DOSTOYEVSKY'S AMERICAN REPUTATION TO 1930

APPROVED:

E. S. Ballard
Major Professor

M. I. Shockley
Minor Professor

E. S. Clifton
Director of the Department of English

Robert Toulouze
Dean of the Graduate School
DOSTOYEVSKY'S AMERICAN REPUTATION TO 1930

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State College in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

Dallas L. Lacy, B. A.

Denton, Texas

June, 1961
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As early as 1931, Edward Carr wrote, "Dostoyevsky has influenced nearly all the important novelists who have arisen in England, France and Germany during the past twenty years." 1 Individual studies have shown Dostoyevsky's influence upon Hawthorne, 2 Melville, 3 and Faulkner 4 in America, while additional studies have portrayed the closeness of Hauptmann 5 and Proust 6 to Dostoyevsky. Gide 7 and Middleton Murry 8 have readily

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7 André Gide, Dostoyevsky (Norfolk, Connecticut, 1925).
acknowledged his influence upon them, and have devoted themselves to critical studies of Dostoyevsky. Undoubtedly, his influence upon the novel is great, but, even yet, few concrete studies have been made and no full-length study has been published. It is hoped that this account of Dostoyevsky's reputation in America during the 1920's will be of assistance in the greater task of tracing Dostoyevsky's influence.

Dostoyevsky composed most of his works in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. For example, Poor Folk was published in 1846; Crime and Punishment in 1865; and The Idiot in 1868. Even so, Dostoyevsky is considered a modern writer, and it is not surprising to find a chapter devoted to him in The Twentieth Century Novel.9

Dostoyevsky's contemporary, Count Lev Tolstoy, had his significance established in America much earlier, and had, in fact, won a solid reputation during the 1890's.10 Dostoyevsky's first book to be published in America, Buried Alive: or Ten Years of Penal Servitude in Siberia, appeared in 1881.11 Only three other novels of his

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appeared before 1900: Poor Folk in 1894; Crime and Punishment in 1886; and The Idiot in 1887.

In 1912, however, Dostoyevsky's reputation entered a new phase with Constance Garnett's translation of The Brothers Karamazov. In the next ten years (1912-1921), she translated all the important works of Dostoyevsky. Her translations were rated excellent at their reception and are still today the standard translations of Dostoyevsky in the English-speaking world. It can safely be said that her work was of primary importance in establishing the reputation of Dostoyevsky in America.

Good translations of Dostoyevsky's books, therefore, were not published in America until many years had elapsed from their original composition and publication. There are diverse interpretations as to why Dostoyevsky's works were slow to receive creditable translations. Edward Carr, for instance, suggests that Dostoyevsky was not brought into

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14 A Catalog of Books Represented by Library of Congress Printed Cards, XLI (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1943), 69.

the English-speaking world until the aesthetic literary
school had some power over the older realistic school:

The aesthetic school had reached its zenith and
art for art's sake had been preached all over Europe
as the one thing needful for literary salvation. In
Russia, the naïve Victorian orthodoxy of Dostoyevsky
had been transformed by his ingenious followers into
a revelation of moral anarchism and spiritual beauty.
He arrived in western Europe under the aegis of these
latter-day interpreters; for Merezhkovsky's Tolstoy
and Dostoyevsky, the most brilliant if not the most
profound work of the school, was translated, at any
rate into English, before many of Dostoyevsky's own
novels. He arrived in a world where aesthetics
seemed to the most advanced thought of the day,
the key to morality.16

Scientific advances in the field of psychological
analysis were also needed in understanding Dostoyevsky.
Freud 17 and Adler 18 acknowledged their indebtedness to
Dostoyevsky and wrote articles about his psychology.
Another influence which was helpful to Dostoyevsky in
America was World War I. The Russians were allies of
America at the time, and American propaganda was favorable
to the Russians. Through this propaganda, Russia became
not so mysterious or foreboding to the American. The

16 Carr, op. cit., pp. 322-323.

17 Sigmund Freud, "Dostoyevsky and Parricide," Art and
Psychoanalysis, edited by William Phillips (New York,
1957), pp. 3-20.

18 Alfred Adler, "Dostoyevsky," The Practice and Theory
of Individual Psychology, translated by F. Radin (New York,
1924), pp. 280-290.
Russian revolution of 1917, on the other hand, had seemingly no influence upon bringing Dostoyevsky to America.

The basic time period for this study, 1920-1929, was chosen because it is the first complete decade in which Dostoyevsky had any appreciable significance in America. Nevertheless, this study goes back as early as 1915 in order to show the beginnings of the literary trends in the criticism of Dostoyevsky. It may be said, therefore, that this paper traces the critical history of Dostoyevsky in America through 1929.

The transliteration of Russian names always presents some difficulties. Dostoyevsky's name, for instance, is spelled in a variety of ways: Dostoievsky, Dostojewski, Dostoevski, et cetera. The spelling "Dostoyevsky" has been chosen because it seems most commonly accepted. Other names have also been transliterated in accepted form: Tolstoy, Turgenev, Pushkin, Raskolnikov, Nastasya, Myshkin, Stavrogin, and so on.

This study has not been limited to criticism of Dostoyevsky by United States nationals. Instead, the limits have been set by studies of Dostoyevsky which have been published in America in the English language. Many of these works were composed in England, and others appeared in America through translation.
Dostoyevsky's artistic works had lain dormant for many years before reliable translations were made available to the American reader. Accurate information on Dostoyevsky's background and personal history followed a similar pattern. Dostoyevsky's second wife, Anna Grigorievna Smitkin, kept a diary of her first few months of married life; she also recorded her impressions in a notebook up to the time of her death. Nevertheless, these important sources lay unknown in the Pushkin Department of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Petersburg until the 1920's. Following in the family tradition, Dostoyevsky's daughter Aimée wrote a biography of her father which appeared in America in 1922. With the publication of these studies, critics were able to base their findings on more tangible evidence than had hitherto been possible. For this reason Chapter II of this study is devoted to a summary of these important biographical works. In the 1920's Dostoyevsky attracted the attention of the interpreters who were interested in the psychological aspects of his background and personal history. Chapter III records the findings of this group


20 Aimée Dostoyevsky, Fyodor Dostoyevsky: A Study (New Haven, 1922).
who interpreted Dostoyevsky's life and artistic works from a psychological standpoint.

When Dostoyevsky's books were published in America, the criticism which followed immediately was quite diverse. Many of the critics had only one perspective and sought to explain Dostoyevsky according to it. This criticism was excited and extreme, and it completely covered the spectrum. Dorothy Brewster and Angus Burrell noted that three branches of criticism blossomed and flourished in America during the 1920's.\(^{21}\) First, they saw "the Christian interpreters" who were "sweetly solemn."\(^{22}\) Second, they viewed the critics who presented their work "metaphysically and mystically and allegorically and anagogically and symbolically."\(^{23}\) Last, they referred to the interpreters who spoke of Dostoyevsky's books "being filled with nothing but 'disease, putridity and crime.'"\(^{24}\) Chapters IV, V, and VI will record the views and trends of these more distinctive and extreme fields of criticism.


\(^{22}\) Ibid., p. 130.

\(^{23}\) Ibid., p. 132.

\(^{24}\) Ibid., p. 146.
Dostoyevsky attracted the extremists, but he also attracted the attention of the more formidable critics and literary scholars of the day. The most influential criticism of the 1920's was written by those who employed a more conventional and academic approach to Dostoyevsky's artistic works. Chapter VII traces the development of this more important field of technical criticism.
CHAPTER II

PUBLISHED WORKS OF DOSTOYEVSKY AND HIS FAMILY

During the 1920's new translations of Dostoyevsky's own works, and a great influx of works translated from his family's writings, were published in America. The beginnings of the 1920's saw the completion of Constance Garnett's amazing project of translating the complete works of Dostoyevsky which she had begun in 1912. In 1920, Volume XII, her last volume, was published as Friend of the Family and Other Short Stories.\(^1\) Reprints of Constance Garnett's previously completed translations were published and made available in new editions, among which were The Everyman's Library and The Modern Library.

The most important of the other new translations to appear in the English-speaking world during this period was S. S. Kotelyansky and Virginia Woolf's Stavrogin's Confession and the Plan for the Life of a Great Sinner.\(^2\)


Although this book was published in England, *Stavrogin's Confession*, nevertheless, did appear in the American magazine *The Living Age*. With the publication of one new short story, Dostoyevsky's artistic works were finally all published by 1925.

Some non-artistic works, however, remained to be made available to the American reader, mainly letters. England had a book-length edition of Dostoyevsky's letters, but America had to be satisfied with letters scattered throughout various magazines. Foremost among his letters was the letter written to his brother Michael just shortly after his reprieve from death. C. Nabokoff used this same letter, in addition to a passage from *The Idiot*, and related the exciting story of Dostoyevsky's capture, imminent execution, and imprisonment. Other "hitherto

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3 Fyodor Dostoyevsky, "Stavrogin's Confession," *The Living Age*, translated by S. S. Koteliansky and Virginia Woolf, CCCXIII (June 10, 1922), 627-633; (June 17, 1922), 723-732; (June 24, 1922), 782-786.


unpublished letters" appeared in The Forum7 and in The Virginia Quarterly Review. 8

Of primary importance during the 1920's was the making available of the personal history of Dostoyevsky. Dostoyevsky's wife, Anna Grigorievna, and daughter Aimée made this possible. Three separate volumes were published from Madame Dostoyevsky's notebook and diary. The first book in her trilogy was Dostoyevsky: Letters and Reminiscences. 9 Some new letters were published for the first time in this volume, but only the letters addressed to his friend, the Russian critic A. N. Maikov, were of interest. 10 In the main, Dostoyevsky's letters were dull, poorly written, and concerned with the most trivial of details. Charles Dickens, Dostoyevsky's predecessor in England, wrote brilliant, finished letters, a fact which has led some critics to believe that he wrote them solely for publication. No critic would suggest that Dostoyevsky's letters were polished before publication.


9Anna G. Dostoyevsky, op. cit., pp. 1-286.

10Ibid., pp. 17-96.
It was, however, the reminiscences which constituted the heart of the study. For the reminiscences, the translators drew upon the notebook of Madame Dostoyevsky. Madame Dostoyevsky began keeping a notebook in 1866, the year when she first met Dostoyevsky, her husband-to-be, and continued this until 1917, the year before she died. The period of the notebook which S. S. Koteliansky and J. Middleton Murry chose to study was 1871-1872. This was the period when Dostoyevsky and his young wife returned to St. Petersburg, after a four-year absence abroad which they took immediately following their wedding.

Dostoyevsky's personal trait of sympathy was shown throughout the book. On one occasion after a man had unmercifully cheated him, Dostoyevsky said, "I could not have thought he was capable of deceiving me. What a man may be brought to by necessity!"\(^{11}\) On the other hand, a great many less admirable traits were inadvertently revealed by Madame Dostoyevsky. More than once she spoke of "his purely childish impracticality, his extreme trustfulness, his ill-health and complete insecurity"\(^{12}\) and his "fits of jealousy."\(^{13}\)

\(^{11}\)Ibid., p. 129.  
\(^{12}\)Ibid., p. 132.  
\(^{13}\)Ibid., p. 146.
Critics eagerly read this book, but they were divided in their opinions concerning its literary merit and significance. A. J. Nazoroff thought the biographical data valuable: "Every document referring to him, every page of reminiscences adding to his characteristics, is of great interest and importance. All the more is this true of the volume just published."14 Expressing disapproval of the book was Avraham Yarmolinski, the Americanized Russian, who wrote, "The book has all the earmarks of having been hastily thrown together. The selection which the editors have made from the recent Dostoevskiana is not unexceptionable."15 More support of the latter statement was given by Alexander Kaun who concluded, "One closes the book with the wish to forget it, and to remember only the author of the Karamazovs."16

Further gleaning by S. S. Koteliantsky in the notebook and in the diary of Madame Dostoyevsky produced Dostoyevsky Portrayed by His Wife.17 No specific time period was


16Alexander Kaun, "Homely Dostoyevsky," The Bookman, LVIII (September, 1923), 82.

