

Edmund Heier

Literary Portraits in the Novels of F. M. Dostoevskij

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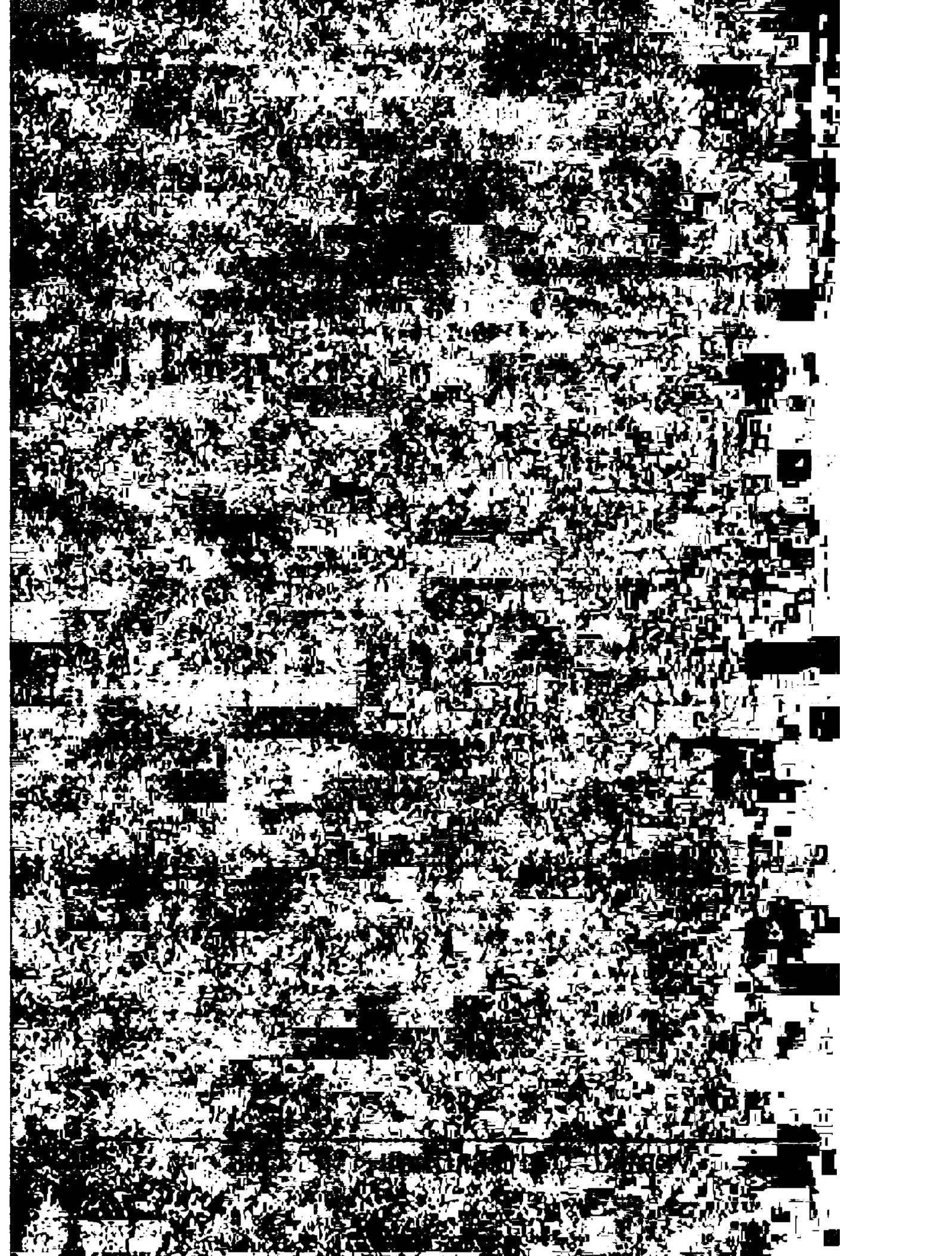
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zur
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von

Edmund Heier

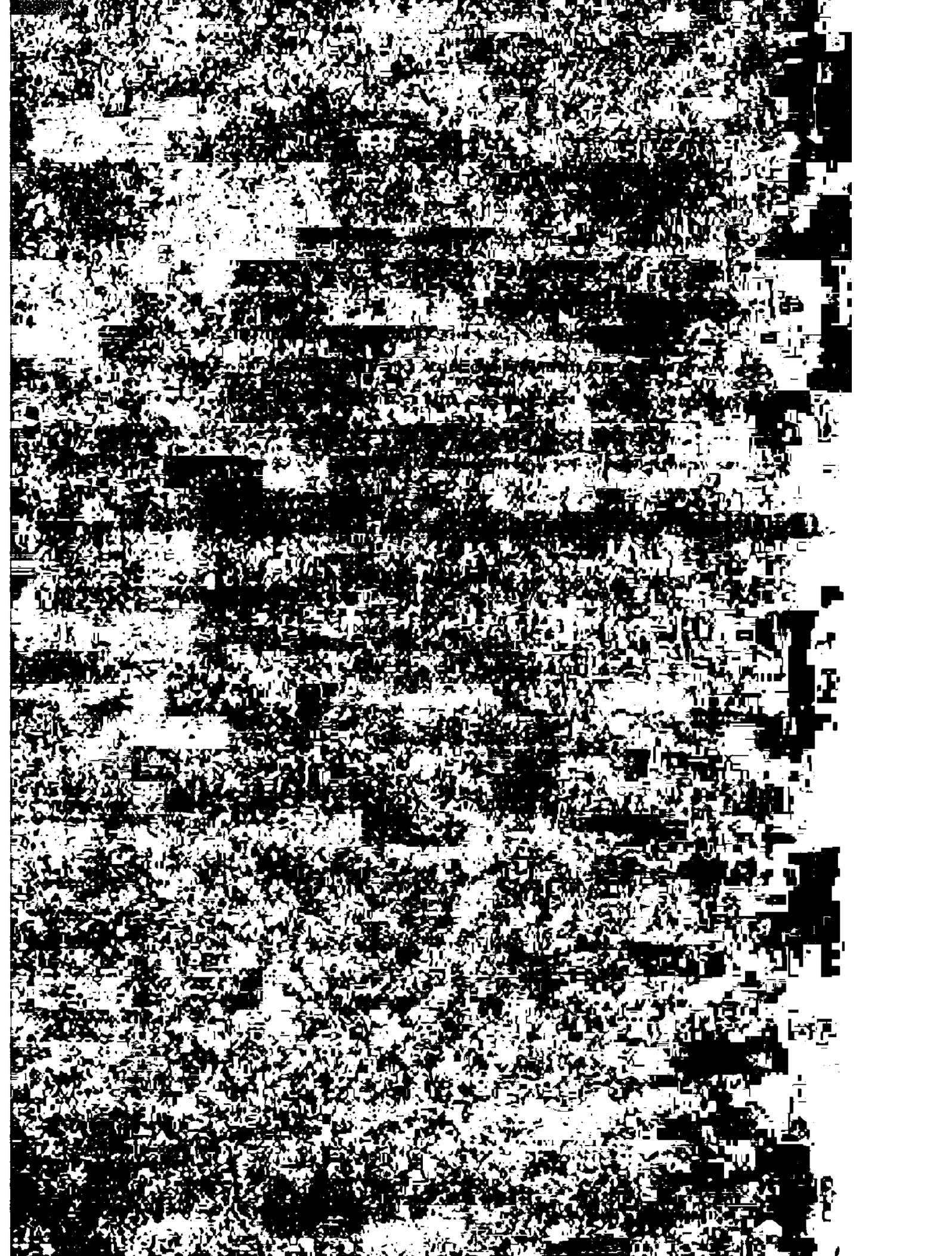


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PREFACE

The present work devoted to F.M. Dostoevskij's literary portraits is an extension of what was to be a mere chapter in a larger study dealing with literary portraiture in the nineteenth century Russian novel. In seeking to examine the problem of character depiction in portraiture, I necessarily had to omit important and intrinsic ideas which otherwise are essential for a better understanding of Dostoevskij but are beyond the scope of the present venture. On the other hand, it was necessary, at times, to deviate from my central theme and introduce specific material related to Dostoevskij's artistic thought.

