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“If there’s no immortality of the soul, ... everything is lawful”: On the Philosophical Basis of Ivan Karamazov’s Idea

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In its various versions, the popular formula “If there is no God, ... everything is lawful” is presented in many of Dostoevsky’s works. It plays an especially significant role in his novel *The Brothers Karamazov*. It is commonly known that Dostoevsky determined “the main question which is asked” to be “the question of God’s existence” (PSS, 29[1]:117).¹ As he confessed, that was the question that tormented him all his life.

In the second book of *Brothers Karamazov*, Piotr Miusov recites the words of Ivan Karamazov, who claimed,

If there is and ever has been any love on earth, this is not from any natural law but simply because people believed in immortality ... precisely in this consists the whole natural law, so that if you destroy humanity’s faith in immortality, there will immediately dry up in it—not only love but also every living force necessary to perpetuate life on earth. Even more: there will

1 Dostoevsky, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v tridsati tomakh* [PSS], ed. V. G. Bazanov et al. (Leningrad: Nauka, 1972–90); hereafter cited as PSS by volume and page.

no longer be anything immoral, everything will be permissible, even cannibalism. (PSS, 14:64–65)

Robert Louis Jackson shows the dialectics of this motive further developed in *Brothers Karamazov*. Let me quote here a long passage from his *Dialogues with Dostoevsky*, which will serve as a good introduction to my analysis:

The torment of Ivan Karamazov as God-struggler is that he allows for the existence of a religious moral law but does not believe in the immortality of his soul or the goodness of man. He is a victim, finally, of the fatal logic of his position: believing absolutely in the concrete, as it were, day-to-day interdependence of virtue and faith but lacking personal belief in immortality, he arrives at the intellectual position that “all is permissible.” His moral nature will not permit him openly to sanction the death of his father, but his ideas are picked up by his disciple Smerdyakov, who implements them with a ruthless logic.

The practical implications of Ivan’s proposition—“There is no virtue if there is no immortality”—for an unbeliever are grasped immediately by Dmitry Karamazov: “Excuse me ... have I heard things right? ‘Villainy must not only be permitted but even recognized as the inevitable and even rational outcome of his position for every atheist!’ Is that so or not?” “Precisely,” says Father Paissy. “I’ll remember that,” says Dmitry. Dmitry draws these conclusions; in the end, however, he does not act upon them. “If there is no eternal God, then there is no virtue,” he reminds Ivan in his last meeting with him, adding, “And, indeed, there’s really no necessity for it.”

It is this final conclusion, this simplistic deduction, this intoxicated leap into crime and chaos—“And, indeed, there’s really no necessity for it”—that lies hidden in Ivan’s speculations and deeply troubles Dostoevsky. How is one to surmount the fatal logic of this either-or: either faith or cannibalism, either beatitude or nihilistic despair? Such are the extreme choices that inhere in Ivan’s notion that “there is no virtue if there is no immortality.” “You are blessed in believing that, or else most unhappy,” Zosima remarks perceptively addressing to Ivan. “Why unhappy?” Ivan asks, smiling. “Because in all probability you don’t believe yourself in the immortality of your soul.” Ivan has left himself, and mankind, little room for maneuver or morality.

Ivan finds nothing in man, no action of the eternal law in man's consciousness, to counteract his criminal tendencies to guide him toward salvation. Hence his reliance on an authoritarian church-state. The position of Father Zosima is quite different. Like Ivan, he believes in a universal church "at the end of the ages." In the meanwhile, however, he does not despair. While Ivan places his hope in social-religious compulsion and excommunication, Zosima believes in the divine law acting in man and in "the law of Christ expressing itself in the recognition of one's own conscience." Zosima essentially affirms a faith in man's conscience, in the possibility of man freely arriving at a sense of truth and goodness through his own consciousness.²

Having placed this motive in the framework of Augustinian and Pelagian theological controversy, Jackson quite reasonably concludes that "Ivan's position would seem to gravitate toward radical Augustinian doctrine, or Jansenism, according to which post-Fall man lacks the power to abstain from sin and can be saved only by virtue of God's grace," while Zosima's thought "would seem to gravitate in the direction of Pelagian doctrine, which places less emphasis on the original sin and affirms man's perfect freedom to do right and wrong and, in the end, to discover his path of salvation."³ According to Jackson, Ivan's viewpoint also evokes quite reasonable parallels with Thomas Hobbes's ideas.⁴ For her part, Valentina Vetlovskaya, in her commentaries published in the Academy edition of Dostoevsky's *Complete Works*, refers in this regard to Blaise Pascal (PSS, 15:536). Yet, the question concerning the philosophical basis of this motive in the framework of nineteenth-century European philosophy that was contemporaneous for Dostoevsky is still open.