17Anna Grigorievna Dostoyevsky, Dostoyevsky Portrayed by His Wife, edited and translated by S. S. Koteliantsky (New York, 1926).
chosen, and Koteliansky hoped to select only such selections as seemed "to throw new light on Dostoyevsky."\textsuperscript{18} Many biographical facts, now familiar to readers of Dostoyevsky, were told in this work for the first time. Here, for example, was an account of Dostoyevsky's proposal to his young secretary, Anna Gregorievna Snitkin. He proposed to her by pretending he was a character in a book, and asked Anna if she thought the young heroine of the book could possibly love the older and ill hero. Here, also, was the joke that Madame Dostoyevsky played on her husband. On this occasion she copied a typical letter which questioned a wife's virtue and mailed it anonymously to her husband. The rage it put him in was described in some detail.\textsuperscript{19} Harold Goddard devoted much space to this story because it helped him to declare that Shakespeare's \textit{Othello} was plausible.\textsuperscript{20} Dostoyevsky's rage, however, was provoked by much less than this, for on another occasion, he refused to speak to his wife for several hours after a man had kissed her hand at a party.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., p. ix.
\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., pp. 157-162.
\textsuperscript{21}Anna G. Dostoyevsky, \textit{Dostoyevsky Portrayed by His Wife}, pp. 172-175.
Reception of this book was once again as varied as the first had been. For a thesis E. F. Edgett announced: "Their frankness and intimacy offer the student of literary history and personality and of character, a series of rare glimpses that in their way form a complete portrait of an extraordinary man."\(^{22}\) Princess Radziwill expressed the antithesis: "It is not even an interesting book, because it leaves one with the impression that so much might have been said in it that has been passed off as unworthy of attention."\(^{23}\) Avraham Yarmolinski synthesized these views. He admitted the book "gave some insight to Dostoyevsky," but found fault in Madame Dostoyevsky's "habit for detail" and "lack of understanding of her husband's writings."\(^{24}\)

A third book was formed from Madame Dostoyevsky's writings by use of her diary.\(^{25}\) Her diary was originally kept on a day-to-day basis for four months following her wedding (April 14, 1867–August 13, 1867). Many personal characteristics of Dostoyevsky were again given in this

\(^{22}\)E. F. Edgett, *Boston Transcript*, May 29, 1926, p. 3.


work. His epileptic fits, for example, were described in vivid detail, and on one of those occasions an interesting note was added: "After these fits he is always seized with a fear of death. He says he is afraid they will end in his death."26 S. C. Burchell, a psychological critic, found this to be of especial interest. 27

After having described Dostoyevsky's passion for gambling, Madame Dostoyevsky gave an interesting account of the quarrel her husband had with Turgenev:

Fyodor, as usual, treated him [Turgenev] none too gently, telling him to procure himself a telescope, for as he always lived in Paris he couldn't otherwise understand it [Russia]. Turgenev declared he was a realist, and Fyodor said he only thought he was. When Fyodor declared he found the Germans extremely stupid and very apt to be dishonest, Turgenev promptly took offence, assuring Fyodor he had irreparably insulted him for he himself had now become, not a Russian any more, but a German. Fyodor said he didn't know that, and greatly deplored the fact. 28

This book's critical reception followed the paths previously established by Madame Dostoyevsky's two other works. Alan Porter thought the book gave "a very poignant, full and remarkable picture of six months of their first

26 Ibid., p. 359.


year of married life."^{29} He also felt sympathy for Madame Dostoyevsky as "there could have been few girls who have passed through such drama and vicissitude in so short a time."^{30} Edmund Wilson, on the other hand, wrote, "She often reports how much everything costs—though she frequently speaks in this diary of conversations with her husband—reports scarcely a one of his opinions."^{31}

Next in the family tradition of writing was Dostoyevsky's daughter Aimée. Although only eleven years old at her father's death, she later wrote his biography in commemoration of Dostoyevsky's centenary.^{32} In 1921, however, Russia was just recovering from her revolution and seemingly was not interested in art. "If Dostoyevsky's centenary cannot be celebrated in Russia," Aimée stated, "I should like to see it commemorated in Europe, for he has long been accepted as a universal writer, one of those beacons which illuminated the path of humanity."^{33} Therefore, the book was composed in German, and first published in Germany.

^{29}Alan Porter, "Dostoyevsky's Marriage," The Spectator, CXLI (December 1, 1928), 824.
^{30}Ibid.
^{31}Edmund Wilson, "Dostoyevsky Abroad," The New Republic, LVII (January 30, 1929), 302.
^{33}Ibid., pp. vi-vii.
The book was translated and published in America in 1922, and was immediately popular for a study of such a nature. Perhaps the reason for its popularity was the sensational elements which were first exposed. It was exciting reading for the public, who had previously known so little about Dostoyevsky, to find that his first wife had "African blood" and made him a cuckold.\textsuperscript{34} Likewise, it was new for the reader to know about Dostoyevsky's father's drinking, and his subsequent death at the hands of his own serfs.\textsuperscript{35} Still more thrilling to the public was Dostoyevsky's love affair with Apollinaria Souslov, which was told here for the first time.\textsuperscript{36} Mademoiselle Dostoyevsky, however, referred to her as Pauline N--.

The thesis of Mademoiselle Dostoyevsky's study was to prove her father's paternal Lithuanian ancestry. The intellectual influence of Russia on Dostoyevsky was slight, she said, but the influence of Lithuania was great. Dostoyevsky's role in the Petrachevsky conspiracy was thus explained:

He plotted against the Tsar, because he did not yet understand the real meaning of the Russian monarchy. At this period of his life Dostoyevsky knew little of Russia. He had spent his childhood in a kind of artificial Lithuania created by his father in the heart of Moscow.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid., pp. 91-102. \textsuperscript{35}Ibid., pp. 32-33.
\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., pp. 103-112. \textsuperscript{37}Ibid., p. 52.
The critics, however, were quick to show their disapproval of her thesis. William Lyons Phelps wrote, "It is exasperating on account of its vagaries and solemn prophecies. . . ."38 Another critic believed Mademoiselle Dostoyevsky's study made "strange reading."39 "The simple truth," said M. G. Strunsky, "is that Mademoiselle Dostoyevsky does not know her father."40

Dostoyevsky appeared on the New York stage twice during the 1920's. The Little Theatre on April 9, 1922, presented an adaptation by John Cowper Powys and Reginald Pole of The Idiot. In his review of this play, Stark Young, the drama critic, referred to the "poor translation" and "poor plot," but suggested that Dostoyevsky gave many valuable truths "about that human nature on which society rests."41 Shortly thereafter came the Theatre Guild's production of The Brothers Karamazov.42

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40 M. G. Strunsky, New York Evening Post, March 18, 1922.

41 Stark Young, "Dostoyevsky's Idiot," The New Republic, XXX (April 26, 1922), 255.

42 Fyodor Dostoyevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, adapted into play form by Jacques Copeau and Jean Groue, translated by Rosaline Ivan (Garden City, New York, 1927).
To summarize, immediately following the publication of Dostoyevsky's artistic works, American and British critics became interested in Dostoyevsky's thought and personal history. The thought processes of Dostoyevsky were shown more clearly in his individual letters than from other sources. For additional light on his personal history the critics turned to the diary and notebook of Dostoyevsky's second wife. Those who hoped to learn more of the development of Dostoyevsky's thought, his literary sources, his literary contacts, and his opinions were greatly disappointed in Madame Dostoyevsky's works. Nevertheless, from amid the details recollected by Madame Dostoyevsky, a clearer image of her husband as an actual man began to emerge. The critics were to take these ideas and produce a more specific biographical criticism than had hitherto been possible.
CHAPTER III

PSYCHOLOGICAL CRITICISM

Modern advances in the field of psychology were of keen interest during the 1920's. Professional scholars in modern psychology found in Dostoyevsky a plethora of psychological complexes. Literary critics, too, found Dostoyevsky's psychical make-up to be of interest. These latter critics believed that a criticism based on the findings of modern psychology would lead them closer to the "real" Dostoyevsky and thereby make possible a more accurate interpretation of Dostoyevsky in relation to his artistic works. Therefore, these same critics primarily interpreted Dostoyevsky's novels and his characters in relation to Dostoyevsky's own psychic history.

"The father of modern psychology," Sigmund Freud, was among those who psychologically interpreted the personal history of Dostoyevsky. Freud's study of Dostoyevsky originally appeared in The Realist in 1929; however, a reprint of this article was later published in Art and Psychoanalysis.¹ Typical of the Edipus complex,

¹Freud, op. cit., pp. 3-20.
Dostoyevsky, said Freud, wished for his father's death in phantasy. When the event did occur, the phantasy became a reality. Freud used this as a basis for explaining Dostoyevsky's epilepsy: "Dostoyevsky's seizures now assume an epileptic character; they still of course signify the father identification as a means of punishment, but they have become terrible, like the frightful death of the father itself." In fact, Dostoyevsky "never got free from the remorse due to his desire to murder his father." Freud doubted that Dostoyevsky had these seizures in prison, because the external anguish of prison life would suffice for the punishment which the overpowering guilt called for.

Freud also used this explanation to reveal Dostoyevsky's seemingly contradictory actions. In little things this Oedipus complex brought about a frustration which made him a "sadist" to others; in the bigger things, however, this complex took on a form to make him a "sadist" to himself, or a "masochist, who is the mildest, kindliest, most helpful human being possible."

In this same study Freud found the world's masterpieces to hold the Oedipus complex in common:

\[2\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 11.}
\[3\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 12.}
\[4\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 5.}\]
It can scarcely be mere coincidence that three of the masterpieces of the literature of all time, the Oedipus Rex of Sophocles, Shakespeare's Hamlet, and Dostoyevsky's The Brothers Karamazov, should all deal with the same subject, a father's murder. In all three, too, the motive for the deed, sexual rivalry for the woman, is laid bare.  

S. C. Burchell, too, believed that Dostoyevsky had a great struggle with the Oedipus situation. With this fact as a springboard, Burchell leaped into a discussion of Crime and Punishment. Dostoyevsky had imparted his own complex to Raskolnikov in this book, said Burchell, and Raskolnikov, early in the novel, "has made artful use of his attractions to ingratiate himself with his landlady and her invalid daughter and so has nothing to fear on the maternal side." This growing restlessness on the part of Raskolnikov, which was in direct proportion to the loss of the maternal element, formed a neurosis and the seed was sown "for the unconscious guilt which calls for punishment." Hence, according to Burchell, the commission of the crime was solely to bring about the penalty. Burchell gave evidence to his proposition by showing "the criminal's frantic efforts to attract attention to his guilt."

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5Ibid., p. 13.
6Burchell, op. cit., p. 201.
7Ibid., p. 203.
8Ibid.
Another interpretation of Dostoyevsky's Oedipus complex was given by Dorothy Brewster and Angus Burrell.\textsuperscript{9} This Oedipus struggle, they stated, was shown autobiographically in \textit{The Brothers Karamazov}. It was Ivan who was the personification of Dostoyevsky in the novel, and the feeling of Ivan when his father was killed was the feeling of Dostoyevsky when his father was killed.\textsuperscript{10} According to this study it was Dostoyevsky himself who suffered when Ivan was horrified by Smerdyakov's accusation: "You are fond of money, I know that. . . . You are like Fyodor Pavlovitch, you are more like him than any other of his children; you've the same soul as he had."\textsuperscript{11} Dostoyevsky suffered even more when Ivan's baser self addressed him: "'You murdered him,'" accuses Smerdyakov, "'you are the real murderer. I was only your instrument.'"\textsuperscript{12} In order to support their thought Brewster and Burrell discovered that "the name of the village where Ivan intended to go during the interval when the crime took place, Tcheremashnya, was the name of the village Dostoyevsky's father was going to when he was killed."\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{9}Brewster and Burrell, op. cit., pp. 155-175.
\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., p. 157.
\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., p. 159.
\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., p. 169.
\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 157.
Alfred Adler had long been interested in Dostoyevsky. Adler gave a series of lectures on him in England in 1922, and in 1924 a chapter was devoted to Dostoyevsky in his *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology*. In this study Adler developed the thesis of what he called the "limit-feeling" of Dostoyevsky. Each of Dostoyevsky's novels, said Adler, began with the characters surrounded by "limits that he [Dostoyevsky] had discovered from a realization of the logical demands of communal co-operation." Shortly thereafter, he permitted them all to madly transcend the limits "by inciting their ambition, vanity, self-love, on to the uttermost confines of life." It was only after the characters had transgressed the "limit" that they would observe truth and start back to the boundaries where "he allowed them to sing hymns in harmony." Dostoyevsky's characters found truth through error, instead of from more commonly accepted methods.