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Edmund Heier

Waterloo

October 1989

Introduction

In approaching F.M. Dostoevskij's novels with the express purpose of identifying and determining the function of literary portraiture, one is faced with an unexpected enormous gallery of literary portraits. These are verbal accounts or drawings in words, in which physical appearance and facial expression are described not only to evoke a visual image, but more specifically to discern the inner man. Indeed, Dostoevskij cultivated the literary portrait so assiduously that only two of his major characters are not depicted in portrait form. The vast amount of material that came to light in the pursuit of this study has necessitated a selection and omission of equally valid specimens, which would further substantiate that Dostoevskij was a close observer of the physical properties of his characters and that he employed them to delineate psychological and moral disposition. And yet, the voluminous critical literature on Dostoevskij hardly devotes any attention to this artistic device.

It stands to reason that Dostoevskij's profound philosophical and religious observations, his unparalleled insight into the psychology of his heroes and his admirable analysis of the working of their minds provided a greater fascination. Indeed, his significant views on human personality, the depiction of his heroes' passions and contradictions, the portrayal of the depths of the human soul, which made Dostoevskij the legitimate creator of the modern psychological novel, ultimately dictated the nature of the critics' preoccupation with Dostoevskij. It was thus natural that in the area of modes of characterization the purely psychological portrayal became the primary concern of critics.

But this one-sided approach and over-emphasis on direct psychological analysis also created misconceptions. A case in point is the famous comparative study *Tolstoj and Dostoevskij* (1901) by D.S. Merezhkovskij. Here it is asserted that Tolstoj is the "seer of the flesh," while Dostoevskij is the "seer of the spirit" and that Tolstoj employs exterior physical description of his characters in order to reveal their psychological disposition, while Dostoevskij ignores external appearance, as he describes inner qualities and thereby evokes an indirect visual image of his characters. In reality Dostoevskij uses the physical features of a character no less than Tolstoj, but this notion of Merezhkovskij is still being perpetuated in many quarters. Tolstoj's psychological range was no less than that of Dostoevskij, and his contribution to the psychological novel equals that of Dostoevskij. However, while they both employed the exterior appearance of their characters for similar functions, Tolstoj is considered as the greater master in his descriptive passages. Though his physical portraits are not as polished as those of

Tolstoj's, Dostoevskij recorded the physical features of his characters not as just another cliché, but as a meaningful device adding realism and verisimilitude to his characters. But most of all, it will be demonstrated in this study that literary portraiture functioned as an important mode of characterization and that Dostoevskij's characters are not merely embodied vehicles of abstract ideas and passions.

Literary portraiture is an important manifestation of a writer's concept of man and of his artistic talent. The designation "literary portrait" or "literary portraiture" may refer to both indirect and direct delineation of character. Indirect portraiture depicts character through action, confession, dialogue, contrast, dramatic situation, in short, through any device which discloses character traits by indirect means. Here the reader is invited to compose his own mosaic-like portrait of the character. The direct literary portrait, our primary concern, depicts or delineates character traits directly via external appearance. It is a pictorial description, in which the writer consciously introduces his character by way of an account of his exterior in order to suggest or reveal directly the essence of inner qualities. This kind of literary portrait consists of both the physical appearance and the interpretation of these features and their expression. In offering a visual impression of the characters in such a manner that it reveals specific character traits either by implication or through direct intervention, the author-narrator resorts to the principle of physiognomy, i.e., to the art of delineating character on the basis of physical appearance. In contrast to a writer's attempt to capture permanent character traits using physiognomy, he most often also employs pathognomy, i.e., mimic and gesture, to record the physical reflection of a character's temporary mental and psychological state.

The efforts to depict men physiognomically in literary portraits dates back to antiquity. By the time Dostoevskij appeared on the literary scene it had become a common device among the French and English realists, especially in the works of Balzac and Dickens. The application of physiognomic principles, which determined the content and form of the literary portrait, was based on the prevailing concept of man as an organic, harmonious unity. The conviction that the physical and the spiritual constantly interact explains the major reason for describing the physical details of a character with the aim of revealing inner disposition. The person most responsible for propagating the idea of physiognomy and pathognomy in modern times was J.K. Lavater, with his voluminous work *Physiognomic Fragments* (1775-78), which was translated into most European languages. His efforts not only reversed the declining interest in physiognomy,

but provided the artistic world with a tangible method for realistic art.¹

Although this study is primarily concerned with direct literary portraiture, indirect depiction was no less important, as it has to be juxtaposed with the former, in order to determine the extent to which Dostoevskij employed physical appearance in the delineation of character. One of the difficulties is the fact that Dostoevskij does not systematically adhere to any mode of characterization, least of all to prevailing psychological theories of his time. Contrary to Tolstoj, Dostoevskij left us few significant commentaries on his own work, but even more regrettable is the substantial absence of his various novelistic versions which would enable one to pursue the process of creation. Thus the literary text supported by his correspondence will have to serve as our major source in identifying specific Dostoevskijan ideas, a task which is not always easy to accomplish. What is, however, overwhelmingly apparent, is precisely that which had been denied, namely that Dostoevskij is a careful observer of the physical phenomena of his characters and that he resorts to them with the express purpose of revealing character traits. In analyzing the physical appearance, as it manifests itself in his character drawings, it is hoped to demonstrate the importance and vitality of literary portraiture as part of the novelist's mode of characterization.

¹ The details of Lavater's reception in Russia and his influence on the manner of character portrayal are found in my forthcoming study: *Literary Portraiture in Nineteenth Century Russian Prose*.

Chapter I: Dostoevskij's Concept of Man and its Artistic Depiction in Literary Portraiture

Although Dostoevskij belonged to the same literary schools, read the same writers, and experienced the same influences as most of his contemporaries, such as Goncharov and Turgenev, his artistic works, especially of the later period, were decidedly different and distinct from anything until then encountered in literature. The ultimate cause of this difference is to be sought not only in the artistic make-up of Dostoevskij, in his thoughtful imaginative power, but even more in his nervous and intense personality, in the unstable and emotional existence which he was destined to lead. None of his fellow writers had ever been condemned to death, only to have the sentence reprieved in the last minute before execution; none had ever spent four years among convicts in Siberia; none had ever suffered his material deprivation; but most of all, none had experienced the extreme feelings caused by epileptic fits--the exaltation and intensity immediately before the attack and the ensuing total collapse of consciousness, which was followed by unbearable, deep depression. No wonder Dostoevskij was bound to see and feel differently from others and was described by critics as a "cruel talent" and genius who preferred the depiction of the abnormal and pathological side of man. What seemed fantastic and abnormal to others was to him reality. His personal experiences took him beyond the daily concerns and mere political questions of his contemporaries. The years of suffering, especially those among criminals, which were subsequently recorded in *Notes from the House of Death* (1861), provide the clue to much of Dostoevskij's creative work.