In a way, Ivan Karamazov's formula ("If there is no God . . .") already promises the next step, taken by Nietzsche, who in his *The Gay Science*, published after Dostoevsky's death, declared that "God is dead." However, there was another philosopher who, when Dostoevsky was young, claimed that God—at least in his conventional concept—did not exist, pronouncing religion as the "objectification" of human consciousness. This was Ludwig Feuerbach. The above phrase is to be found in his book *The Essence of Christianity* (1841), of

2 Robert Louis Jackson, *Dialogues with Dostoevsky: The Overwhelming Questions* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 295–98.

3 Ibid., 298.

4 Ibid., 297.

which, as noted by Sergei Bulgakov and then commented on by Vadim Belopolsky and Igor Smirnov, Dostoevsky was aware. It had an impact on his works, starting at least from *Notes from the Dead House* and *Notes from Underground*.⁵

But in Ivan Karamazov's formula, "If there's no immortality of the soul ... everything is lawful" (PSS, 14:93), one can trace not only the impact of Feuerbach's famous book but also of its critique made by another German philosopher of the 1840s—Max Stirner, whose book *The Ego and His Own*, which was published in the end of 1844, produced a shock in philosophical circles of Europe.⁶ The influence of this philosopher on Dostoevsky was already discussed by Nikolay Otverzhenniy and Sergei Kibalnik,⁷ and by Takayoshi Shimizu and Marcos Galounis.⁸ Nevertheless, up to now there has been little attention among Dostoevsky scholars to the fact that the first part of Stirner's book contains a sharp interpretation of Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity* as an "abolition of faith" and that Stirner's declaration of individualism and immoralism was a direct conclusion from Feuerbach's anthropotheism. All moral relations, affirms Stirner, "are ethical, are cultivated with a moral mind, only where they rank as religious of themselves."⁹ Since "higher powers exist only through my exalting them and abasing myself," my "relation to the world,"

5 S. N. Bulgakov, "Religiia chelovekobozhiia u L. Feierbakha," in *Sochineniia v dvukh tomakh* (Moscow: Nauka, 1993), 2:181. V. N. Belopolskii, *Dostoevsky i filosofskaiia mysl' ego epokhi* (Rostov: Rostov University Press, 1987), 165–85. I. P. Smirnov, "Otchuzhdenie-v-otchuzhdenii: 'Zapiski iz Mertvogo doma' v kontekste evropeiskoi filosofii 1840 gg. (Feuerbach and Co.)," in *Kak literatura otzyvaetsia na filosofiui* (St. Petersburg: Petropolis, 2010), 59–72.

6 Max Stirner, *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (Leipzig, 1845).

7 N. Otverzhenniy, *Shtirner i Dostoevskii* (Moscow: Golos truda, 1925); S. A. Kibalnik, "Dostoevskii i Maks Shtirner," in *Dostoevskii i sovremennost': Material XXVI Mezhdunarodnykh Starorusskikh chtenii* (Velikii Novgorod: Novgorod Museum Press, 2012), 172–79; S. A. Kibalnik, "On Dostoevsky's Anti-Rationalism, Its European Parallels and Its Followers," in *Russian Thought in Europe: Reception, Polemics, Development*, ed. T. Obolevich, Thomasz Homa, and Josef Bremer (Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM, 2013), 73–92.

8 See abstracts of their papers: Takayoshi Shimizu, "Dostoevsky and Max Stirner," accessed March 25, 2016, <http://catalog.lib.kyushu-u.ac.jp/handle/2324/24632/p%28vi%29.pdf>; Marcos Galounis, "Political Nihilism in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*," paper given at the 15th Simpozium Mezhdunarodnogo obshchestva Dostoevskogo "Dostoevskii i zhurnalizm," 34–35 (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnoe obshchestvo Dostoevskogo, 2013).