Joseph Collins believed that Dostoyevsky's own mental disorders enabled him to excel in the field of morbid

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psychology, or psychiatry.\textsuperscript{20} Just as a painter left identifying marks on his portrait, explained Collins, Dostoyevsky left his mark with descriptions of "nervous and mental disorder, such as mania and depression, the psychoneuroses, hysteria, obsessive states, epilepsy, moral insanity, alcoholism, and that mysterious mental and moral constitution called 'degeneracy.'\textsuperscript{21}

Lafcadio Hearn studied \textit{Crime and Punishment} to find its source of power.\textsuperscript{22} After discarding its "workmanship of phrases" and its "ingenuity of conception," Hearn decided its whole force was a psychical one.\textsuperscript{23} Its force was a "sort of ghastly mesmerism like that exercised by Coleridge's fantastic mariner."\textsuperscript{24} According to Hearn, Raskolnikov did not develop morally in the novel; his mental sufferings were "not the sufferings of remorse, but of nervous affection."\textsuperscript{25} "He speaks only in order to save himself from going mad."\textsuperscript{26} Thus, concluded Hearn,

\begin{footnotes}
\item[23] \textit{Ibid.}, p. 190.
\item[24] \textit{Ibid.}
\item[26] \textit{Ibid.}
\end{footnotes}
the psychical force of the novel was so great that it acted as a whirlpool and the reader "feels, thinks, dreams, trembles as the criminal whose psychology is thus exposed for him!"\textsuperscript{27}

The modern reader is often freshly impressed with the psychological aspects of Dostoyevsky's writings. As is shown above, the groundwork for this modern view was formed by the critics during the 1920's who psychologically interpreted Dostoyevsky. The majority of these critics viewed Dostoyevsky's psychical make-up and the composition of his novels as intimately related. Their criticism was important, for they presented the multiplicity of motivations which they believed to be in Dostoyevsky's characters. As a result of their criticism, Dostoyevsky and his novels were seen to possess a more subtle, profound, and complex meaning.

\textsuperscript{27}Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

SENTIMENTAL CRITICISM

Much of the criticism of Dostoyevsky during the 1920's was fanatically enthusiastic appreciation. Dostoyevsky's primary value, these critics believed, was in the level and purity of his thoughts. Therefore, they indulged in a kind of uncritical criticism which tended to be somewhat sentimental. Dostoyevsky's religious attributes were keenly appreciated by these critics, and they saw in him a second Messiah, and believed his "spiritual flights" to easily transcend his "minor literary faults." Dostoyevsky's compassion for the "poor people" was given great prominence in their interpretation. Other critics were persistent apologists for Dostoyevsky and upheld his supremacy against belittlers. A few critics merely told sentimentally why they enjoyed Dostoyevsky. Together these critics were a formidable group, and their enthusiasms played a large role in introducing Dostoyevsky to the American reader.

Perhaps the loudest herald for this school of criticism was William Lyon Phelps, who in 1915 published his Essays on Russian Novelists.1 Phelps found certain faults

in Dostoyevsky, for he saw in him "dream episodes [which] have absolutely no connection with the course of the story,"\(^2\) stories "filled with extraneous and superfluous matter,"\(^3\) and the need for *The Brothers Karamazov* to be "cut down one-third."\(^4\) Nevertheless, Phelps "pardons Dostoyevsky everything, because when he speaks of the ill-treated and the forgotten children of our town civilization he becomes truly great through his wide, infinite love of mankind—of man, even in his worst manifestations."\(^5\) In this chapter Phelps made several statements which were often repeated by critics who were followers of his. For instance, Phelps wrote, "Probably no man ever lived who had a bigger or warmer heart than Dostoyevsky, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."\(^6\) Even more typical were the words which closed his study:

> That so experienced and unprejudiced a man, gifted with such a power of subtle and profound reflection, should have found in the Christian religion the only solution of the riddle of existence, and the best rule for daily conduct, is in itself valuable evidence that the Christian religion is true.\(^7\)

A staunch defender of Dostoyevsky's literary reputation was Otto Heller.\(^8\) It was Heller's belief that

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 154.  
\(^3\)Ibid., p. 152.  
\(^4\)Ibid., p. 163.  
\(^5\)Ibid., p. 138.  
\(^6\)Ibid., p. 140.  
\(^7\)Ibid., p. 169.  
Dostoyevsky showed the wretched and outcast portion of humanity in order to portray their need for charity: "He did not dwell upon the wretchedness of that submerged section of humanity from any perverse delight in what is hideous or for the satisfaction of readers afflicted with morbid curiosity, but from a compelling sense of pity and brotherly love."\(^9\)

Two critics presented in contrasting views the influence of the Russian country and people upon Dostoyevsky. The earlier study of the two was written by Francis Hackett.\(^10\) Hackett found the people of Russia to have great expectations and they "stand on the threshold, tremulous and eager, lips parted, cheeks flushed, heart [sic] beating high."\(^11\) The same people, said Hackett, unconsciously gave Dostoyevsky his "instinct with the brotherhood of man."\(^12\) Dostoyevsky revealed these feelings in *Crime and Punishment* and therefore was able to lift this otherwise typical melodrama into the ranks of the sublime.\(^13\) The epitome of all the human sympathies of Russia was found in the memorable scene of Raskolnikov bowing down

\(^9\)Ibid., p. 165.
\(^11\)Ibid., p. 178.  
\(^12\)Ibid.
\(^13\)Ibid., p. 181.
and kissing the feet of Sonia: "I do not bow down to you, but to the suffering of all humanity!" In *Crime and Punishment* "it is the punishment that awakens his soul, and as the flame of the inner life rises and falls one can feel the heart of Dostoyevsky beat quicker, believing as he does in the forces that heal as well as wound." Yes, Hackett wrote, the Russian temperament was far from detrimental to Dostoyevsky; it was, instead, a powerful catalytic agent which indirectly helped to produce one of the world's masterpieces.

The later study of the two was written by Moissaye Olgin. Olgin saw in Russia no such traits of sympathy, but, instead, saw Russia as a country full of cruelty, vice, and corruption. Dostoyevsky went through the fire of cruelties of this Sodom-like land, and was tempered by it to such an extent that he was able to rise above the flame. Dostoyevsky's compassion for the people, explained Olgin, was not a free gift to him, but was a trait developed in him through many tortures. Olgin also wrote that the reader of Dostoyevsky could grow similarly in a vicarious way, for "the man who has gone through the

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14 Ibid., p. 183.  
15 Ibid., p. 185.  
17 Ibid., pp. 101-102.  
18 Ibid., p. 108.
purgatory of Dostoyevsky's novels emerges with a wealth of unmatched experiences that give new meaning to the world."\(^{19}\) Olgin's study had additional value in relation to the criticism of Dostoyevsky, for it contained a section which quoted from the works of various Russian critics.\(^{20}\)

Sometimes it was the literary scholars of the day who gave high praise to Dostoyevsky. Hugh Walpole, for example, the English novelist and critic, while speaking in the United States, said he "considered Theodore Dostoyevsky, the Russian novelist, greater than any author of our day."\(^{21}\) Another writer and critic, James Huneker, wrote to his friend Edward Marsh that he considered Poor Folk and The Gambler to be the best things Dostoyevsky ever wrote for the public.\(^{22}\) He also lamented the fact that Poor Folk had "a foolish preface by--George Moore, of all men."\(^{23}\)

As Chapter V below will indicate, J. Middleton Murry was enthusiastic about Dostoyevsky. His famous wife, Katherine Mansfield, seemed to be no less interested in

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\(^{23}\) *Ibid.*
Dostoyevsky, and she often made delighted references to Dostoyevsky in her letters to her husband. In one such letter a touching scene was portrayed:

There's such a sad widower here with four little boys, all in black—all the family in black—as though they were flies that had dropped into milk. There was a tiny girl, too, but she was not fished out again soon enough, and she died. They are silly, so stupid: that's what makes me so sad to see them. Like a Dostoyevsky 6th floor family to whom this had happened. 24

There was another event which excited her and caused her to think of an event she had read from Dostoyevsky:

It was all so noisy and at 2 o'clock my French windows burst open—out popped the candle—the blinds flapped like sails. As I rushed to the rescue I thought of that appalling moment when Kirillov rushed at Pyotr Stepanovitch. 25

Katherine Mansfield's devotion was shown in still another passage: "Well, well, well. Why do I feel like this about Dostoyevsky—my Dostoyevsky—no one else's—a being who loved, in spite of everything adored LIFE even while he knew the dark, dark places." 26

Dostoyevsky was given recognition in J. Arthur Myers' Fighters of Fate, 27 a book which contained brief sketches

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25 Ibid., p. 169.  

26 Ibid., p. 244.

27 J. Arthur Myers, "Fyodor Dostoyevsky," Fighters of Fate (Baltimore, 1927), pp. 140-150.
of the lives of men who succeeded despite handicaps. Dostoyevsky found a light in this world despite the handicaps of poverty, chronic tuberculosis, and epilepsy.28 Not only his own life, but that of his novels, was made great within this fact, "that in every life, no matter how degraded, a bright flame keeps burning."29

Two books published in 1928 were the culmination of the sentimental school of criticism. The first of these was a two-volume edition of Oswald Spengler's The Decline of the West.30 The influence of this book was indeed great; it was, in fact, included among the ten books which, Malcolm Cowley and Bernard Smith thought, have changed the world's mind.31 Spengler's primary concern with Dostoyevsky was in a comparison between Tolstoy's religious view and Dostoyevsky's. Tolstoy was, in regard to his religion, the former Russia:

Tolstoy, the townsman and Easterner, saw in Jesus only a social reformer, and in his metaphysical importance--like the whole civilized West, which can only think about distributing, never renouncing--elevated primitive Christianity to the rank of a social revolution.32

28Ibid., p. 140.  
29Ibid., p. 148.  
On the other hand, Dostoyevsky's "passionate power of living is comprehensive enough to embrace all things Western as well--'I have two fatherlands, Russia and Europe.'" Therefore, Spengler credited Dostoyevsky's transcending religion to be representative of the coming Russia. Dostoyevsky, unlike Tolstoy, said Spengler, did not aim at changing the world of facts: "Dostoyevsky, like every primitive Russian, was fundamentally unaware of that world and lived in a second metaphysical world beyond." A religion which had taken social problems in hand was not a true religion. Tolstoy often took these social problems in hand in his novels, and produced books which had a typically Western slant. Spengler mentioned Anna Karenina as an example of the greatest of the Western novels. Dostoyevsky, Spengler wrote, remained free and above these social problems and produced works of art which have defied all literary criticism, including Russian. "His life of Christ, had he written it--as he always intended to--would have been a genuine gospel like the Gospels of primitive Christianity, which stand completely

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33 Ibid., p. 194. 
34 Ibid., p. 195. 
35 Ibid. 
36 Ibid. 
37 Ibid.
outside Classical and Jewish literary forms."  
Dostoyevsky's far-reaching view let him see that "the agony of a soul" had nothing to do with Communism or simple social problems.  
Spengler concluded that the basic Russian still has within himself the religion which rises above that of mere social institutions and problems, and thereby remains a disciple of Dostoyevsky.  
The second book published in 1928, Julius Meier-Graefe's *Dostoyevsky: The Man and His Work*, was exultant in its praise of Dostoyevsky.  
This book was definitely of the sentimental school, but it was also the most complete survey made of Dostoyevsky by any critic during the 1920's. Meier-Graefe noticed several planes or levels to Dostoyevsky's art:

There are then, three consecutive effects: first, the crude tension of a detective story, which is carried to its climax with the utmost subtility; secondly, the enigmatic and intimate relationship of the stories to latent parts of our own existence which suddenly become roused and torment us; thirdly, the gladdening relaxation bringing spiritual harmony.

Meier-Graefe's whole thesis of the study was to show a progression of thought arising from the earlier novels and

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developing into the beautiful spiritual harmony of the last novel. "What we are mainly concerned with," wrote Meier-Graefe, "is the aestheticism of the work freed, as far as possible, from extraneous matter." Therefore, very little biography was given and the reader was hurled into lengthy discussions of the novels. For example, more than fifty pages were given to The Idiot and almost ninety pages were given to The Brothers Karamazov. The Letters from the Underworld was Meier-Graefe's main springboard as he began to show Dostoyevsky's development; Crime and Punishment further developed the idea found in The Letters from the Underworld; The Idiot began where Crime and Punishment left off; and the Christianity in The Idiot was made manifest in The Brothers Karamazov. This development spoken of by Meier-Graefe was primarily one of thought. Development of form was only hinted at, and its development would seemingly correspond with that of thought.