Dostoevskij's imprisonment in Siberia also marked the turning point in his spiritual development; it marked the end of a strong Gogolian influence and, after the 1860's, initiated a new period characterized by his great philosophical novels. His idealist dreams and humanitarianism which were nourished by Schiller's thoughts and Fourier's utopian socialism gave way to a humanism based on Christianity. Before his penal servitude Dostoevskij was a philanthropist and humanist, a champion of the humiliated and insulted who believed that man is by nature good and decent and that evil can be overcome by love and compassion. But having encountered in prison savage behaviour without any signs of repentance, Dostoevskij became convinced that evil is a reality against which society must be protected even if it is at the expense of humanistic concepts. The young radical intellectual returned to Russia as a champion of Russian Orthodoxy, albeit with frequent moments of doubt, and with a firm religious conviction

and a relentless desire to find the ultimate goal of mankind, the true path for moral and spiritual regeneration. His life among prisoners taught him that man is ultimately dominated by a dichotomy of good and evil, and that he is capable of committing all kinds of immoral acts and destruction for the sake of his caprice and self-assertion. Sinful man cannot be reeducated through reason but only through resurrection, faith in Christ.¹

Prior to his Siberian exile, religious questions were never raised by Dostoevskij, but after a regeneration of his spiritual development they became a major theme in his novels. That inner struggle between faith and reason (his old atheistic outlook and his new faith in Christ) reached its full treatment in his last novel, *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880). It has to be understood, however, that although Christ occupied a central theme in his life and later works, he conceived of Christ only as the most beautiful and perfect man. His Christianity was Christian humanism, and although he advocated Orthodoxy, it was more the spirit of Orthodoxy and its idea of brotherhood rather than ecclesiastical Orthodoxy as practised by the Church at the time. K. Leont'ev, the guardian of true Byzantine Orthodoxy, did not fail to note that Dostoevskij's religious types neither pray nor attend church.² In this sense Dostoevskij's religiosity is identical with Tolstoj's. Although fully aware that his dream of world harmony--a vision of a kind of Christian socialism, an earthly paradise or a Golden Age, in the Schillerian sense--would have to remain a dream, the idea became central in his thinking and also in his work. Though an unattainable idea, it nonetheless is a goal towards which mankind should strive. But in this striving Dostoevskij also saw the human tragedy, i.e., the consciousness of a better world and the impossibility of reaching it.

The fact that Dostoevskij's own personal experience, concerns, and especially the dramatic, hectic and nervous tension in actual life were largely carried over into the thematics of his work, was only a natural consequence of his creative process and his philosophical thinking. One can only agree with Mochulskij's repeated insistence that in order to understand Dostoevskij fully and correctly, one must not separate his work from his life.³ They are one spiritual unity. Indeed, to comprehend Dostoevskij's creative process fully (the profound psychological analysis of his characters and the prevailing religious philosophical themes in his work), one ought to be aware of the forces behind that ingenious creation. Such an understanding will aid the reader in deciphering Dostoevskij's ultimate message, how the work is to be read, or how its creator wanted to have it perceived. Reading *The Idiot* (1868) or *The Brothers Karamazov*, for example, without any knowledge of Dostoevskij's conviction often leaves the reader perplexed as

to his final message. The edifying message, though expressed in dialogues and interpolations, is ultimately left up to the reader.

Dostoevskij, the artist, did not attempt to systematize any of his ideas, least of all his religious ideas. He has his heroes debate them; each character is given a chance to defend his view with equal skill and conviction, thus leaving the reader in doubt, as to which side he supported. But if we know that Dostoevskij, the man, was in real life a defender of Russian Orthodoxy and intolerant of any sectarians and that in his view a true Russian must be Orthodox, and that Christ was to him the only redeemer of all mankind, then it is not difficult to note that the views expressed by Myshkin, Father Zosima or Alesha approximate those of the author. In depicting an ideal in these figures or in directly denouncing the socialist views of the nihilists in *The Possessed* (1872), Dostoevskij is far from free of tendentiousness. In fact his novels are decidedly tendentious. The fact that Dostoevskij does not systematize the path to salvation, and seemingly treats a problem only by presenting its pros and cons, speaks in his favour as an artist. But he never espoused the type of art which leads to a felicitous interpretation. Though Dostoevskij defended free art and denied that any individual, even Shakespeare,⁴ should impose a specific direction on art, Dostoevskij's own art was never the result of light playfulness, but always of serious purpose. Here Dostoevskij, the man, echoed his own voice in artistic form. This dual position is expressed for example in a letter to K.P. Pobedonostsev and to the editor of *The Brothers Karamazov*, in which Dostoevskij asserts that the chapter about Father Zosima was meant to counteract the prevailing atheism, but doubts its strength as he had to proceed artistically and not directly. He adds: "Although I am fully of the same opinion as he [Zosima], but if I were to express my own personal opinion, I would do so in a different form and language. ... He had to have his own manner, otherwise he would not have been an artistic creation."⁵

Mochulskij's statement, however, that Dostoevskij "spoke only of those things which he himself had personally experienced" must be interpreted in a broader sense.⁶ Otherwise one is led to believe that the depiction of the psychic abnormality, the impulsion to queer, reckless and cruel acts of his characters, especially when viewed from within, i.e. by the sufferer himself, is but the disguised voice of the author and that he could have known these abnormalities only as a result of his own experience. While it is true that much of Dostoevskij's agony of spirit and body were transformed into his art, it is equally true that not all artists who treat neurotic, pathological habits or lay bare satanic self-assertions and the workings of the criminal mind have been suffering the same affliction in their own lives. In the final analysis, we are dealing with an intense

genius who took advantage of his own experience and in coupling it with his creativity and his unusual power of imagination emerged as an original inventor in the field of literary psychology.

In antedating modern psychology, he went beyond the ordinary boundaries of observation inventing thereby, for his time, what might be called a sixth sense, which enabled him to gain further insight into the abnormal psychological behaviour of his heroes, and their chaotic conflicts between the conscious and the unconscious. But also his admirable depiction of the pathological phenomena in the life of his heroes, not so much through description, but rather through behaviour and enactment, which Dostoevskij pursued to the point of saturation and imbalance invited the criticism of his contemporaries. Precisely this saturation and obsession with the abnormal and the dark side of the soul caused Turgenev to label Dostoevskij the Marquis de Sade of Russian literature. But whatever some of his contemporaries thought of him, he proved to be an extraordinary seer and correct observer and his analysis fits into modern psychological studies even though he did not avail himself of the advanced technique of modern analysts.

What then is this direct vision which enabled him to lay bare the duality of character of his young heroes or to insist on the existence of good and evil in any individual? While his hypersensitivity and his own psychological experience were decisive in his observation of a pathological state and its ensuing portrayal, one ought not to forget that as part of Dostoevskij's own experience one must also consider the fact that he kept abreast of the latest psychological developments. He read a host of writers from whom he acquired not only thoughts and ideas about abnormal behaviour, but also the artistic technique of characterization; it suffices to mention only the major figures: Karamzin, Gogol, J. Miloslavskij, V. Dal', V.I. Narezhnyj, Pushkin, Lermontov, Schiller, Goethe, E.T.A. Hoffmann, Shakespeare, W. Scott, A. Radcliffe, Dickens, Racine, Corneille, Balzac, V. Hugo, and F. Soulié.⁷ Thus, not some special psychic power, but rather a happy combination of his own psychic experiences and talent, further enriched by the influences and thoughts of others, made him an extraordinary seer. These borrowings, however, in no way distract from his enormous contribution to literary psychology. It seems that he contributed more to the purely psychological portrait than he was able to borrow from prevailing literary portraiture.

Although Dostoevskij's brilliant insight into human behaviour, and his unusual ability to observe irrational and unconscious urges and pathological complexes make him, in many respects, a forerunner of the modern psychoanalytical school, the

customary notion that he anticipated Freud and Jung's psychoanalytical doctrine has been demonstrated to be false. He is rather a follower of C.G. Carus and more specifically of the psychoanalytical views expressed in his *Psyche: The Development of the Soul* (1846). Dostoevskij and his friend Baron Vrangel had thought of translating this work in the 1850's.⁸ The very fact that Dostoevskij does not give the case history of a character, or any background and begins, so to speak, *in medias res*, is a major deviation from Freudian psychoanalysis. Moreover, he is interested in only psychical aspects and shows no concern for physiological causes or for that matter for any reasons for the conduct of his heroes. Thus Smith and Isotoff conclude: "Dostoevskij's extensive use of Carus' *Psyche*, which strangely resembles psychoanalytical doctrine in terms and hypotheses, is sufficient to account for the apparent anticipations of psychoanalysis which have been detected in the novels."⁹

A closer examination of the basic features of Dostoevskij's art reveals a multitude of deviations from the artistic norm of his time. The overwhelming use of polyphony, complex or polyvalent characters, and dramatic features in his novels stands in direct contrast to the traditional novel of the nineteenth century. Polyphony enabled Dostoevskij to present a multitude of diverse views on a specific subject or problem, expressed or debated by various characters. L. Grossman made a subtle observation when he likened Dostoevskij's polyphony to a musical composition in which there are "different voices singing in different ways on the same theme. This is 'multivoicedness,' which reveals the variety of life and the complexity of human experience."¹⁰