9 Max Stirner, *The Ego and His Own*, trans. Steven T. Byington, with an introduction by J. L. Walker (New York: Benj. R. Tucker, 1907), 43; <http://www.df.lth.se/~triad/stirner/theego/theego.pdf>. Hereafter I will use in-text citations by page number.

claims Stirner, is that "I no longer do anything for it, 'for God's sake,' I do nothing 'for man's sake,' but what I do I do 'for my sake'" (158). An introduction to Stirner's book concludes with the declaration: "The divine is God's concern; the human, man's. My concern is neither the divine nor the human, not the true, good, just, free, etc., but solely what is *mine*, and it is not a general one, but is—unique, as I am unique. Nothing is more to me than myself!" (18).

The denial of not only God but of Feuerbach's "God-man," and the declaration of "my self-enjoyment," is the main idea of Stirner's book. So, Ivan Karamazov simply reproduces Stirner's objection to Feuerbach when he declares,

that for every individual, like ourselves, who does not believe in God or immortality, the moral law of nature must immediately be changed into the exact contrary of the former religious law, and that egoism, even to crime, must become not only lawful but even recognised as the inevitable, the most rational, even honourable outcome of his position. (PSS, 14:64–65)

Dostoevsky must have faced the above-mentioned ideas of Feuerbach and Stirner as early as in the 1840s at the parties at Petrashevsky's house. The writer once made a speech there "about personality and individualism" in which he "wanted to prove that there is more ambition than real human dignity between us, and that we all fall into self-abasement, self-annihilation due to petty ambition, egoism, and aimlessness of occupations" (PSS, 18:129). This speech is supposedly permeated with Stirner's ideas. But if so, then it is actually directed against them. Dostoevsky could have borrowed a copy of Stirner's book from Petrashevsky.

Apparently, Stirner's ideas were shared by some other members of Petrashevsky's circle, and first of all by Nikolay Speshnev, who is an obvious prototype of several of Dostoevsky's characters (e.g., Nikolay Stavrogin). As it was noted in the commentaries for the Academy edition of the *Complete Works* of Dostoevsky, Speshnev, in his *Letters to Khoetsky* (1847), "criticizes Ludwig Feuerbach's anthropotheism": "Anthropotheism is also a religion but a different one. There is another object of deification—newly made, but the fact of deification itself is not new. Instead of God-man now we have Man-god. Only the word order has changed. Is there a big difference between God-man and Man-god?" (PSS,

12:222). The commentators argue that Speshnev “delicately criticizes anthropotheism” (ibid.).

However, here Speshnev does not offer his own criticism of the anthropotheism of Feuerbach but rather retells Stirner’s. And it is not accidental that this letter was written in German. In *Ego and His Own*, we read: “Man has killed God in order to become now—‘sole God on high.’” *The other world outside us* is indeed brushed away, and the great undertaking of the Illuminators completed; but *the other world* in us has become a new heaven and calls us forth to renewed heaven-storming: “God has had to give place, yet not to us, but to—Man. How can you believe that the God-man is dead before the Man in him, besides the God, is dead?” (85). Speshnev also recalls Stirner’s thoughts in other passages of his *Letters to Khoetsky* where he emphasizes the difference between “me” and “man” in very similar words. For the sake of brevity, I omit here some textual parallels.

It is obvious then that in the mid-1840s Speshnev was in a way Stirner’s follower. (This was overlooked by Speshnev’s biographers, including Ludmila Saraskina, the author of the most recent biography of Speshnev.)¹⁰ In 1845, possibly after his reading Stirner, Speshnev called himself a man who “lost shame.”¹¹ At the time, he was living abroad with a Polish woman, who had left her husband for him. That is why he must have enjoyed the dedication in Stirner’s book: “TO MY SWEETHEART MARIE DÄHNHARDT” (even though Marie was already Stirner’s wife when his book came out).

When Dostoevsky met Speshnev a few years later, he saw him as a strong personality, and afterwards he recognized his extreme influence on his own ideas. At one of Petrashevsky’s parties Speshnev gave a speech on religion in which he denied the existence of God.¹² Speshnev’s life and behavior in general were marked by “willfulness” and, as is well known, brought to life the character of Stavrogin. As we will see, he also played an essential part in Dostoevsky’s shaping of Ivan Karamazov.