Through the eyes of Meier-Graefe, no faults of Dostoyevsky could be seen, and parts of the study were used in defending him against the critics. For example, in

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43 Ibid., p. 378.
44 Ibid., pp. 147-206.
regard to the length of Dostoyevsky's novels, Meier-Graefe defended:

If his long-drawn passages were inapposite they would be intolerable at the second reading; but they have the opposite effect; long as they are, long as Jupiter's nose and El Greco's saints, they shrink, and we scarcely notice their length.\textsuperscript{46}

Meier-Graefe was also the biographer of Vincent Van Gogh, and, as to be expected, made many references to artists and paintings. The reader going from Balzac to Dostoyevsky, Meier-Graefe wrote, was like leaving a fresco in Florence of the Quattrocento and viewing a portrait by Rembrandt.\textsuperscript{47} In fact, the similarity between Rembrandt and Dostoyevsky was given considerable attention:

There are pictures by Rembrandt whose relationship to Dostoyevsky shoots like a flame out of the darkness. There are phrases of the Russian, occasional, arbitrary, contorted, acute-angled phrases like drawings by Rembrandt. It is not alone the similarity of the motifs, not those self-portraits which both repeat in more profoundly conceived legends, but the uniformity of the stage on which the play is set, this thoroughly theatrical drama carried right into the midst of life with the unmistakable central illumination; all that we, with our satellite understanding, call form and technique. They are mutually helpful. The one states the moral of the other's work.\textsuperscript{48}

Had this book been presented ten years earlier, it perhaps would have met with great acclaim. At this date, however, the critics gave it reviews which were strongly

\textsuperscript{46}Ibid., p. 18. \textsuperscript{47}Ibid., p. 30. \textsuperscript{48}Ibid., p. 32.
indicative of the temper of the late twenties. The Nation stated, "Julius Meier-Graefe is often useful, always sympathetic, but he so surrounds the object of his criticism with a hedge of blustering love that, though one admires the solicitude, one cannot see the object."49 Avraham Yarmolinski, perhaps thinking of the book he himself was to write, said, "The volume, properly speaking, is a literary study and in no sense that biography which our time demands, and for which raw material, necessarily in Dostoyevsky's own tongue, is accumulating rapidly."50 In a similar vein, The New Statesman reported, "He burrows into his subject, which is to the good, but he often remains buried in it, which is not. . . ."51 Still another critic, Babette Deutsch, wrote, "This volume is not a work of scholarship. . . . It is rather a sympathetic study of the novels as a record of Dostoyevsky's growth, the vessel of his emotions and the depository of his faith."52

Beginning with William Lyon Phelps's study in 1915 and extending into the early 1920's, Dostoyevsky was proclaimed

49 "Biographical Briefs," The Nation, CXXVII (October 31, 1928), 459.


51 The New Statesman, XXX (March 3, 1928), 660.

and exalted as he has possibly never been since. Even as late as 1928, despite the dominance of the realistic school of criticism, two important studies were published. The first of these, Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West*, contains material which is valuable today. The second of the two, Julius Meier-Graefe's *Dostoyevsky: The Man and His Work*, remained the standard critical biography of Dostoyevsky until the following decade. Although the critical content of their studies was limited, they did not actually distort the meaning of Dostoyevsky, and they portrayed the positive aspects of his work. The sentimental criticism became a real force in its day, and it made the valuable contribution of introducing countless readers to Dostoyevsky during the early period when his novels were being translated.
CHAPTER V

SYMBOLIST CRITICISM

Especially characteristic of the temper of the time were the symbolist critics. Immediately following World War I, a symbolist criticism was evolved as a part of the broader reaction against external realism. These critics quickly found Dostoyevsky's thought and art to be an ideal subject for their criticism. The symbolists were not always sure of the exact symbol intended by Dostoyevsky, but the consensus was that some set of symbols must be interpreted before the "deeper" and "modern" Dostoyevsky could be understood. Sometimes the symbol arrived at was derived through metaphysical analysis; other times it was derived by ideological methods; and still other times it was explained by analogy. The juxtaposition of these formed a symbol, and Dostoyevsky was presented early to the American reader as containing a great depth of perception.

The high water mark in the field of symbolist criticism was reached by J. Middleton Murry in his study of Dostoyevsky.\(^1\) In his lengthy introduction, Murry expressed

\(^1\)Murry, op. cit., pp. 1-263.
the purpose of his work to be "an attempt to explain the necessity of adopting a new attitude towards his work." 2 "Old methods and standards" were useless to explain Dostoyevsky's art, for he was a "profoundly different" writer. 3 Therefore, a "new creation" demanded a "new criticism" for its understanding. 4 Not only was this study to set a new trend in Dostoyevsky's criticism, but it was typical of the trend of ideological criticism which arose with World War I.

While reading Dostoyevsky, Murry could not "discern the new logic, but a sure instinct told that it existed to be discovered." 5 He found a significance which he could not understand, "lacking the key and the sign." 6 At moments Dostoyevsky ascended to "the timeless world," then again descended "to the world where the sun rises, and the flowers spring up and blossom." 7 Yet, all the while, "a memory of some unsolved mystery" hovered around Murry. 8 Characters appeared in a shaded form with the shade "part of the very essence of light and light of shade, so that the man who was evil has become a spirit in whom good and

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2 Ibid., p. 29.  
3 Ibid.  
4 Ibid.  
5 Ibid., p. 31.  
6 Ibid.  
7 Ibid.  
8 Ibid.
evil are but names for a unity which contains them both."\(^9\)
The characters escaped the morality in which the reader
"sought so vainly to contain them," and "they burst the
bonds of human law and human time together."\(^10\) Murr saw
the characters as "spirits," and he was able for one moment
"to see things with the eye of eternity, and have a vision
of suns grown cold, and hear the echo of voices calling
without sound across the waste and frozen universe."\(^11\) In
all of Dostoyevsky's works, Murr wrote, "the proportion of
life, the sweet reasonableness of things human has been
dissolved away."\(^12\)

Once while Murr was reading a translation of the
Egyptian sacred books, he read the phrase "The Boat of the
Million Years."\(^13\) The same expression was repeated several
times in the book and at last, he "saw the boat."\(^14\) Murr
described his feeling at seeing the boat: "I was cold with
horror; it was as though my very spirit had frozen. I
dared not move; I dared not look out of the window, for I
knew that all that lay outside would be old and cold and
grey."\(^15\)

\(^9\)Ibid., p. 32.  
\(^10\)Ibid.  
\(^11\)Ibid., p. 33.  
\(^12\)Ibid., p. 30.  
\(^13\)Ibid., p. 35.  
\(^14\)Ibid.  
\(^15\)Ibid., p. 36.
On still another occasion Murry was reminded of Dostoyevsky. On this occasion he visited the Zoological Gardens and "stopped before the great cage in which the vultures and condors live."\textsuperscript{16} On the ground he saw a "big, bloody bone," while perched above were the "ragged and grey" birds which were "motionless, looking out with blind and lidded eyes."\textsuperscript{17} They looked out of place to Murry; he hated and feared them, but he was unable to drag himself away.\textsuperscript{18} As he muttered to himself: "obscene, obscene," the word "seemed to have taken on a new sense, a profounder meaning."\textsuperscript{19} It was then that Murry felt "an obscenity beyond the bodily world, a metaphysical obscenity, which consists in the sudden manifestation of that which is timeless through that which is in time."\textsuperscript{20}

Dostoyevsky, Murry asserted, saw this metaphysical obscenity and "the thought of it haunts his great characters, as it haunted himself."\textsuperscript{21} Dostoyevsky conceived "the timeless world," yet was "physically to be set in the world of time and to be subject to its laws."\textsuperscript{22} "There is in this," said Murry, "a grotesqueness and obscenity which can freeze the mind which broods upon it with a palsy of horror.

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{17}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{18}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{19}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{20}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{21}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{22}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 41.
which reaches its climax in the sudden vision of the timeless world made apparent in that which is in time."

Just as his metaphysical view "did not fit into the forms of general life," Dostoyevsky's own life did not fit into human existence: "that which served him for life was a long sequence of suffering upon suffering, extreme sensation piled upon extreme sensation. It is one huge grotesque and heart-rending blunder, utterly devoid of beauty, and balance and sanity." Murry explained that since Dostoyevsky never belonged to the world, his "Christianity is not Christianity, his realism is not realism, his novels are not novels, his truth not truth, his art not art." "His world is a world of symbols," said Murry, "and potentialities which are embodied in unlivable lives; for the art and the creative activity which was the only way of escape from the unendurable torments of his mind, had perforce to be commensurate with the doubts which were the cause of the torments."

Therefore, Dostoyevsky's characters were not characters, but, instead, were the embodiment of an idea. In The Idiot, for example, "Rogojin is Body, as Myshkin is Soul; they are not men, they have only the semblance of men, in

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23Ibid.
24Ibid., p. 55.
25Ibid., p. 200.
26Ibid.
which the Ideas which they are have been clothed." 27 "And Nastasya is not a woman, but the embodiment of the idea of Pain." 28 In this novel, said Murry, the characters "are brothers, seeking each other eternally." 29 Stavrogin, on the other hand, represented "Will Incarnate," for he had set his "individual consciousness against life." 30 Murry remembered that "it was rumored that he had been on an expedition to the icy North." 31 Murry interpreted this as a symbol "by which Dostoyevsky could convey in temporal terms, the lonely and infinite distance to which Stavrogin's spirit had been driven." 32

Similarly the characters and content in The Brothers Karamazov were given metaphysical symbols:

The pain and chaos of the mighty blind Karamazov spirit strives towards creation by paths which the human consciousness, though working in the light of its extreme incandescence, cannot discover. The force which by its own inward contradiction drives the man of this world to self-annihilation and the void, in another world evolves a mighty youth, from whose open eyes no secrets are his. From the womb of lust and destruction leaps forth the child of life. . . .

The father is the blind force of life, which arose we know not how. It brooded over life, high and low, birds of the air and creeping things, obscene, terrible and beautiful, it rose through slime and lust and agony to man. Old Karamazov is life under the old Dispensation. He is a force and no more; he does not know himself what he is. He

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27 Ibid., p. 152.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid., pp. 152-153.
30 Ibid., p. 160.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
contains within himself the germ of all potentialities, for he is chaos unresolved. He is loathsome and terrible and strong, for he is life itself.

And this old Life is slain by his sons, for by the death of the old Life and the breaking of the old Covenant, the new Life lives and the new Covenant is established. And the form of the new Life that descends upon the chaos of the father is Christ.33

Murry gave two other brothers in the novel, Dmitri and Ivan, a complementary closeness, for "that force which was one and unresolved in their father knows itself and is divided in them."34 "Dmitri is body conscious of mind, Ivan is mind conscious of body."35

It was Murry's belief that the actual temporal events had only the importance in Dostoyevsky's greater novels of clothing the metaphysical symbols. It was not important, for instance, whether or not the bastard half-brother, Smerdyakov, existed.36 Smerdyakov, said Murry, could easily have existed in Ivan's soul, just as the Devil had done.37 Then it may have been Ivan himself who murdered his father, or, on the other hand, "there may have been no murder at all."38

Dostoyevsky, concluded Murry, "deliberately poured a new wine into the old bottles knowing that they would burst; and in himself he felt the incessant ferment of

33 Ibid., pp. 247-250. 34 Ibid., p. 250.
35 Ibid. 36 Ibid., p. 228.
37 Ibid. 38 Ibid.
conceptions which it passed even his power to make vocal."\textsuperscript{39} Nevertheless, with him "humanity stood on the brink of the revelation of a great secret."\textsuperscript{40}

Other symbolic interpreters saw Dostoyevsky mainly as a prophet to the Russian people. The most emphatic of these was the German poet Hermann Hesse. The year 1922 saw the publication of his study in translation by both The Dial\textsuperscript{41} and The Living Age.\textsuperscript{42} It was, said Hesse, The Brothers Karamazov which was Dostoyevsky's book of prophecy, and this prophecy was the "Downfall of Europe." The "Downfall of Europe" was the overwhelming of the "European soul" by the ideas of the Karamazovs. The Karamazovs had the "faculty to feel the godlike, the significant, the fatalistic, in the wickedest and in the ugliest—and even to accord them veneration and worship."\textsuperscript{43} The "primeval" Karamazovs became saintly, and this was the "New Ideal." By this "New Ideal" embodied in the Karamazovs, Hesse wrote, "the roots of the European Spirit" were being "sapped."\textsuperscript{44} The "Russian man" who had long

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., p. 200. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{40}Ibid., p. 26.