The introduction of polyphony as well as complex characters was a natural development of Dostoevskij's own contradictory views which ranged from socialist humanism, through atheism, to Christianity, not to mention the glaring contradictions apparent in his theory and practice of art. Equally important was the spiritual diversity of his time. Under such conditions people began to change, revealing different faces of their personalities, and playing different roles. Thus Dostoevskij avoided the monological depiction of fixed types with specific permanent character traits as hitherto encountered in the novel. In his view art should represent contemporaneousness, which meant the portrayal of the contemporary complex man. A monological type with specific dominant character traits like Rudin or Oblomov, for example, is rarely encountered in Dostoevskij's mature works. Most of his characters display not only a dual nature, but often many different and contradictory faces; the duality of emotion and rationalism inherent in everyone adds further to the complexity. Although the many-faced character has become a characteristic feature of Dostoevskij, he was not its inventor. Hamlet and

Pechorin displayed complex and contradictory character traits, and in Schiller's heroes one discovers a deep inner disharmony, intertwining fanatical forces with moral principles. Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa with her changing expression and mixture of various qualities--kindness and severity, grace and an enigmatic smile--is one of the oldest and certainly one of the most unique depictions in portrait form.

The complexity of characters along with Dostoevskij's polyphonic approach, which enables the protagonists to act independently and play their own roles without the author's interference, give Dostoevskij's novels a distinctly dramatic quality. The epic and descriptive quality of the traditional novel with its omniscient narrator is thus decidedly reduced in Dostoevskij's work. Here narration and description give way to enactment and dialogue. Dostoevskij does not appear on the pages as an observant commentator who passes judgement on his characters. In Dostoevskij's polyphonic depiction the hero elucidates himself, i.e., the role of the author is transferred to the hero as he reveals himself from all possible points of view, again an approach which does not allow much authorial intervention.¹¹

It is through the dialogical process, as in drama, that the characters reveal their consciousness to each other. B.F. Odinokov sees in Dostoevskij's novels one continuous dialogue which could go on; the end of a novel by Dostoevskij is brought about when the dialogue stops. This is why all of his novels have an open ending.¹² It is this dramatic quality that caused Nemirovich Danchenko to say: "Dostoevskij wrote like a novelist but felt like a dramatist. ... Everything in his works invites the theatre ... whole chapters are excellent dramatic pieces."¹³ It is also the theatrical quality, the intensive use of dialogue, the presentation of action through scenes, the swiftness of action, the indifference to a detailed description of the exterior of the characters and the absence of the author's voice that provoked V. Ivanov to define Dostoevskij's novel as a "novel-tragedy."¹⁴

Having noted Dostoevskij's polyphony, his dramatic quality and ability to depict complex personalities, it must be emphasized that by no means are all of his heroes portrayed as complex personalities. Starting with *Notes from the House of Death* (1861) to his last novel, one encounters several monological depictions, characters with one predominant character trait. It suffices to recall such figures as Gazin and Alej from *Notes from the House of Death*, the pawnbroker from *Crime and Punishment*, Father Zosima and Alesha from *The Brothers Karamazov*, all of whom are drawn monologically and in total harmony with their exterior and their psychological disposition.

While polyphony became primary for Dostoevskij, traditional critics were perplexed with the enormity of information and tension as well as with the multitude of characters

in his novels. They lost their way, unable to see the whole for all the individual voices; they found only turmoil, chaos, contradictions, and a distorted depiction of human character. An extreme reaction was expressed by Ju.F. Karjakin when he stated that "the melodies of the 'Marseillaise,' 'Lieber Augustin' and 'God, save the Tsar' were fighting in Dostoevskij."¹⁵ The problem was further compounded when the single hero of his earlier works gradually changed into a collective hero, or a series of major heroes, a trend which reached its acme in his last novel.

The enormous amount of information and thought which he was able to compress into his novels was, indeed, from an artistic point of view not always advantageous. Whenever he completed a novel, he complained that he had not managed to incorporate all he intended to say. In a letter to E.F. Jung in April 1880 he stated that many times he had "to recognize with pain that not even the twentieth part of what I had wished to say was expressed." He felt like the philosopher V. Solov'ev that mankind knows infinitely more than it has hitherto expressed in science and art. "I feel," he added, "that I harbor much more in me than I was able to express as a writer."¹⁶ Yet at the same time he speaks of the inadequacies in his writing, the drawn out tension in his work (*rastjanutosi* and *natjanutosi*). To his wife he wrote in July 1874 in the midst of working out the plan for *A Raw Youth* that he had much too much material--"herein is the main drawback. When I looked at it as a whole, I discovered that I had combined four novels. Strakhov always saw in this my main shortcomings."¹⁷ The critic N.N. Strakhov, whose opinion Dostoevskij highly respected, had written to him in connection with his novel *The Possessed* (1872):

You are overloading your works, you are making them too complex. ... This deficiency, it is understood, is connected with your merits. ... And the entire secret, it seems to me, consists in the toning down and weakening of the tension, in lowering the subtle analysis, instead of twenty images and hundreds of scenes one should limit it to one image and ten scenes. ...¹⁸

Although Dostoevskij was fully aware of his tendency to draw out his novels and was certainly the first one to recognize this imbalance in his work, he was not able to correct the problem, even though he repeatedly reread Pushkin hoping thereby to learn restraint. Dostoevskij admitted to Strakhov that he suffered and is suffering from this his major fault: "Until now I have not learned to control my means. Too many novels at once preoccupy me, so that there is neither measure nor harmony."¹⁹ But to budding young writers he advised that one of the greatest gifts of a writer is to be able to strike out

some of one's own writing: "All great writers wrote in an extremely condensed manner."²⁰

To follow Strakhov's advice would have meant a return to the monological concept of the novel as practised by Turgenev and Goncharov. It would have meant depicting a single major hero with fixed character traits, who could have acted only within the boundaries of a predetermined design. It would have been a hero with a specific temperament, full of harmony, whose exterior and interior, action and behaviour reinforced and strengthened that unity and predominant character trait. But it is precisely that one-dimensional and organic unity hitherto encountered in the concept of man, which Dostoevskij renounced, albeit not categorically. His characters are not preconceived; their behaviour can turn in any direction. While in a monological depiction the information about a character comes straight from the vocal author-narrator in a pictorial or descriptive form, Dostoevskij violates this narrative tradition of characterization. He dramatizes a situation, behaviour or a specific viewpoint, believing thereby to be more objective and to give the reader a chance to test for himself the author's design. Whether one or the other method carries more verisimilitude is determined ultimately by the author's persuasiveness, the manner and skill of the artistic presentation.

In destroying the monological predominance of the traditional novel, Dostoevskij decidedly separated himself from contemporary writers like Turgenev, Goncharov, Pisemskij and Leskov; only Tolstoj was singled out as being equal to his artistry. He repeatedly stresses that he is not interested in describing cities, circumstances and customs of people, or in making "pictures of our little corners," which is a major theme in the novel dealing with modes of life (*bytovoj roman*). He was not interested in the static, picturesque painting of reality, but rather in dynamic actuality, in current events, in the here and now (*tekuchest*).²¹ What he produced then was a novel which was intensely dramatic and explosive and almost always with a catastrophic ending. He showed a predilection for depicting crime, extreme passion and violence, intrigue and horror, so much so that his contemporaries accused him of a fantastic and distorted portrayal of reality. The truth of the matter is that he alone dared to portray the facts of life, its ills and ugly side, the thought of the "underground man."