In his *Letters to Khoetsky*, Speshnev also predicted that “humanity won’t stop at anthropotheism” and that “anthropotheism is not an eventual result, but

10 L. I. Saraskina, *Nikolai Speshnev: Nesbyvshaiasia sud’ba* (Moscow: Nash dom—L’Age D’Homme, 2000).

11 Ibid., 125.

12 Ibid., 375.

only a transitional theory. ... To my mind, it is just a track, keeping [to] which Germany and science will come to the complete and unconditional denial of religion."¹³ Here Speshnev also openly develops Stirner's idea, which stated that "the fear of God in the proper sense was shaken long ago, and a more or less conscious 'atheism,' externally recognizable by a wide-spread 'unchurchliness,' has involuntarily become the mode. But what was taken from God has been superadded to Man" (100).

Claiming that anthropotheism is just a route on which Germany and science will come to a complete and absolute negation of religion, Speshnev, along with Stirner, sounds similar to Dostoevsky, who regarded Feuerbach's philosophy as a serious step towards atheism. For Speshnev, atheism is an inevitable and justified stage: "And at last, is it really necessary to reduce all the data of a certain period to one and the only idea?"¹⁴ But for Dostoevsky in the 1870s it is, on the contrary, an alarming symptom.

Russian religious philosophers clearly saw Max Stirner's philosophy as a reaction to *Essence of Christianity* by Feuerbach. For example, Semion Frank, in his *Ethics of Nihilism*, wrote: "Strictly logically, from nihilism in the moral field one can conclude only nihilism, that is immoralism, and Stirner did not have many difficulties while explaining this to Feuerbach and his followers."¹⁵ Boris Vysheslavtsev, in his *Ethics of Transfigured Eros*, came close to acknowledging that Dostoevsky's works were a philosophical reaction to the attempts to replace God with man or with the self.¹⁶

But the specific form of this reaction is a very controversial issue that is still under debate. It is not quite clear whether Dostoevsky, while denying Stirner's position, takes Feuerbach's side. There are some things in *Brothers Karamazov* that make us think so. For example, Rakitin, who finds Ivan Karamazov's way of thinking outrageous, believes in a mankind. "Humanity will find in itself the power to live for virtue even without believing in immortality. It will find it in love for freedom, for equality, for fraternity" (PSS, 14:76). This recalls Feuerbach's philosophy. Feuerbach, as he argued himself, "transformed ethics into

13 N. A. Speshnev, "Pis'ma k K.E. Khoetskomu," in *Filosofskie i obshchestvenno-politicheskie proizvedeniia petrashevtshev* (Moscow: Gospolitizdat, 1953), 496.

14 Ibid.

15 S. L. Frank, *Sochineniia* (Moscow: Pravda, 1990), 84–85.

16 B. P. Vysheslavtsev, *Etika preobrazhennogo Erosa* (Moscow: Respublika, 1994), 115–16.

religion.”¹⁷ Still, it is certainly meaningful that this approach is demonstrated by the character whom the narrator calls “a young man bent on a career” (14:71). Another character who “so loves humanity” that she “often dreams of forsaking” her ill daughter and “becoming a sister of mercy” is Madame Khokhlakov, clearly caricatured by Dostoevsky.

Obviously, Dostoevsky’s position is essentially different from those of Rakitin and Madame Khokhlakov. And it is directly formulated in a section of *Diary of a Writer* for 1876 called “Unsubstantiated Statements”: “I declare (again, without substantiation, at least *for the moment*) that love for humanity is even entirely unthinkable, uncomprehensible, and *utterly impossible without faith in the immortality of the human soul to go along with it*” (italics in the original).¹⁸ Jackson finds it significant that Dostoevsky’s remarks are made in this particular section (also called “Arbitrary Assertions” in another translation) and that Dostoevsky “prefaces his remarks by saying that he intends ‘to amuse’ those ‘gentlemen of ironclad ideas’ who believe that love for humanity and its happiness is all set, comes about cheaply and without a thought. Dostoevsky’s above-cited remark is provocative and ironical, and directed against interlocutors who have never really confronted or deeply responded to real suffering.”¹⁹ But what is provocative in the following Dostoevsky statement, which was more than once rephrased by him in other works?—“My article ‘The Sentence’ concerns the fundamental and the loftiest idea of human existence: the necessity and the conviction that the human soul is immortal”²⁰ (PSS, 24:46). Isn’t Jackson trying to find in Dostoevsky’s journalism the ambivalence that is fully present only in his novels? But I do completely share his point of view “that in *The Brothers Karamazov* Dostoevsky finds Ivan’s statement acceptable as a theological truism, as an affirmation of the divine unity of all aspects of God’s world, but

17 Ludwig Feuerbach (anonymous), “*The Essence of Christianity in Relation to The Ego and Its Own*,” trans. Frederick M. Gordon, <http://www.lsr-projekt.de/poly/enfeuerbach.html>.