\textsuperscript{41}Hermann Hesse, "The Brothers Karamazov: The Downfall of Europe," The Dial, LXXII (June, 1922), 607-618.

\textsuperscript{42}Hermann Hesse, "A Prophet of Catastrophe," The Living Age, CCCXIV (September 2, 1922), 606-613.

\textsuperscript{43}Ibid., p. 607. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{44}Ibid.
existed was "on the road to becoming the European man." 45

"And that was the Downfall of Europe." 46 Europe, continued
Hesse, had shown signs of being tired and of wanting to
rest; yet, here moved swiftly and blindly the Karamazovs.
The ideal man of the Karamazovs "loves nothing and every-
thing, fears nothing and everything, does nothing and
everything." 47 "He is primeval matter, he is monstrous and
soul-stuff." 48 The power of the Karamazov is impossible to
stop, concluded Hesse, whether he surprised "with a death-
blow" or "with a moving thanksgiving to God." 49

Hesse did not claim that his symbols contained the
only possible interpretation, but he did believe that
Dostoyevsky must be interpreted by a set of symbols:

When the unconscious of a whole continent and
age has made of itself poetry in the nightmare of a
single, prophetic dreamer; when it has issued in
his awful, blood-curdling scream, one can of course
consider this scream from the standpoint of a singing
teacher. 50

But our age, affirmed Hesse, should be more than an age for
singing teachers.

It was not the "Downfall of Europe," according to The
Current Opinion, which Dostoyevsky symbolized; it was,

45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid., p. 608.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid., p. 609.
50 Ibid., p. 612.
instead, the downfall of Russia. Dostoyevsky foresaw in his novels, the article said, the "present hell" of the Russian people by his portrayal of "a boundless expanse in which truth and falsehood, the wickedness of the demon and the nobility of the angel's soul, wisdom and madness, whirl and waltz in a weird dance together." Dostoyevsky was also a prophet to Clarence Manning, but it was through this prophecy that Dostoyevsky wished to become a saviour. The choice given to the Russian people by Dostoyevsky was to turn to God and become better than either the East or the West, or be brought under to destruction by these forces.

Perhaps the best studies of surveys of Russian literature were written by Prince D. S. Mirsky. In 1926 his Contemporary Russian Literature was published and in 1927 his A History of Russian Literature. In the former, Dostoyevsky was mentioned only in passing; in the latter,


52 Ibid., p. 225.


54 Prince D. S. Mirsky, Contemporary Russian Literature, 1881-1925 (New York, 1926).

however, a complete chapter was devoted to Dostoyevsky. In this latter work Mirsky traced the development of Dostoyevsky's art and found a major division point in his work at 1864. Dostoyevsky's works before and after this period shared many characteristics, but the novels to appear after this time were given life through the breath of Dostoyevsky's ideology.\textsuperscript{56} In his latter works "the idea of the novel is inseparable from the imaginative conception, and neither can it be abstracted from the story nor the story stripped of the idea."\textsuperscript{57} This transition which Dostoyevsky made in 1864 in his ideology was to be explained partly by the circumstances of his life. It was also to be explained by Dostoyevsky's experience of thought: his faculty of "feeling ideas," just "as others feel cold and heat and pain."\textsuperscript{58} This trait of "feeling ideas" placed him in the company of St. Paul, St. Augustine, Pascal, and Nietzsche.\textsuperscript{59} The chasm which he leaped across was shown still another way by Mirsky:

\begin{quote}
The deeper, the essential, Dostoyevsky is one of the most significant and ominous figures in the whole history of the human mind, one of its boldest and most disastrous adventures in the sphere of ultimate spiritual quest. The superficial Dostoyevsky is a man of his time, comparable, and not always favourably comparable, to many other
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{56}Ibid., p. 346. \textsuperscript{57}Ibid. \textsuperscript{58}Ibid., p. 350. \textsuperscript{59}Ibid.
Russian novelists and publicists of the age of Alexander II.\textsuperscript{60}

Mirsky refuted the texts of the critics who claimed Dostoyevsky was a realistic writer because of his realistic detail. This detail, Mirsky wrote, was used by Dostoyevsky solely for the purpose of placing an idea, for Dostoyevsky's Russia was no closer to the real Russia of Alexander II than the characters of \textit{Wuthering Heights} were like the real West Riding of the early nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{61}

The essential elements of Dostoyevsky's novels to show the idea, said Mirsky, were the characters, and "in this respect he is in the true tradition of Russian novel writing, which regarded the novelist as primarily a maker of characters."\textsuperscript{62} By the characters functioning for an idea, they "are at once saturated with metaphysical significance and symbolism, and intensely individual."\textsuperscript{63} Mirsky believed that the full significance of Dostoyevsky could not be understood without symbols, and he upheld this view by showing that in Russia Dostoyevsky was comparatively unknown until Ivanov and the other symbolists began their work.

\textsuperscript{60}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 344. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{61}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 356. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{62}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{63}\textit{Ibid.}
Russian ideology was given extensive treatment by Thomas G. Masaryk in his two-volume survey *The Spirit of Russia*. "What I write about Dostoyevsky," Masaryk stated in a foreword, "is the core of the undertaking. Properly speaking the entire study is devoted to Dostoyevsky, but I lacked the literary skill requisite for the interweaving of all I wanted to say into an account of that author." Throughout the book Masaryk referred to the work which he would next undertake, concluding with "an appeal to the reader's interest on behalf of the sequel, which will deal with Dostoyevsky, the great analyst of the Russian revolution."

The heart of Masaryk's study, however, was a development of the two philosophic ideas which arose in Russia during the nineteenth century. On one hand, "the Russian 'children' of the sixties attempted to up-build a new and complete philosophy of life upon the foundations that had been laid by their fathers in the forties; in all seriousness these 'children' wished to become new men, desired to begin the new life." This, of course, was the philosophical ideology of nihilism. The Russian nihilists read

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65 Ibid., I, vii.
66 Ibid., II, 565.
67 Ibid., p. 80.
Mill and Schopenhauer, but the metaphysical nihilism of these authors was largely ignored.68 Their nihilism then was social and political, with their aim to destroy completely authority, superstition, illusion, falsehood, and orthodoxy.69 In fact, said Masaryk, their aim was to eliminate Old Russia, the Russia of Nicholas.70 Many of the nihilist believers went even further, for the critic Pisarev sanctioned the right to kill and to rob.71

Dostoyevsky, on the other hand, saw in nihilism the leading problem of the day, and devoted many pages of his novels to refuting it.72 First of all, said Masaryk, Dostoyevsky refuted nihilism for its faulty reflection upon metaphysics and the philosophy of religion.73 Nietzsche, incidentally, later borrowed from Dostoyevsky in his view and "conceived nihilism metaphysically and in its world-wide and historical relationships."74 Second, Dostoyevsky claimed that nihilism carried to its fullest would tend to be atheistic and would lead to revolution and crime.75 Last, concluded Masaryk, Dostoyevsky felt the Russian people had a more noble calling; he believed "the

\[\text{\footnotesize\bibitem{68} Ibid., p. 73.}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize\bibitem{70} Ibid., p. 73.}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize\bibitem{72} Ibid., p. 80.}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize\bibitem{74} Ibid.}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize\bibitem{69} Ibid., pp. 72-73.}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize\bibitem{71} Ibid., p. 105.}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize\bibitem{73} Ibid., p. 73.}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize\bibitem{75} Ibid., p. 105.}\]
one and only Russian people would be representative, leader, and saviour of mankind."  

Dostoyevsky's writings have always seemed well suited for symbolist criticism. In Russia, for example, he received little appreciation until the symbolists analyzed his art. This occurred, incidentally, some years after the original publication of his works. In America, fortunately, the aesthetic school came into full bloom simultaneously with the translation of Dostoyevsky's novels. Dostoyevsky immediately received the attention of the symbolist critics; and as in Russia, he fared well with them. The influence of Middleton Murry's study was great, for it was the first full critical study of Dostoyevsky to appear in the English language. Although the work was seemingly lacking in concreteness, many hints were given of Dostoyevsky's greatness, and it played the important role of introducing Dostoyevsky as a writer deserving of much critical attention. It is perhaps true that much of the symbolist criticism tended to become somewhat distorted; nevertheless, these critics made a noble attempt to show the profundity of Dostoyevsky's thought, and Dostoyevsky was projected early with a brilliant light to the American reader.

\[76\] Ibid., I, 320.
CHAPTER VI

DEMONIST CRITICISM

There were many critics during the 1920's who one-sidedly emphasized the "frenzied" and "abnormal" portions of Dostoyevsky's personality and writings. For this reason the term "demonist criticism" has been given to this field of criticism. Many of these critics spoke of Dostoyevsky's "semi-insane mind" and his "distorted brain"; other critics wrote of the insincerity of Dostoyevsky's religious faith; and still others referred to Dostoyevsky's excesses in "terror" and "sensationalism." There were also the prominent writers of the day who expressed their disapproval of Dostoyevsky. These critics shared the common belief that Dostoyevsky had nothing positive to offer in the way of his thought and art. Nevertheless, these critics produced a great volume of work, and the demonist criticism became a dominant field of literary criticism in America during the 1920's.

Many of the demonist critics pounced upon Dostoyevsky's so-called "mad" and "distorted brain."
"Turgenev called Dostoyevsky mad,"¹ said Percy Grant.

"If his friend Turgenev, of the same race, generation and art understood him so little as to question his sanity, how can one of a different race, era and profession set him before you clothed and in his right mind; some one to be warmly concerned with?" Dostoyevsky was semi-insane, said Grant, and his characters were portrayed in the semi-insane way which prevented the reader from feeling "the intimacy with Dostoyevsky's characters that we do with the creations of other novelists." The reader knew the characters as he did "the vividness of a dream, but can just as little draw near or touch them." Dostoyevsky's characters were motivated from "within," Grant wrote, but the motivations from "without" of institutions, environment, and economics were completely neglected.

To Herbert Gorman it was the "cerebral torture of his unhappy life" which caused Dostoyevsky's "distorted brain." "He, more than any other writer who had lived," said Gorman, "brought to the minds of the world the terrible vicissitudes of life." Primarily, Gorman was concerned with showing the "distorted brain" of Dostoyevsky in its three various aspects. First of all, it was

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2Ibid.
3Ibid., p. 116.
4Ibid.
5Ibid., p. 117.
7Ibid.
Dostoyevsky's outlook and vision which were unbalanced, for his sight was upon "mystics, victims of hallucination, creatures of hysteria, epileptics, idiots, and moral degenerates," instead of upon "nature" and "lovely women." Second, Dostoyevsky was a man of contradictions, and "time and again he absolutely reverses certain views in his novels" and these contradictions were brought about by his passion being "flung hither and thither." The last proof given by Gorman was found in the characters themselves, who, while being "extraordinarily fine at certain moments," were never completely rounded and fulfilled to their extreme possibilities.

Dostoyevsky's sympathy with the people was projected in a somewhat different light by Gorman:

It was a vast pity that welled in Dostoyevsky, and it was so vast that it unbalanced his mind, distorted his perspectives, and sometimes changed through a most consistent process of unfulfillment into sheer savagery.

Clarendon Ross's article began as a review of the translations of Constance Garnett, but it soon became a denunciation of the art of Dostoyevsky. The reader of

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8Ibid.  
9Ibid., p. 161.  
10Ibid., p. 158.  
11Ibid., p. 161.  
12Ibid., p. 162.  
Dostoyevsky was dragged, Ross wrote, through "hundreds of worthless details, prolixity, tedious entanglements not emphatically resolved, unaccentuated shifts, and blind alleys." These faults were caused by three distinct psychological ailments: hysteria—"the loss of emotional control, in which the subject experiences imaginary sensations"; melancholia—"the deep depression, the groundless fears, the delusions, and the moody over-occupation with one idea or one set of ideas"; and epilepsy—"the hallucinations of personal grandeur, and he is not uncommonly characterized by distrust and suspicion."  