Dostoevskij in turn criticized his contemporaries for failing to see actuality, the shocking events of the day, for missing their task and not recording the plaguing problems of man. In a defence of his work and especially of the actuality and truth of his heroes, he maintained in 1874 that "our talented writers have, indeed, portrayed in a

highly artistic manner the life of the upper middle circles and in doing so they believed that they had shown the life of the majority. ... On the contrary their life is an exclusive life and only the life I depicted is the general rule. Future generations who are less biased will be convinced of that; the truth will be on my side. I believe in that." Further, he fails to see any profundity in Russian literary heroes--from Pushkin's Silvio to Tolstoj's Levin--seeing in them merely egoists who were brought up badly. Because they suffer only from their shallow egoism, they can easily be cured. Having noted the failure to point out the real problem, he characterizes his own achievements by saying: "Only I have portrayed the tragic suffering and self-torture of the underground, the consciousness of a better existence and the realization that it can never be reached, but most of all the conviction of these unfortunate ones, that everybody is like them and that there is no point for a cure." He asks, who can help those who have lost all faith in everything that is holy, and who will support them after their cure? Convinced of his artistic mission to lay bare the minds of his young heroes he announced: "I am proud that I was the first to portray the real Russian majority and the first to have revealed its abnormal and tragic side (*urodlivuju i tragicheskiju storonu*)." The origin of the underground man he saw in "the disappearance of faith and in the vanishing norms of society."²²

It is precisely such a contemporary theme as the manifestation of atheism within families and among youth (or rather the "blaspheme and its refutation"), which reached its culmination in *The Brothers Karamazov*. In the treatment of such topical problems Dostoevskij also saw the essence of realism. When he sent the chapter "Pro and Contra" of his last novel to his editor he pleaded with him not to change anything as everything was based on reality, "the heroes and whatever they uttered, all anecdotes about the children are true and have been printed in the newspapers ... nothing has been invented by me."²³ In a letter to Strakhov he again defends his realism which is based on actuality: "I have my own special view of reality (in art), and that which the majority call fantastic and exclusive, is for me at times the very essence of reality. ... In every newspaper you will find an account of the real facts. ... To our writers they are fantastic, because they don't know them; and yet, they are reality. ..."²⁴

Dostoevskij never shared the indifference to newspaper reports of his fellow writers. They kept him abreast of current events and provided him with many a subject matter. Perusing several papers during a day, he urged others to partake in this enlightening process. To one of his young correspondents he wrote: "Do you get any newspapers? For heaven's sake, read them! One can't do otherwise today, not to be fashionable, but so that the visible connection of all public and private affairs should become ever stronger and clearer."²⁵

Like most realists, Dostoevskij aimed at depicting types, but once again his concept differed from that of his contemporaries who, for the most part, conceived a type as one who, over a long period of time, has become deeply rooted in society. His are unusual types, representatives of a small group, intellectuals who are most often isolated from the cultural tradition of their people. They are possessed with an idea which usually looms larger than their character. Although unusual and rare, these types were to be encountered in Russian society at the time. In a sense they are typical of a specific era and may thus be called epochal types.²⁶ It is thus not surprising that most of Dostoevskij's heroes are based on prototypes. Here are only two examples from *The Possessed*. In creating Peter Verkhovenski, Dostoevskij believed he created "a character, a type, though rare in society, but nonetheless one who typifies the villainous kind in the political murder of the Nechaev Affair." The other enigmatic, "dark character," also a villain, is Nikolaj Stavrogin of whom Dostoevskij says: "In my opinion this is a typical Russian character. ... Of course, in all his typicality he is a rarity, but it is a Russian character of a certain circle of our society."²⁷

The ultimate task of Dostoevskij's realism "is to find man in men," a factor which of course accounts for his probing into the minds of his characters. It was clear to him that "evil in mankind is concealed deeper than the physician-socialists suppose; that in no organization of society can one escape evil."²⁸ Thus the ultimate aim of his novels was always the elimination of abnormality, guilt and criminality, not through reforms, or any outside forces, but through a spiritual regeneration, through love and mercy. Although in the final analysis God had to be summoned to alleviate man's plight, Dostoevskij saw himself as a tool in this process because he pinpointed contemporary problems through his psychological analysis. Precisely this contemporaneous, current reality provided him with the source of his novels. In a letter to A.N. Majkov in 1868 Dostoevskij expounds on his special brand of realism: "I have completely different concepts about actuality and realism than our realists and critics. My idealism is more real than theirs. ... If one were to relate everything that we Russians have lived through the last ten years in our spiritual development--the realists would call it fantasy. While in actuality it is genuine and true realism. ... It is only deeper than theirs. ..."²⁹ The presentation then of a synthesis of contemporary Russian anarchism through the psychological analysis of a series of characters in the hope that mankind may ultimately achieve a kind of "universal harmony," Dostoevskij viewed as the highest form of artistic realism. His concept of realism is once again reinforced when he entered in his notebook: "They call me a psychologist; it is not true, I am a realist in the highest sense, i.e., I am portraying all the depths of the human soul."³⁰

When Dostoevskij stresses that he is not a psychologist but merely a realist who depicts the soul of others, this can only mean that he is not testing or applying a specific psychological theory, but rather that he is a profound recorder of human behaviour. Based on observation, his psychology has decidedly a personal and subjective flavour, bearing the stamp of his own observation and experience. In any case, Dostoevskij never spoke about any psychological theory (neither of his nor of anyone else's) as he was generally reluctant to speak about his creative process. Psychology is for him a mere tool in his psychological analysis. The whole aspect of psychological influences and his knowledge of scientific literature still seem to be quite nebulous. The reliance on conjectural evidence or the attempt to determine his knowledge of contemporary psychology on the basis of his analysis, frequently yielded contradictory evidence. A case in point is Bakhtin's assertion that "Dostoevskij had a negative attitude toward contemporary psychology, both in scientific literature and in fiction, as well as toward the way it was practised in the law courts." Indeed, Dostoevskij shows in his own novels, *Crime and Punishment* and *The Brothers Karamazov* that the judges with their ready-made formulas are incapable of approaching the undetermined personality of the accused. Only the detective Porfirij Petrovich with his intuitive approach is able to penetrate Raskolnikov's soul. Equally valid is Bakhtin's observation when he maintains that Dostoevskij saw in psychology "a degrading materialization of the human soul, a sacrifice of the soul's freedom." All of this corresponds fully with Dostoevskij's concept of the human personality which is at best indeterminable and unpredictable, i.e., complex in its nature. Finally, Bakhtin declares:

Dostoevskij constantly and harshly criticized mechanistic psychology, both its pragmatic line based on concepts of common-sense and utility, and particularly its psychological line, which equated psychology with physiology. He ridiculed it in his novels as well. We need only recall the "lumps on the brain" in Lebezyatnikov's explanations of Katerina Ivanovna's spiritual crisis (*Crime and Punishment*).³¹

Although we know that Dostoevskij was intensely interested in the latest work on psychology, his library contained no specific entry as a possible source for his modes of characterization.³² The only specific influence hitherto recorded is that of Carus' *Psyche*. Smith and Isotoff have convincingly demonstrated that as a psychologist Dostoevskij was a follower of Carus and like Bakhtin they came to the same conclusion. Similar to Carus, Dostoevskij does not postulate causation for psychic behaviour, but emphasizes unpredictability of impulse and shows how the characters follow their whims. Since he

believed in free will, "there is in his habit of mind no trace of the scientific determinism which was to animate Zola, Dreiser, and the rest of the Naturalistic School."³³ Smith and Isotoff see Dostoevskij's hostility to systematic, positivistic psychology expressed further by the underground man in *Notes from the Underground* (1864):

As a matter of fact, if ever there is discovered a formula which shall exactly express our wills and whims ... which shall make it absolutely clear what those wills depend upon, and what laws they are guided by, and what means of diffusion they possess, and what tendencies they follow under given circumstances, if ever there is discovered a formula which shall be mathematical in its precision, well gentlemen, whenever such a formula shall be found, man will have ceased to have a will of his own--he will have ceased even to exist. Who would care to exercise his will power according to a table of logarithms? In such a case man would become not a human being at all, but an organ handle or something of the kind.³⁴

The above arguments convincingly state that Dostoevskij was against mechanistic psychology, particularly its physiological line which equated psychology with physiology. Although it is not spelled out, clearly phrenology and physiognomy fall into this category, for they even more than any other approach provided ready-made formulas which claimed to facilitate the understanding of man. For Dostoevskij human character is being much too complicated and complex to be able to reduce it to a simple schematic presentation. In fact, had time and space permitted, his characters would have become more complex, and the reader would have discovered even more layers as in a Russian matryoshka. Thus critics often speak of his characters as unfinalized versions, i.e., he knew much more about them than he had them reveal about themselves. Oscar Wilde saw Dostoevskij's greatest contribution in the fact that he "never completely explains his characters."³⁵