18 Fyodor Dostoevsky, *A Writer’s Diary*, ed. with an introduction by Gary Saul Morson, trans. and annotated by Kenneth Lantz (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2009), 1:735–36.

19 Jackson, *Dialogues with Dostoevsky*, 294.

20 Dostoevsky, *Writer’s Diary*, 1:736.

as a guide to action, he finds Ivan's proposition limited, dogmatic, and dangerous."²¹

Indeed, Dostoevsky approaches the issue of interdependence of virtue and faith in a radically different way than Ivan Karamazov:

Ivan insists that love and virtue can come to one only through faith. Zosima, however, believes that belief in God and faith are inseparable from love. "Try to love your neighbors actively and ceaselessly," Zosima counsels Mrs. Khoklaka. "To the extent that you succeed in love, you will become convinced in the existence of God and in the immortality of your soul. But if you reach the point of total self-renunciation in love for your neighbor, then without question you will believe, and no doubt will be able to enter your soul."²²

Zosima's idea of active love seems to be close to Dostoevsky's own view of Orthodox Christianity.

Ivan's starting point is the same as Dostoevsky's. Ivan is also convinced of a firm interdependence of faith in God, the immortality of the soul, and morality. Yet, unlike Dostoevsky, Ivan ends up proclaiming immoralism. Dostoevsky appears to see clearly that Stirner's idea of "ego" and "self-enjoyment," which make everything permitted, is just a logical consequence of Feuerbach's philosophy. And Ivan's problem is perhaps an excessive logic, that is, rationalism; a lack of any emotional attitude; and, most of all, a lack of love for other people.

Jackson's statement that Dostoevsky's response to Ivan is to remind him that it is "not virtue through faith but faith through love"²³ seems to me absolutely well founded. "Faith which comes through love"—that is certainly true. And, according to Dostoevsky, virtue is achieved through one's love for other people. The "active love" advocated by Zosima turns out to be a recipe both for faith in immortality (not in immortality in general, but in the immortality of one's soul) and at the same time for moral action. Alyosha's kiss, and Christ's kiss in Ivan's poem, presents a symbolic image of such forgiving love.

It may seem, however, that Dostoevsky suggests coming back from Stirner to Feuerbach, who also regarded love as a significant factor. But, according to Feuerbach, "love is practical atheism, the negation of God by the heart, by the

²¹ Jackson, *Dialogues with Dostoevsky*, 294.

²² *Ibid.*, 300.

²³ *Ibid.*, 294.

feelings, in fact.”²⁴ Proclaiming himself a “communist,” Feuerbach meant “love” as “love for humanity.” In the meantime, this principle of “love for mankind” was the target of keen criticism by Dostoevsky, both in his novels and in his journalism.

In “Unsubstantiated Statements,” Dostoevsky declares,

Love for humanity is even entirely unthinkable, uncomprehensible and *utterly impossible without faith in the immortality of the human soul to go along with it*. Those people who deprived humanity of its faith in its own immortality want to replace that faith, in the sense of the meaning of the highest purpose of existence, by “love for humanity.” Those people, I say, are raising their hands against themselves; for in place of love for humanity they plant in the heart of a one who lost his faith the seed of hatred for humanity. Let all those wise men of cast-iron convictions shrug their shoulders at this statement of mine. But this thought is wiser than their wisdom, and I believe without a doubt that it will someday become an axiom for humanity.²⁵

By “those people” Dostoevsky here apparently means Feuerbach and his followers.