Dostoyevsky, said Joseph Collins, was composed of two personalities: the first the more unconscious personality which dominated his life and was seen most clearly in his Letters and in The Journal of an Author; and the second the life he would have liked to live. It was, however, his first personality which was responsible for his novels and his characters. Dostoyevsky's characters, for example, "are never insane legally, but all of them are insane 

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14 Ibid., p. 207.  
15 Ibid., p. 205.  
16 Ibid.  
17 Ibid.  
medically," and they move around unconsciously acting "upon a compulsion or hysteria." Referring to The Brothers Karamazov, Collins wrote:

It is saturated in mysticism and it is a vade mecum of psychiatry. It is the narrative of the life of an egotistic, depraved, sensuous monster, who is a toad, a cynic, a scoffer, a drunkard, and a profili-gate, the synthesis of which, when combined with moral anaesthesia, constitutes degeneracy; of his three legitimate sons and their mistresses; and of an epileptic bastard son who resulted from the rape of an idiot girl. Evgenii Soloviev's Dostoyevsky: His Life and Literary Activity appeared in America in 1916, but it had been previously somewhat of a landmark in the Russian criticism of Dostoyevsky in 1891. The Marxist critic, Soloviev, like so many Russian critics, was primarily interested in the social and political meaning of Dostoyevsky's works. Here good proof was given that the Russian demonist school of criticism was active long before the American school began. Some of the faults of Dostoyevsky's writing, said Soloviev, were caused by his hurried economic necessities. Primarily, however, the fault was in Dostoyevsky's

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19 Ibid., p. 92.  
20 Ibid., p. 93.  
21 Ibid., p. 76.  
24 Soloviev, op. cit., p. 12.
personal self, the "integrated trait which lay in his tendency to hysteria." \(^{25}\) Referring to this hysteria, Soloviev wrote, "So unequal, indeed, so fiery, so irritable, so preëminently nervous and capricious, was that talent that even to write an ordinary letter he required inspiration—otherwise not two lines of it would have resulted." \(^{26}\) "In fact, there are times when the undisciplined mind of a great artist like Dostoyevsky does not itself know whether it is thinking," concluded Soloviev, "but, like the mind of Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*, calls for a madman's fetters." \(^{27}\)

To much of the world the Russian critic Leo Shestov was well-known. His studies seem to have rarely been published in English-speaking countries, and only one brief note of his appeared in America during this period. \(^{28}\) First, Shestov was convinced that "Dostoyevsky did not discover one single original political idea." \(^{29}\) "Dostoyevsky understands nothing, absolutely nothing, about politics, and moreover, he has nothing at all to do with politics," \(^{30}\) Shestov wrote. Secondly, Dostoyevsky wanted to be a

\(^{25}\)Ibid., p. 18. \(^{26}\)Ibid., pp. 16-17.

\(^{27}\)Ibid., p. 26.


\(^{29}\)Ibid., p. 68. \(^{30}\)Ibid., p. 71.
prophet in the field of religion and wanted the people to cry "Hosanna!" because "he thought that if men had ever cried 'Hosanna!' to any one, then there was no reason why he, Dostoyevsky, should be denied the honour."\textsuperscript{31} To Shestov Dostoyevsky believed that "he is the light, the salt of the earth, the first in the whole world," and thereby developed a "megalomania" which "is a kind of madness."\textsuperscript{32} Therefore, concluded Shestov, Dostoyevsky failed in these two crucial areas and "would have been far better had he never attempted to prophesy."\textsuperscript{33}

Other critics, too, doubted the sincerity of Dostoyevsky's religion. I. A. Richards, for example, believed Dostoyevsky had "the feelings of religion without the beliefs."\textsuperscript{34} "The possibility of the beliefs was devastating," said Richards, "since, for him, it left the feelings without their justification."\textsuperscript{35} "This, incidentally, is why he makes Myshkin, his perfect man, an idiot."\textsuperscript{36} Richards, by quoting from a portion of a letter which Dostoyevsky wrote at the end of his life, gave final

\textsuperscript{31}Ibid., p. 75. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{32}Ibid., p. 89.
\textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 81.
\textsuperscript{34}I. A. Richards, "The God of Dostoyevsky," The Forum, LXXVIII (July, 1927), 92.
\textsuperscript{35}Ibid. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{36}Ibid., p. 96.
proof to his thesis: "There is only one cure, one refuge,—art, creative activity." \(^{37}\)

Alexander Kaun also attacked Dostoyevsky's religion. \(^{38}\) "Death carried him off before he could (if he ever could!) realize anything more than mere hints at the possible harmony between heaven and earth, the individual and the collective, freedom and duty, Russia and the West," \(^{39}\) said Kaun. Because of this disbelief, Dostoyevsky was unable to have anything but a negative outlook. \(^{40}\) He had questioned the established beliefs "without being able to solve the problems in an acceptable and workable way." \(^{41}\) The individual himself "is submerged and effaced in the omnipotent current of the herd, and Dostoyevsky dismisses the herd with pity, which is in the last account equivalent to contempt." \(^{42}\) Therefore, said Kaun, the "finish" did not stand for triumph, but for destruction of the "rebellious individual in the struggle." \(^{43}\)

Another branch of the demonist school of criticism believed that Dostoyevsky's novels consisted primarily of

\(^{37}\)Ibid., p. 97.


\(^{39}\)Ibid., p. 367.

\(^{40}\)Ibid., p. 363.

\(^{41}\)Ibid.

\(^{42}\)Ibid., p. 364.

\(^{43}\)Ibid.
sensationalism. Among these critics was Charles Gray Shaw, who believed Dostoyevsky employed only the principle that "everybody loves crime." Dostoyevsky, therefore, exploited it to its fullest in his novels and was able to make "Milton's Satan and Nietzsche's blond beast appear quite amateurish and unconvincing." Look at the novels, said Shaw, and view the elements of terror and sensationalism which Dostoyevsky employed:

Rogojin, in The Idiot, with a garden-knife slays a family of six for the sake of killing them, from which act of disinterested deviltry he turns to the murder of his beautiful bride. Prince Harry, in The Possessed, the Gadarean swine story, bites off the ear of the old count who in his deafness is trying to hear what the youth has to say. . . . Famous among Dostoyevsky's tales of terror is that of the two peasants who go to bed in the same room, whereupon one cuts the other's throat because of the silver watch which his friend carries, although the murderer has neither need of nor desire for the time-piece. Again, a young girl reads the story of a Jew who, having cut off the fingers of a child, crucifies it with no regret save that the Golgothan period of the child's suffering was limited to a paltry four hours.

Shaw could not find a character in Dostoyevsky's novels who fit the European man or the accepted realistic picture of man. Instead, he found Dostoyevsky's characters portrayed with "excessive want and extravagant self-abasement," and with the characters shifting "from the

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46 Ibid., pp. 250-251.
Slavonic to the Sanskrit, while a word from him turns the Cossack into a Buddhist."

Another sensationalistic interpreter of Dostoyevsky was Robert Lynd. To Lynd, Dostoyevsky's characters were not real; they were, instead, "the men and women one reads about in the police news." "There are more murders and attempted murders in his books than in those of any other great novelist." In Lynd's opinion Dostoyevsky's popularity was due to his sensationalism:

It is easy to see why Dostoyevsky has become a popular author. Incident follows breathlessly upon incident. No melodramatist ever poured out incident upon the stage from such a horn of plenty. His people are energetic and untamed, like cowboys or runaway horses. They might be described as runaway human beings.

C. Williamson conceived that Dostoyevsky was burdened with the nationality of Russia. In Williamson's opinion, the average Russian was a "crude, uncouth, half-cultivated creature, very sensitive to religion and superstitious associations, capable of insane bursts of brutality and a

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47 Ibid., p. 251.


49 Ibid., p. 9.  

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid., p. 12.

man who lives by his heart and not by his head."

Dostoyevsky was unable to rise above this provincial view and present a complete picture of man as Shakespeare had, because he "was so sodden with her pains as to seem unaware that beyond her provinces there were happier lives."

Several leading literary figures of the day, while not giving a formal criticism of Dostoyevsky, did state their frank disapproval of him. D. H. Lawrence, for example, wrote, "Like Dostoyevsky posing as a sort of Jesus, but most truthfully revealing himself all the while as a little horror [sic]."

When André Gide was interested in Dostoyevsky, Edmund Gosse attempted to lead him from his study with a letter dated August 22, 1926:

May I venture to wish, however, that you would try to release yourself from your bondage to the Russians, and particularly to Dostoyevsky? We have all in time been subjected to the magic of this epileptic monster. But his genius has only led us astray, as I should say to any young writer of merit who appealed to me. Read what you like, only don't waste your time reading Dostoyevsky. He is the cocaine and morphine of modern literature.

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53 Ibid., p. 218.  
54 Ibid., p. 227.  
Surprisingly enough, Joseph Conrad joined the group who spoke of finding little merit in the art of Dostoyevsky. Referring to Dostoyevsky's works, he wrote Edward Garnett:

But it's an impossible lump of valuable matter. It's terrifically bad and impressive and exasperating. Moreover, I don't know what Dostoyevsky stands for or reveals, but I do know that he is too Russian for me. It sounds to me like some fierce mouthing from pre-historic ages. I understand the Russians have just "discovered" him. I wish them joy.57

Not so surprising was the view taken by Henry James. In a letter to Hugh Walpole, James quite literally expressed his opinion of Dostoyevsky:

At least when you ask me if I didn't feel Dostoyevsky's "mad jumble, that flings things down in a heap," nearer truth and beauty than the picking and composing that you instance in Stevenson, I reply with emphasis that I feel nothing of the sort, and that the older I grow and the more I go the more sacred to me do picking and composing become—though I naturally don't limit myself to Stevenson's kind of the same. Don't let any one persuade you—there are plenty of ignorant and fatuous duffers to try to do it—that strenuous selection and comparison are not the very essence of art, and that Form is [not] substance to that degree that there is absolutely no substance without it. Form alone takes, and holds and preserves, substance—saves it from the welter of helpless verbiage that we swim in as in a sea of tasteless tepid pudding, and that makes one ashamed of an art capable of such degradations. Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky are fluid puddings, though not tasteless, because the amount of their own minds and souls in solution in the broth gives it savour and flavour, thanks to the strong, rank quality of their genius.

and their experience. But there are all sorts of things to be said of them, and in particular that we see how great a vice is their lack of composition, their defiance of economy and architecture, directly they are emulated and imitated; then, as subjects of emulation, models, they quite give themselves away. 58

Just as the symbolist criticism reflected the literary temper of the few years following World War I, the demonist criticism reflected the temper of the 1920's. American criticism during the 1920's was strongly realistic in its approach. This criticism gave prominence to the outward reality to be found in Dostoyevsky's novels. Needless to say, criticism tending to neglect Dostoyevsky's inward reality and motivation of character has always tended to deal harshly with him. Admittedly biased in their approach, the demonist critics, nevertheless, proved themselves a force not to be neglected in the 1920's, and the waters of criticism of Dostoyevsky were muddied by them for several years to follow.

CHAPTER VII

TECHNICAL CRITICISM

The criticism surveyed above, all tending to be extreme, certainly gave Dostoyevsky's early American reputation a rich diversity. Nevertheless, much was written by critics who followed more conventional and academic lines. For this reason, the critics who interpreted Dostoyevsky by use of these conventional modes have been termed "technical." Generally speaking, technical criticism involved the interpretation of particular art form or technique used by Dostoyevsky. Many of the technical critics described Dostoyevsky's use of atmosphere; others made comparisons of contemporary authors with Dostoyevsky; and some analyzed Dostoyevsky's characters. Together, they showed many elements of Dostoyevsky's achievements as novelist.

In both the Greek drama and Shakespeare's tragedies and histories, a certain foreboding mood or choric element prevails, so that the ending is not so much a surprise as an expectation. Coleridge regarded expectation as greater than surprise: "As the feeling with which we startle at a shooting star compared with that of watching the sunrise at a pre-established moment, such and so low is surprise
compared with expectation."¹ Similarly, many critics found Dostoyevsky's atmosphere to play an important role in his art.

The foreboding atmosphere of Dostoyevsky's *The Idiot* came under the consideration of Edwin Muir in his *The Structure of the Novel*.² Muir believed that Dostoyevsky produced this foreboding atmosphere through three distinct elements: dialogue, characters, and urgency of time. In order to show the relationship of dialogue to the atmosphere, Muir quoted from a scene in *The Idiot* where Prince Myshkin was describing an execution he had seen at Lyons:

"Well, at all events," some one says, "it is a good thing that there's no pain when the poor fellow's head flies off."