But whatever Dostoevskij negates at one time, he may uphold at another, whenever he finds it essential to establish the verisimilitude of his characters, including the depiction of his characters' exterior in order to reveal their interior. He is most often aware of a character's physical make-up, makes extensive use of his physical appearance and records carefully the physical reflection of a character's mental state. An analysis of his portraits will show that whenever necessary he adheres to the principle of the correlation between a character's physical properties and those of his psyche. Admittedly, this never became a major mode of characterization as in Goncharov's writing, but merely another link in his multifaceted depiction. Most often, however, such a depiction was overshadowed by direct psychological analysis. While it was still possible for Goncharov to depict the dichotomy of characters like Rajskij or Vera (*The*

Precipice) in a physiognomic manner, it would have been an unsurmountable task to reveal the contradictory characteristics of one of Dostoevskij's heroes in a verbal portrait; and yet, in many instances he attempted to indicate character traits via their physical properties.

It is clear, however, that Dostoevskij had gone beyond physiognomy and phrenology, which also accounts for the fact that he never referred to Gall or Lavater, but there are ample indications in his work that he was well aware of their teachings. Likewise, of the many memoirists, none of them left us any indication as to Dostoevskij's flirtation with these pseudo-sciences, except his personal physician S.D. Janovskij, whom he befriended when the former began to show the first signs of epilepsy. Between 1846 and his arrest in 1849, Dostoevskij visited the doctor daily, not only because of his illness and friendship, but also because of his excellent library. Janovskij recorded their discussions, describing how frequently he would arrive home and find Dostoevskij immersed in some book. Of Russian writers he would forever recommend Gogol as a teacher, especially for budding writers like himself, adding that, after all, "we are all suffering from the same afflictions as Manilov, the impertinence of Nozdrev, the coarse clumsiness of Sobakevich, and from all kinds of follies and vices." But then Janovskij made a rather pertinent observation:

Besides the belletristic works, Feodor Mikhailovich would frequently borrow from me medical books dealing with mental disorders and with the development of the skull according to Gall's old theory, but which was at the time in fashion. This last book with illustrations fascinated him so much that he frequently came to me in the evenings in order to discuss the anatomy of the skull and brain, the physiological function of the brain and nerves, the meaning of the elevation on the skull to which Gall attached great importance. He would then apply each of my explanations to the shape of his own head, and in demanding from me a comprehensible explanation for each depression and elevation on his head, he would frequently drag on our discussion way past midnight.³⁶

In this respect Janovskij was in line with the physicians of the time in Russia who, indeed, were practising phrenologists.³⁷ The excellent shape of Dostoevskij's head he compared to that of Socrates, a comparison which pleased the young writer since he himself had come to the same conclusion. Janovskij's phrenological account of Dostoevskij's countenance and head makes for a rather interesting comparison with the famous portrait painting of Dostoevskij by Perov. While Janovskij emphasized the exactness of his physical features, Perov not only captured the physical likeness, but also the spiritual Dostoevskij, "the main idea of his personality." It is a physiognomic

depiction, "as if he himself were looking into himself," the high forehead and the entire facial expression speak of an activity of the mind and emotions.³⁸ But what is more important is that Perov's entire process of painting provoked Dostoevskij subsequently to set forth his concept of portraiture, which is again fully in accord with his understanding of realism and the complexity of human personality.

Dostoevskij's wife tells us in her memoirs that before Perov started to paint her husband, he visited them every day for an entire week; he observed him in various situations, forced him to be argumentative for the sake of capturing on canvas the most characteristic expression of his face, namely that which he had when he was absorbed in artistic thoughts. He, so to speak, captured in the portrait the "moment of creation."³⁹ What Perov did in actual practice as a portrait painter was a year later, in 1873, expressed in Dostoevskij's *The Diary of a Writer* as advice to young painters. Here he argued that reality cannot be represented as it is, simply because the whole substance of things is inaccessible; one can only perceive reality as it reflects itself in one's idea after it filters through the senses. As an example he then cites the case of the portrait painter:

A portraitist, for instance, seats his subject, in order to paint his portrait; he is getting ready and looks intently. Why is he doing this? Because he knows from experience that a man does not always resemble himself and, for this reason, he tries to discover "the fundamental idea of his physiognomy" to arrest that moment in which the subject resembles himself most. In the ability to find and arrest this moment lies the gift of the portraitist.⁴⁰

Although the above passage pertains to portrait painting, it is equally valid when applied to literary portraiture, for here too, only the idea, or the essence of a character's being can be captured and expressed through physical presentation. To capture on canvas the fundamental idea of a personality is actually a monological approach. Because of the limitation of his medium, the portraitist has no other choice even though he may perceive the complexity of personality. But while Dostoevskij recognized the gift of the portraitist, he nonetheless considered this kind of depiction inadequate because it does not allow the presentation of the whole character, but only the "moment in which the subject resembles himself most." The writer, who is not limited by his medium or forced to say everything at once, may depict his character in several different portraits. Nonetheless, he encounters similar problems, if he attempts to present all of a character's diversity in one single verbal portrait.

In this difficulty in depicting in portrait form all the various faces of a character and having the physical features harmonize with character traits, one can also find

Dostoevskij's reticence regarding full psycho-physical portraits.⁴¹ It also accounts for a gallery of portraits, all of which differ in content and form. Thus in Dostoevskij's writing one encounters, though rarely, no portrait at all, or partial portraits, giving only an indication of a character's psychological make-up; one also encounters full psycho-physical portraits or, on the other hand, merely anatomical enumerations, as in theatrical instructions. All this variety indicates not only that Dostoevskij took a laconic attitude towards portraiture, but also that none were created according to a specific scheme or norm. In depicting a character with permanent character traits, Dostoevskij resorted to the traditional monological method.

Difficulties arise with complicated personalities, modern types who display contradictory characteristics and about whom much remains unsaid. Those are the unfinalized characters whom Oscar Wilde found so fascinating. To depict truthful and fully one would have to have not one, but several portraits displaying the various faces of their personality. Indeed, at times one gets the impression that he attempted to get rid of the external as quickly as possible in order to concentrate on the inner disposition. Raskolnikov is a case in point. As if attaching no importance to his appearance, the narrator simply says of his hero when he introduces him in *Crime and Punishment*: "Incidentally, he was good looking, with beautiful dark eyes, dark brown hair, medium in height, slender and erect."⁴² This account reveals nothing of the diverse character of Raskolnikov and certainly speaks against the concept of organic unity; at best it may be looked upon as just another face from among the many faces of his hero. Raskolnikov's psychological portrayal is so extensive and intense that one could have done without that meagre description. Indeed, were it not for other detailed portraits of other characters, one would think that Dostoevskij avoided portraiture at all cost.

A study of Dostoevskij's portraiture is further complicated by the fact that his theoretical statements regarding characterization do not always coincide with his practical application. It is obvious that Dostoevskij was not bound by anyone's theories, not even his own when it came to the process of creation. It is thus not important whether he created according to any psychological, phrenological or physiognomic theories or whether he was endowed with some extraordinary power of seeing the psyches of others; what is important is that the author-narrator in Dostoevskij's novels almost always utilizes the external, physical make-up of his characters. The initial physical appearance alone initiates reflection and observation and with it the analysis of the inner via the exterior. Only rarely does he bypass the exterior and proceed directly with the depiction of the inner workings of his characters. Verisimilitude and realism demanded this process from which even Dostoevskij could not escape.

But since the ultimate goal of portraiture is the depiction of the psychic make-up of a character, Dostoevskij goes far beyond normal realism and what it had to offer in terms of revealing character traits via physiognomy. He either observed more and read much more from the exterior than any other writer or attributed little relevance to exterior as a source of character. In any case, while the exterior is employed, it is disproportionate and varies from character to character. There is, for example, no plausible explanation why all characters in *The Brothers Karamazov* are described with a portrait, while Ivan is not. Was it neglect or was he not worthy of a full portrait? Or did his exterior lack credibility as a source of characterization? The latter cannot be the case, as Dostoevskij's own practice demonstrates the opposite.