In *Brothers Karamazov*, the confession of a doctor, retold by Zosima, has a similar meaning, compromising Feuerbach’s ideal of love for mankind:

“I love humanity,” he said, “but I wonder at myself. The more I love humanity in general, the less I love man in particular. In my dreams,” he said, “I have often come to making enthusiastic schemes for the service of humanity, and perhaps I might actually have faced crucifixion if it had been suddenly necessary; and yet I am incapable of living in the same room with anyone for two days together, as I know by experience.” (PSS, 14:53)

Ivan Karamazov says that his Grand Inquisitor has been “loving ... mankind” “all [his] life” (PSS, 14:238).

At the end of the novel, Kolya Krasotkin asks Alyosha Karamazov: “It’s possible for one who doesn’t believe in God to love mankind, don’t you think so? Voltaire didn’t believe in God and loved mankind?’ (‘I am at it again,’ he thought to himself.)” Alyosha answers: “Voltaire believed in God, though not very much, I think, and I don’t think he loved mankind very much either.” The narrator’s comment on how Alyosha said this is quite remarkable—“quietly,

24 Feuerbach (anonymous), “*The Essence of Christianity in Relation to The Ego and Its Own*.”

25 Dostoevsky, *A Writer’s Diary*, 1:736.

gently, and quite naturally, as though he were talking to someone of his own age, or even older. Kolya was particularly struck by Alyosha's apparent diffidence about his opinion of Voltaire. He seemed to be leaving the question for him, little Kolya, to settle" (*PSS*, 14:500). This comment is in a way analogous to the title of Dostoevsky's article "Unsubstantiated Statements," fairly commented on by Jackson. Alyosha's "diffidence" reminds us of Dostoevsky's proclaiming his own assertions as "arbitrary." Both words are aimed at eliminating any pattern of dogma, which was always alien to the writer. Dostoevsky's manifestations of faith were always styled in such a way, both in his literary works and in the *Diary of a Writer*. Without sharing Stirner's anarchical individualism, Dostoevsky advocates coming back to the "immortality of the soul," which was rejected by Feuerbach.

Ivan's discourse on "if there is no God . . ." clearly fits this pattern. "I don't know whether or not it has been sufficiently pointed out that [Ivan's formula] is not an outburst of relief or of joy, but rather a bitter acknowledgment of a fact," asked Albert Camus, who continued, "The certainty of a God giving a meaning to life far surpasses in attractiveness the ability to behave badly with impunity. The choice would not be hard to make. But there is no choice, and that is where the bitterness comes in."²⁶ No wonder Jean-Paul Sartre turned Ivan's statement upside down. And the essence of existentialism was formulated by Sartre in the following way: "Nothing will be changed if God does not exist . . . even if God existed that would make no difference from its point of view. Not that we believe God does exist, but we think that the real problem is not that of His existence; what man needs is to find himself again and to understand that nothing can save him from himself, not even a valid proof of the existence of God."²⁷ Ivan Karamazov's idea, which according to Camus is partly Dostoevsky's one, was regarded by Sartre as the starting point of existentialism.

In this respect, both European and Russian existentialism seem to follow Feuerbach and many other partisans of the Pelagian tradition in European philosophy rather than Dostoevsky. But as Jackson has shown, according to

26 Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*, trans. Justin O'Brien (1955), 44, <http://www.dhspriory.org/kenny/PhilTexts/Camus/Myth%20of%20Sisyphus-.pdf>.

27 Jean-Paul Sartre, "Existentialism Is a Humanism," in *Existentialism from Dostoyevsky to Sartre*, ed. Walter Kaufman, trans. Philip Mairet (Meridian, 1989), <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/sartre/works/exist/sartre.htm>.

Dostoevsky the primary force is love—"not virtue through faith but faith through love—this is Dostoevsky's reply to Ivan."²⁸ So one can say that Sartre followed Zosima rather than Ivan Karamazov. And thus he still followed Dostoevsky.

As we can see, the "voices" of Dostoevsky's characters are to a certain extent associated with the ideas of European philosophers of the mid-nineteenth century. And the twentieth-century European and Russian philosophers—Nietzsche and Camus, Semion Frank and Sergei Bulgakov—clearly found their philosophical frameworks in Dostoevsky's novels.

The complicated dialectics of faith and morality, disbelief and Man-godhood, love for one's neighbor and love for mankind in *Brothers Karamazov* cannot be understood without taking into account their interdependence with contemporaneous philosophical discourses.

28 Jackson, *Dialogues with Dostoevsky*, 302.