"Do you know, though," the Prince replies, "you made that remark now, and everybody says the same thing, and the machine is designed with the purpose of avoiding pain, this guillotine, I mean; but a thought came into my head then: What if it should be a bad plan after all? You may laugh at my idea, perhaps—but I could not help its occurring to me all the same. Now with the rack and tortures and so on—you suffer terrible pain of course; but then your torture is bodily pain only (although no doubt you have plenty of that) until you die. But here I should imagine the most terrible part of the whole punishment is, not the bodily pain at all—but the certain knowledge that in an hour—then in ten minutes, then in half a minute, then now—this very instant—your

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soul must quit your body and that you will no longer be a man—and that this is certain, certain! That's the point—the certainty of it. Just that instant when you place your head on the block and hear the iron grate over your head—then— that quarter of a second is the most awful of all."

Muir believed that the dialogue had one level of meaning at the moment of reading, but that at the same time a second level crept unconsciously into the reader's mind. In other words, Myshkin's dialogue accomplished more than merely to relate the terrors of the guillotine; it evidenced the fact that "the thing to come is death."

Other times, it is the actions of the characters which point quite clearly to the fatal ending. "Again and again throughout the book there are hints prefiguring the end," Muir wrote, "which, as everyone knows, is the murder of Nastasya by Rogojin." An admirable foreshadowing incident is recalled by Muir as "throwing wild shadows over the action" through the actions of the characters. The incident chosen is Rogojin's cutting pages with a knife while the Prince suspects something.

The urgency of time in The Idiot was still another foreshadowing agent, said Muir. This urgency of time "is given by a particular fear, by the knowledge, sometimes hidden, but always revealed again, of a definite event that

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3Ibid., pp. 73-74. 4Ibid., p. 74.
5Ibid., p. 5. 6Ibid.
will happen."[7] In this novel "the characters wander in a daze, living in that nightmare state, known sometimes in our dreams, in which there are innumerable things which we must do, but we cannot remember them, or we do not know which to do first."[8] The Idiot is given a hurried and urgent movement, Muir wrote, by the fact that "Myshkin, Rogojin, and Nastasya are fighting against time."[9]

A further comparison of Dostoyevsky's novels with the Greek tragedies was given by Avraham Yarmolinski.[10] Primarily, Yarmolinski was concerned with the aesthetics of Dostoyevsky. His aesthetics, said Yarmolinski, was one of tragedy in which the final catastrophe flashed upon the rest of the story.[11] Another characteristic Dostoyevsky shared with the Greek dramatists was the unity of time, for the events in The Brothers Karamazov covered only a few days.[12] The dialogue was skillful, said Yarmolinski, and the "movements of their souls are given for speeches."[13] Yarmolinski credited Dostoyevsky with being anticipatory

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[7] Ibid., p. 78.  
[9] Ibid.  
[12] Ibid.  
[13] Ibid.
of the intensities of present-day expressionism, for his characters did not commit in their violence a transgression upon the physical world; rather it was a transgression against moral principles of the imagination.\textsuperscript{14} Agreeing with Yarmolinski were John Cowper Powys\textsuperscript{15} and Maurice Baring.\textsuperscript{16} Powys compared the "feeling of description" of The Brothers Karamazov with King Lear,\textsuperscript{17} while Baring, on the other hand, noticed the "high spiritual magnitude" of Dostoyevsky's novels.\textsuperscript{18}

Percy Lubbock developed his thought by studying Dostoyevsky's focusing of color upon the ordinary theater of consciousness.\textsuperscript{19} "The illumination that falls upon his page is like the glare of a furnace-mouth; it searches the depths of the inner struggles and turmoils in which his drama is enacted, relieving it with sharp and fantastic shades."\textsuperscript{20} Hence, said Lubbock, by the light being

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., pp. 116-117.


\textsuperscript{17} Powys, op. cit., p. 253.

\textsuperscript{18} Baring, op. cit., p. 224.


\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., p. 47.
internal rather than external, the reader became closely involved. This focusing of the internal light, concluded Lubbock, was responsible for the reader actually becoming Raskolnikov, and knowing exactly what it was to be that young man in Crime and Punishment.\(^{21}\)

Virginia Woolf found in Dostoyevsky's novels an exciting atmosphere of "seething whirlpools, gyrating sandstorms, waterspouts which hiss and boil and suck us in."\(^{22}\) Only Shakespeare, said Woolf, was Dostoyevsky's rival in understanding and presenting so many sections of life.\(^{23}\) Vividly descriptive in her summary, she wrote, "A rope is flung to us; we catch hold of a soliloquy; holding on by the skin of our teeth, we are rushed through the water; feverishly, wildly, we rush on and on, now submerged, now in a moment of vision understanding more than we have ever understood before."\(^{24}\)

Several critics used the conventional device of comparison in their criticism. The most obvious comparison was, of course, Dostoyevsky with his Russian contemporary, Count Lev Tolstoy. One such comparer of Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy was Maurice Baring. Baring presented the two as

\(^{21}\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 144.\)

\(^{22}\text{Virginia Woolf, The Common Reader} \ (\text{New York, 1925}), \ p. \ 226.\)

\(^{23}\text{Ibid.}\)

\(^{24}\text{Ibid.}\)
thesis and antithesis both in their personality and in their art. Dostoyevsky, on one hand, was an epileptic, was a believer, had an abnormal character, led an eventful life, and was broad-minded.\textsuperscript{25} Tolstoy, on the other hand, had good health, was a heretic, had a sane character, led an uneventful life, and was narrow-minded.\textsuperscript{26} Other differences arose, said Baring, concerning their feelings toward art, the supernatural, submission, and tolerance.\textsuperscript{27} Another comparative study of the two was made by John Carruthers.\textsuperscript{28} To Carruthers, Dostoyevsky was the greater of the two and was "the more intensely dramatic."\textsuperscript{29} The greatness of Dostoyevsky as a novelist, said Carruthers, was "his astounding insight into human motive, his strong sense of drama, his mastery in dialogue, his power of integrating diverse and often contradictory revelations of character into concrete figures as real and unique in their own peculiar world as Tolstoy's in the actual world we live in."\textsuperscript{30}

\textsuperscript{25} Baring, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 211-212.
\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Ibid.} \textsuperscript{27} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 212-213.
\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 49.
\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 48.
The relationship between Dostoyevsky and André Gide was studied by Tatiana Vacquier.\textsuperscript{31} Their chief point of similarity was said to be their recognition of the duality of man.\textsuperscript{32} It was Gide who said, "There is no true work of art without the collaboration of the devil."\textsuperscript{33} Similarly, Dostoyevsky's Dmitri Karamazov believed that the ideal of the Madonna could not exist in the soul of man without the ideal of Sodom.\textsuperscript{34} Thus it was, Vacquier wrote, that Dostoyevsky's contribution to Gide was definite in the realm of ideas, if not wholly in the realm of art.\textsuperscript{35}

Perhaps the most complete comparative study was made by E. M. Forster in his well-known \textit{Aspects of the Novel}.\textsuperscript{36} The comparison is of Dostoyevsky's art with George Eliot's art. After quoting a brief passage from Eliot's \textit{Adam Bede} and Dostoyevsky's \textit{The Brothers Karamazov}, Forster wrote:

Now what is the difference in these passages—a difference that throbs in every phrase? It is that the first writer is a preacher, and the second a prophet. George Eliot talks about God, but never alters her focus; God and the tables and chairs are all in the same plane, and in consequence we have not for a moment the feeling that the whole universe needs

\textsuperscript{32}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 479. \textsuperscript{33}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 482-483.
\textsuperscript{34}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 483. \textsuperscript{35}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 489.
\textsuperscript{36}E. M. Forster, \textit{Aspects of the Novel} (New York, 1927), pp. 188-195.
pity and love—they are only needed in Hetty's cell. In Dostoyevsky the characters and situations always stand for more than themselves; infinity attends them; though yet they remain individuals they expand to embrace them; one can apply to them the saying of St. Catherine of Siena that God is in the soul and the soul is in God as the sea is in the fish and the fish is in the sea. Every sentence he writes implies this extension, and the implication is the dominant aspect of his work. He is a great novelist in the ordinary sense—that is to say his characters have relation to ordinary life and also live in their own surroundings, there are incidents which keep us excited, and so on; he has also the greatness of a prophet, to which our ordinary standards are inapplicable.37

Ashley H. Thorndike briefly described the relationship between Dostoyevsky and Charles Dickens, and found similarities in that both gave "a powerful imaginative presentation of the lives of the poor."38 A contrast between Dostoyevsky and Dante was made by Avraham Yarmolinski.39 Yarmolinski contrasted "Dante's rigid world" with its "rigid, completely integrated personalities," to Dostoyevsky's "characters of disintegration."40 The Current Opinion gave a different comparison by showing the difference between Dostoyevsky and the French

37 Ibid., pp. 192-193.
40 Ibid., pp. 15-16.
polemicist, Léon Bloy.\textsuperscript{41} Both were "twin voices crying from the psychic underworld," but Dostoyevsky was able to produce "a creation instead of a confession."\textsuperscript{42}

Two traditional studies of Dostoyevsky dealt with his characters. The earliest of these studies was made by Alexander Kaun.\textsuperscript{43} Kaun admitted that the gallery of Dostoyevsky's characters "epitomizes Russia with its extremes, conflicts, contradictions, rebelliousness and abandon."\textsuperscript{44} "Yet," Kaun wrote, "to regard these characters as exclusively Russian would be as narrow as to paste national labels on Hamlet and Tartuffe; they are omnihuman, to use a Dostoyevsky word."\textsuperscript{45} To Kaun, sin was the essence of Dostoyevsky's characters whereby they escape the national label. "To Dostoyevsky sin purges man, raises him above the level of mediocrity, stamps him with the dignity of personality, and crowns his destruction with the halo of crucifixion."\textsuperscript{46}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{41} "Twin Voices from the Psychic Underworld," \textit{The Current Opinion}, LXVI (February, 1919), 116.
\bibitem{42} \textit{Ibid.}
\bibitem{43} Alexander Kaun, "Dostoyevsky's Characters," \textit{The Bookman}, LIX (March, 1924), 80-82.
\bibitem{44} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 80.
\bibitem{45} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 81.
\bibitem{46} \textit{Ibid.}
\end{thebibliography}
The other major study of Dostoyevsky's characters was made by Dorothy Brewster and Angus Burrell.47 These two prefaced their interpretation of Dostoyevsky's characters by a question: "Why not, then, just for novelty, look at the people in The Brothers Karamazov as people in essence like ourselves?"48 Dostoyevsky's characters, they thought, were not possessed of the devil, and were not abstractions, but their actions were quite logical and could happen easily in a large American family over a period of a score of years, with "its quarrels, its bickerings, its spite, its petty jealousies, its cruel and inhuman treatment of member by member."49 Brewster and Burrell also granted the fact that Dostoyevsky visualized his characters more clearly than any other figures in imaginative literature.50

Two authors during the 1920's gave their interpretation of Dostoyevsky in their novels. In Edmund Wilson's I Thought of Daisy,51 Dostoyevsky was given a key position. For in one of the central philosophic passages of the book, the narrator meditated the relation of literature and life:

Dostoyevsky's sadistic manias, his complaisance in self-degradation, his extravagant vanity; I began

48Ibid., p. 142.  
49Ibid., p. 144.
50Ibid., p. 153.
51Edmund Wilson, I Thought of Daisy (New York, 1953).
to feel, after meeting Mickler, that the masterpieces of such a man of genius were a doubtful compensation on paper for the moral bankruptcy of a life. Were not the purity of Dostoyevsky's tenderness, the flights of his Christian idealism, to be measured precisely by his perversity, the sub-human depths of his indifference? Were not the Svidrigailovs and the Stavrogins—those malignant growths which seemed to sprout and, almost without the author's intention, to swell to such monstrous proportions, in Dostoyevsky's novels—were they not the price which one had to pay for the Myshkins and the Alyoshas.52

The narrator continued to reflect upon the influence of evil upon literature; and upon realizing that evil had played an important role in literature throughout history, he said:

Was there, indeed, I suddenly asked myself, from the point of view of barbarous behavior, very much to choose between Sophocles and Dostoyevsky himself? There they were, the old hideous discords—Edipus killing his father, the old Karamazov murdered by his sons—that cruel inevitable turning upon the beings who have given us life! . . . And were not the horrors of Dostoyevsky—Myshkin's epilepsy, Zossima's putrefaction and Stavrogin's rape—quite matched by Philoctetes's ulcer, by the unburied corpse of Polyneices and by the incest of Edipus?53