Dostoevskij did, however, come to the conclusion that the entire personality, in all its complexity, cannot be revealed through physical portrayal. The idea that a subject rarely resembles his true self prevented him from attempting a total portrayal. A total portrayal would have been artistically intolerable to Dostoevskij, for he draws a sharp line between copying and an artistic presentation of reality. He admonishes young artists that in striving for photographic reproduction they are bound to produce a lie. Photographic truth and mechanical exactness are merely the raw material. A true artist never copies, but expresses his own vision of the world and thereby creates a higher, artistic truth: "Depict people as people and leave photography to the phrenologists and judges."⁴³

The critic V. Kirpotin aptly summarizes Dostoevskij's creative ability and the role he attached to external phenomena:

Dostoevskij had the ability to see directly into the psyches of others. He looked into their souls as if he were equipped with a magnifying glass which allowed him to discern the subtlest nuances and to observe the most inconspicuous changes and transitions in man's inner life. *By seemingly passing over external barriers*, Dostoevskij directly observes the psychological processes which take place in man, and he commits them to paper. ...

There was nothing a priori in Dostoevskij's gift of seeing the psyches, the "souls" of others. This gift took on extraordinary proportions, *but it was based on introspection, on observation of other people* and on the diligent study of man in Russian and world literature, i.e., *it was based on internal and external experience* [ital. mine], and had therefore objective significance.⁴⁴

It is important to note that Kirpotin is one of the few critics to point out that Dostoevskij's "gift of seeing the psyches of others" was not only based on introspection, but equally on observation of external phenomena. Dostoevskij had a predilection for what was the immediate source for phrenological or physiognomic delineation, i.e., observing the

exterior of those around him.

Strakhov, who travelled with Dostoevskij, relates that the writer was not enthralled with sightseeing, not even with monuments, only with the masters and that "all his attention was devoted to people, and he perceived only their disposition and character. ..." ⁴⁵ Of his own walks on Sundays in St. Petersburg Dostoevskij writes in *The Diary of a Writer* (1873): "I like, when roaming through the street, to look attentively at certain wholly strange passers-by, to study their faces and to conjecture: who are they, how do they live, what is their occupation and what, at this particular moment, attracts their particular interest." ⁴⁶ Since the important thing for Dostoevskij was the depiction of the sum total of his heroes' psychological development, especially their consciousness of themselves, he employed all possible elements to aid him in the construction of convincing images. Whether the author-narrator views the hero directly or depicts him through his selfconsciousness, in either case the aim of presenting a concrete image is the same. In the words of Bakhtin, even if the hero becomes the object of his own reflection, i.e., how he reveals and perceives himself, Dostoevskij has him employ all the characteristic traits of himself: "All of the hero's fixed, objective qualities, his social position, his sociological and characterological typicality, his habitus, his spiritual mien and even his physical appearance, i.e., everything usually employed by the author in creating a concrete and substantive image of the hero. ..." ⁴⁷

But in spite of the attention which Dostoevskij devoted to the physical appearance of his heroes and the extensive use of it in his full literary portraits, critics have neglected these portraits as a device of characterization. Until recently the critical literature on Dostoevskij has been chiefly devoted to ideological problems and the psychopathological analysis of his heroes, while his poetic devices, especially literary portraiture, has been generally neglected. ⁴⁸ It stands to reason that his profound psychological insight, his direct penetration into the inner make-up of his heroes, has been far more fascinating than the comparatively meagre depiction of character traits via the physiognomic mode. Yet, the direct literary portrait, though overshadowed by the purely psychological depiction, is no less present in Dostoevskij's work than in that of Turgenev. He used it in much the same manner as his contemporaries, albeit not systematically. The difference is, however, that he goes far beyond what a physiognomic reading of the exterior of his characters had to offer.

Chapter II: The Early Period: *The Landlady* (1847), *Netochka Nezvanova* (1849), *The Village of Stepanchikovo* (1859), *The Insulted and Injured* (1861), *Notes from the House of Death* (1861)

Looking at Dostoevskij's work chronologically, one is struck by a progressive increase in the use of the literary portrait. The opposite might be expected since his early work was produced at the height of the naturalistic school, which featured portraiture in its poetics. Yet in *Poor Folk* and *The Double* and in a series of tales and stories, such as *Mr. Prokharchin*, *A Novel in Nine Letters*, *A Faint Heart* and *White Nights*, there are either no portraits, or no significant references to physical features indicative of character traits. Much in these stories, all of which were published between 1846-48, is based on Gogolian thematics, with a strong appeal to humanism and justice. The heroes are, on the whole, a variation of one and the same type, insignificant civil servants who suffer from misfortune and psychological instability; plagued by loneliness and guilt, they lack basic sociability. Inasmuch as they are delineated directly through psychological portrayal and action, they anticipate Dostoevskij's later purely psychological portraits, especially in *Notes from the Underground* (1864), a confession in which the underground man mercilessly lays bare his consciousness and the ambivalent nature of his personality.

Because of this kind of depiction (without a direct portrait of the protagonist) one can say that Dostoevskij had no desire to rival his contemporary "literary painters."⁴⁹ Indeed, in the introductory paragraph of *A Faint Heart* he tells his reader that he will not follow the contemporary manner of writing: "The author of this tale naturally has the urge ... to reveal the customary preliminary information about his heroes, explaining and describing their rank, age, position and title, and finally also their character. But because we have so many writers who begin in this manner, this in itself causes the author of this tale to begin directly with the action."⁵⁰ But while the physical appearance of the characters is not revealed, they are very much aware of their own physical shortcomings. This awareness is most often presented through their conscious agonizing reflection on themselves. In the case of Devushkin in *Poor Folk*, a rather sophisticated device is employed: the recognition of oneself in the image of another well-known literary image. In reading Gogol's *Overcoat* Devushkin feels humiliated, as he recognizes his own self in every feature of Akakij Akakevich, but he is thunderstruck when he also recognizes in the mirror none other than Akakij Akakevich: "I glanced to the right into the mirror, and what I saw there was simply enough to drive you mad. ..."⁵¹

Although Dostoevskij attempted to rid his stories of external events typical of the naturalistic school, in order to concentrate on psychological experience, he fully retained the expository and descriptive style, as well as the omniscient reflective storyteller. (The dialogical expository manner became a characteristic feature of his great novels only later.) As a result he created not physiological sketches but rather psychological sketches. Only in some stories of the 1840's such as *The Landlady*, *Polzunkov*, and *Netochka Nezvanova* do we encounter an occasional description of the physical appearance of his heroes. Of the more than thirty literary works from the early period, this chapter concentrates on those which best illustrate Dostoevskij's use of portraiture as a device of characterization.

The Landlady is a melodramatic mystery story in which fantasy and reality tend to merge. Its hero, Ordynov, is a scholar and a dreamer who likes to walk the street and stare at everything like a "flaneur." Nothing escapes him and he deciphers everything, as if reading between the lines in a book: "Everything engaged him; he did not miss a single impression and with a contemplating gaze he observed the faces of the strolling people. ..." ⁵² Having introduced Ordynov as an acute observer, Dostoevskij depicts the other characters whom he encounters through the eyes of the protagonist. The mysterious strange couple, Murin and Katerina, who turn out to be husband and wife, are first observed by Ordynov when they enter the church:

He raised his eyes and inexpressible curiosity overcame him at the sight of the two new arrivals. One was an old man and the other a young woman. He was tall, erect and brisk, but thin and with a sickly pale complexion. His appearance suggested a newly arrived merchant. ... He wore a long, unbuttoned, dark and rather festive caftan with fur. Underneath one could see another tightly worn Russian dress. Around his neck he had a glaring, red kerchief and in his hand a fur cap. His long, thin greyish beard reached to his chest, and from underneath his overhanging and gloomy brows his eyes were burning with a feverish and arrogant look. ⁵³

Murin's disturbed condition, suggested by his pallor and the feverish, arrogant look of his burning eyes is, indeed, subsequently confirmed through his action and Katerina's confession. Through his evil and mystical power, through his demonic passion and horrific tales, he torments her and keeps her like a prisoner.