The theme of The Brothers Karamazov received the attention of Marcel Proust in Remembrance of Things Past.54

The narrator of Proust's novel noticed the classical elements in The Brothers Karamazov and described the theme:

52 Ibid., p. 117.
53 Ibid., p. 126.
But is it not a sculpturesque and simple theme, worthy of the most classical art, a frieze interrupted and resumed on which the tale of vengeance and expiation is unfolded, the crime of old Karamazov getting the poor idiot with child, the mysterious, animal, unexplained impulse by which the mother, herself unconsciously the instrument of an avenging destiny, obeying also obscurely her maternal instinct, feeling perhaps a combination of physical resentment and gratitude towards her seducer, comes to bear her child on old Karamazov's ground. This is the first episode, mysterious, grand, august as a Creation of Woman among the sculptures at Orvieto. And as counterpart, the second episode more than twenty years later, the murder of old Karamazov, the disgrace brought upon the Karamazov family by this son of the idiot, Smerdyakov, followed shortly afterwards by another action, as mysteriously sculpturesque and unexplained, of a beauty as obscure and natural as that of the childbirth in old Karamazov's garden, Smerdyakov hanging himself, his crime accomplished. 55

Dostoyevsky's appeal, said Randolph Bourne, was due to his modern approach to literature. 56 According to Bourne, there was a vast chasm separating Dickens, Scott, Thackeray, and Trollope, who were writing for an epoch that "had stable character, standards, morals, that consistently saw the world in a duality of body and spirit," from the writings of Dostoyevsky. 57 With the beginnings of scientific advances, the modern man was much closer to the writings of Dostoyevsky than to the older English writers. Dostoyevsky, Bourne wrote, brought the duality of man close

55Ibid., p. 646.
57Ibid., pp. 189-190.
together and showed how good can exist side by side with evil. 58 "For Dostoyevsky has a strange, intimate power," Bourne said, "which breaks in your neat walls and shows you how much more subtle and inconsequent your flowing life is than even your introspection had thought." 59

Dostoyevsky's relationship to the art of music was discussed by the music critic André Coeuroy. 60 To Coeuroy it was not opera which appealed to Dostoyevsky; it was, instead, the folk-songs which led him to feel a sympathy and harmony with the people of his nation:

Dostoyevsky, as he listens to folk-songs, feels keener sympathy with the poor, with the humiliated and offended of this world, with those who labor grievously and who have for their labor only the consolation of song. He loves them "in music" with a sane and primitive ingenuousness which, in a Gorki, becomes a dim and troubled mysticism. In the soul of a singing nation, Dostoyevsky regains his own soul; they are one in confidence and love. 61

André Gide gave a series of lectures on Dostoyevsky in 1922, and from these he meant to develop a complete critical study of Dostoyevsky. Gide, however, became involved in other interests and was never able to fulfill his intended project. His notes for these lectures,

58 Ibid., p. 191.  
59 Ibid.  
61 Ibid., p. 113.
nevertheless, were taken and printed without revision.\textsuperscript{62} Therefore, the study was not complete in any sense, but the brilliant propositions set forth mark it as being among the most thoughtful criticisms of Dostoyevsky to appear during the 1920's. For the introduction, Arnold Bennett wrote, "Those who read Gide's \textit{Dostoyevsky} will receive light, some of it dazzling, on both Dostoyevsky and Gide."\textsuperscript{63} Bennett could not find another critical work "which more cogently justifies and more securely establishes its subject."\textsuperscript{64}

The book was divided into sections corresponding to his lectures, and in the first lecture Gide admitted that in a study of this nature he was free to choose only the parts of Dostoyevsky he preferred. Primarily, he chose Dostoyevsky's individualism, his psychology, his Christianity, and his prophetic view.\textsuperscript{65} First of all, Gide was interested in the reason why so many people were prejudiced against the work of Dostoyevsky. Gide gave two reasons for this: first, Dostoyevsky dealt with a theme foreign to Western fiction; secondly, his works were difficult to classify, for no "catch-word" could be given to explain them.\textsuperscript{66} His characters were "representative," but "they never seem to forsake their humanity to become mere symbols

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{62}] Gide, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 1-167.
\item[\textsuperscript{63}] \textit{Ibid.}, p. 8.
\item[\textsuperscript{64}] \textit{Ibid.}
\item[\textsuperscript{65}] \textit{Ibid.}, p. 9.
\item[\textsuperscript{66}] \textit{Ibid.}, p. 16.
\end{itemize}
or the types familiar in our classical drama."67

Dostoyevsky's characters, said Gide, were portrayed with a tremendous psychological duality, but this duality appeared in a character simultaneously instead of alternately.68

According to Gide, it was the psychologist Dostoyevsky who portrayed three different regions of the mind: first was the intellectual region; second was the region of passion; and third was the region of resurrection and re-birth.69 Incidentally, he made an interesting comparison between Dostoyevsky and William Blake.70 Not only were these three levels noticed in the individual, Gide wrote, but the progression of novels from The House of the Dead to The Idiot showed the same "three level" development.71 The region of resurrection was derived from New Testament teachings, from which Dostoyevsky found the divine secret of happiness belonging to the individual who renounced his individuality: "He who lives his life, cherishing personality, shall lose it: but he who surrenders it shall gain the fullness of life eternal, not in the future, but in the present made one with eternity."72 Nietzsche (who

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67 Ibid.
69 Ibid., pp. 113-114.
71 Ibid., p. 114.
68 Ibid., pp. 106-112.
70 Ibid., p. 127.
72 Ibid., p. 130.
along with Ibsen and Dostoyevsky form the great triumvirate in Gide's opinion) could never accept this view and "was jealous of Jesus Christ, jealous to the point of madness."\textsuperscript{73}

Gide suggested that Dostoyevsky was able to portray so much life in truth because of the juxtaposition he made of reality and idea:

Dostoyevsky never observes for observation's sake. His work is not the result of observations of the real; or at least, not of that alone. Nor is it the fruit of a preconceived idea, and that is why it is never mere theorizing, but remains steeped in reality. It is the fruit of intercourse between fact and idea, a blending, in the proper English sense of the word, of the one with the other, so perfect that it can never be said that one element outweighs the other. Hence the most realistic scenes in his novels are the most pregnant with psychological and moral import. To be precise, each work of Dostoyevsky is produced by the crossing of fact and idea.\textsuperscript{74}

The direct impact of technical criticism upon the 1920's was not felt as keenly as were the other fields of criticism. Nevertheless, the influence of the technical critics is probably greatest, over a period of time, for modern criticism of Dostoyevsky is much closer to the technical school of the 1920's than to the other schools of criticism. There were several academic studies made by the technical critics which are of value today. There were,

\textsuperscript{73}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 71.
\textsuperscript{74}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 97.
for example, Muir's study of the atmosphere in Dostoyevsky, Forster's comparison of Dostoyevsky with Eliot, Wilson and Proust's interpretations of Dostoyevsky, and Gide's familiar study of Dostoyevsky. Yes, not only were specific evidences of Dostoyevsky's greatness shown, but the strongest trend which modern criticism has followed was established.
CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

The year 1912 marks the beginning of Dostoyevsky's reputation in America, for at that time Constance Garnett began her translations, The Novels of Fyodor Dostoyevsky. It was not, however, until the 1920's that biographical material was released and interpreted which projected Dostoyevsky's personal history in a clearer light. This biographical material was primarily derived from Madame Dostoyevsky's notebook and diary, and this same material was given a deeper interpretation by the psychological critics.

The artistic works of Dostoyevsky, on the other hand, were interpreted by four distinct schools of criticism: sentimental, symbolist, demonist, and technical. Each of these four fields of criticism was quite diverse, and each sought different values in Dostoyevsky. It would be an impossible task to choose the one field of criticism which presented the "correct" picture of Dostoyevsky and his artistic works. The light that is shed by the various critics illuminates their own minds more than the mind of Dostoyevsky. The critics, in other words, present a
reflection of the trends of literary criticism in their own day.

Dostoyevsky arrived in America in an age when a battle was being fought against the older school of "outward" reality. Somewhat in opposition to this older school arose the sentimental criticism. This opposition was especially noted in Julius Meier-Graefe's full-length study of Dostoyevsky. In his study Meier-Graefe emphasized repeatedly the importance of emotion in literary art. Following a similar line of thought, the symbolist criticism accepted the importance of emotion in a literary work, and its school was formed by that acceptance. The symbolist viewpoint was best expressed by J. Middleton Murry, in whose study the juxtaposition of the ideological symbol and the emotional content could be clearly seen. Dostoyevsky, seemingly, possessed these two elements, and so arrived in an America well suited to receive him.

The influence of the sentimental and symbolist criticisms, important as they were following World War I, did not last, for in the later part of the 1920's the realistic school of criticism moved into prominence, and from it was derived the demonist criticism of Dostoyevsky. With the cries of reason, usefulness, and outward reality, Dostoyevsky's gains in reputation crumbled in a few years.
During the time of various "extremes" in the criticism of Dostoyevsky, there was, however, a great bulk of material which was written by critics who followed a more conventional and academic mode of criticism. These, of course, were the technical critics who provided a synthesis of the interpretation of Dostoyevsky's works. Although their direct influence was not immediately great, this school established the trend which later criticism of Dostoyevsky has tended to follow.

Dostoyevsky's actual influence in America during the 1920's was slight. The primary reason for Dostoyevsky's lack of influence upon this period was the work of the demonist critics. Not only did they stifle criticism of Dostoyevsky, but the demonist critics played a large role in keeping the average American reader from knowing Dostoyevsky. It may also be true, as some critics have said, that Dostoyevsky was too Russian and too removed from our history for the American people to understand in the 1920's. In this connection, it is certainly true that many critics were burdened in their criticism by having to relate Dostoyevsky's artistic creations to more familiar frames of reference.

The amount of critical comment by Americans during this period is another indication of Dostoyevsky's lack of influence, for there were few Americans who devoted studies
to Dostoyevsky. There were, for example, the Americanized Russians, Avraham Yarmolinski and Prince D. S. Mirsky. There were also Edmund Wilson, Alexander Kaun, Dorothy Brewster, Angus Burrell, and Clarence Manning. Nevertheless, their works were overshadowed by the foreign critics: in England, Maurice Baring, J. Middleton Murry, and Edward Carr; in Germany, Julius Meier-Graefe and Hermann Hesse; in France, André Gide; in Czechoslovakia, Thomas Garrigue Masaryk; and in Russia, Leo Shestov and Evgenii Soloviev. Therefore, it can be said that Dostoyevsky's reputation entered America, not through the writings of United States nationals, but through the writings of foreign critics.

The more important question of Dostoyevsky's influence upon the modern novel is not so easily answered. Although it would be impossible for a study of this nature to answer this question, there are many hints which point to the influence of Dostoyevsky. In viewing the trends of criticism of Dostoyevsky, it is somewhat illuminating to see that the trends which place emphasis upon the emotional and symbolical portions of his writings have led to most appreciation of him. It is more than mere coincidence that Melville, Faulkner, Murry, Hauptmann, Gide, and Proust, all of whom are thought to have been somewhat influenced by Dostoyevsky, should be followers to some degree of this emotional and symbolical viewpoint.
Many critics analyzed Dostoyevsky's greatness as novelist, and praised his use of intensity, complexity, and psychological depth. These elements are to be found in the modern novel. Even yet, before a definite statement can be made, these elements must be analyzed closer in other comparisons. Nevertheless, one is led closer to believing Avraham Yarmolinski's statement:

One recognizes the debt to him more clearly in the contemporary novelist's emphasis upon the contradictions, the irrational and subconscious elements of the personality formerly neglected or overlooked. His passionate intensity made him careless of the accepted conventions of fiction, and so instrumental in breaking down the formal pattern of the novel. If it is now a freer, more experimental medium, and in its amorphousness, comprehensiveness, variety, and complexity, more closely approximates life, if it no longer draws invidious distinctions between the morbid and the normal, if it trafficks in "idea-feeling"—this is in no small part due to him.1

This thesis presents evidence indicating that Dostoyevsky had little appreciable influence upon the average American reader during the 1920's. Nevertheless, during this decade basic raw materials were produced in a rich diversity of criticism which later critics were to refine; and many literary scholars became interested in his work. During this period, Dostoyevsky's works in English translation were published in their entirety;

the reminiscences written by his family appeared; and many biographical and critical interpretations related Dostoyevsky's life to his work. From this, a foundation was established, and a clearer image of Dostoyevsky as man and artist began to emerge.
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