In contrast to Murin, Katerina is depicted as a gentle, sensitive dove:

She was about twenty and extremely beautiful. She wore an expensive, blue fur-trimmed jacket, and her head was covered with a white satin kerchief, which was tied under her chin. She walked with downcast eyes and a kind of pensive importance, spread all over her figure, reflected

itself sharply and sadly on the delightful contours of the meek, childlike, gentle lines of her face.

Minutes later, upon leaving the church, Ordynov notices further: "... that from her dark blue eyes with their long shining eyelashes burning tears were rolling down her pale face. On her lips there was a shivering smile; but on her face one noticed traces of a kind of childish fright and a mysterious terror."⁵⁴ The suggested dichotomy of Katerina's character, her changing mood and instability, is repeatedly stressed in the course of the story. Her love/hate relationship to her husband and later her romance with Ordynov is as confused as her erratic behaviour and her mental state. Here is only one example from among many of how exterior reaction is indicative of mental disposition, when she relates her lifestory to Ordynov:

She suddenly looked at him, as if she intended to say something astonishing, but then she calmed down and lowered her gaze. Her face began to redden and suddenly blushed all over. Her eyes began to glitter through the tears ... and one could see that some kind of a question was moving on her lips. With a bashful slyness she looked twice at him and then again she lowered her gaze.⁵⁵

Netochka Nezvanova is Dostoevskij's first attempt at a full-scale psychological novel. As in *The Landlady* Dostoevskij uses the technique of confession: the heroine Netochka becomes the narrator and relates her own upbringing at three different stages, corresponding to the three different families with whom she lived. All her experiences, love and hatred, and her growing sensitivity from childhood to adolescence, are exposed in detailed psychological accounts. Especially memorable are Netochka's recollection of the last eight years of her upbringing in the home of Aleksandra Mikhailovna and her husband Peter Aleksandrovich. Although in love with her husband, Aleksandra Mikhailovna's relation with him was strained. She suffered from the memory of a previous affair and was always guarded in his presence. He, in turn, was vain and egotistical, and payed little attention to her. Their relationship became even more strained when he had learned of his wife's secret. He torments her with his morally superior behaviour and allusions to her weakness. These characters are presented not only on a psychological plane, but also on the physical plane. The entire recollection devoted to Alexandra Mikhailovna is interspersed with several portraits and passages portraying specific psychological traits. This monological depiction using exterior features, must be considered one of the most extensive portrayals of all of Dostoevskij's characters. Here are only a few examples of how the narrator (at the age of thirteen)

perceived her benefactress:

Alexandra Mikhailovna was a woman of twenty-two, quiet, gentle and loving; it was as though some secret sorrow, some hidden heartache had cast a shade of austerity on her lovely features. Seriousness and austerity seemed out of keeping with the angelic candour of her face, it was like mourning on a child. One could not look at her without feeling greatly attracted. She was pale and was said to be inclined to be consumptive when I saw her for the first time. ... I soon noticed by instinct, by intuition, that her lot was by no means so rosy as might be imagined at first sight from her quiet and apparently serene life, from her appearance of freedom, from the unclouded brightness of the smile which so often lighted up her face. ... She was of timid disposition and weak in will. Looking at the candid and serene features of her face, one would never have supposed that any agitation could trouble her upright heart. It was unthinkable that she could dislike anyone. ... She was passionate and impressionable by temperament, but at the same time she seemed afraid of her own impressionability, as though she were continually guarding her heart. ... Sometimes at the sunniest moments I noticed tears in her eyes as though a sudden painful memory of something eating away in her conscience had flamed up in her soul. ...⁵⁶

The secret sorrow which so often clouded Alexandra Mikhailovna's lovely features and provoked many a tear, was, as Netochka discovered only later, her benefactress' painful memory of a previous affair. Although the narrator's analysis rests on the exterior phenomena, at first sight it does not resemble a physiognomic examination. We know her subject is beautiful and gentle, but specific features receive no attention and the reader is free to imagine them. Moreover, there are no indications that the reading of her face is done according to any system or theory, except instinct and intuition. The physical features are neglected and only the general impression of her face was conveyed, indeed a much more sophisticated manner of depiction. One might say that the portrait is the product of a physiognomic analysis, a trend which later became a tradition among the novelists of nineteenth-century Russia. Although the entire interpretation rests on the behaviour and facial expression of Alexandra Mikhailovna, there is room for questioning even the keen perception and impressionability of young Netochka. But then one ought not to forget that by the time Netochka's recollections were put on paper she had grown up and was able to elaborate more fully on her experiences as a child. Moreover Netochka was educated in the manner of Rousseau's *Émile*: an education which stressed not facts, but the development of instinct. Moreover she had read Plutarch's account of great men containing elaborate physiognomic character traits.

One last description of Alexandra Mikhailovna further attests to the narrator's unusual predilection for drawing verbal portraits:

Her features will never be effaced from my memory. They were regular, and their thinness and pallor only accentuated the severe charm of her beauty. Her thick black hair, combed smoothly down, framed her cheeks in a sharp, severe shadow; but that seemed to make more sweetly striking the contrast of her soft gaze, her large, childishly clear blue eyes, which reflected at times so much simplicity, timidity, as it were defenceless, as though fearful over every sensation, over every impulse of the heart--over the momentary gladness and over the frequent quiet sorrow. But at some happy unruffled moments there was so much that was serene and bright as day, so much goodness and tranquility in the glance that penetrated to the heart. The eyes, blue as the heavens, shone with such love and gazed so sweetly, and in them was reflected a feeling of sympathy for everything that was noble. ... But when, and this happened quite often, exaltation sent the colours rushing to her face and her bosom heaved with emotion, then her eyes flashed like lightning. ... And in this sudden rush of inspiration, in the transition from a mood of shrinking gentleness to lofty spiritual exaltation ... there was at the same time so much that was naive, so much that was childishly impulsive ... that I believe an artist would have given half his life to portray such a moment of lofty ecstasy and to put the inspired face on the canvas.⁵⁷

Perhaps Dostoevskij's desire to capture that "moment of lofty ecstasy" caused him to have his narrator belabour the above portrayal. On the other hand, it is a portrayal of a beloved person, one loved and treasured as a friend and mother. Netochka's enthusiasm for her guardian is thus perfectly natural, considering that she was an orphan who was treated like a daughter. Nonetheless, critics felt, particularly in the passages dealing with the "analysis of characters," a constant effort to be effective, to impress the reader with the profundity of the author's observation. This excessive effort, as well as the sentimental-romantic stylistic features, produced the opposite effect. A.V. Druzhinin in his review accuses the author of a lack of measure: "Mr. Dostoevskij seemingly does not know, that it is better not to say everything than to say too much; it is as if he were afraid of not being understood. ... He was not able to disguise the traces of the extra hard work. ..." ⁵⁸ Dostoevskij obviously took note of his criticism, for he referred to it in the epilogue of *The Insulted and Injured* (1861)⁵⁹ and in his later writing he avoided such protracted direct romantic descriptions.⁶⁰ Although Dostoevskij subsequently made some changes in later editions of *Netochka Nezvanova*, he never completed it. Druzhinin's negative criticism and a new realistic orientation, no doubt, contributed to the truncated form of *Netochka Nezvanova*.

The first works published by Dostoevskij after his penal servitude in 1859 were *Uncle's Dream* and *The Village of Stepanchikovo* (also known in English translation as *The Friend of the Family*). While these two novellas were attempts to return to literature, they clearly were also relays on the path to his great novels. Many thematic elements and

situations, the use of peculiarities of speech as a device of characterization, the increasing application of dialogue and theatrical features (especially the dynamic structure), the attempt at depicting specific types--all of these form a definite link with his later works. But most of all, the world of dreaming with its corresponding style, so apparent in the earlier works, is decidedly absent at the start of this new period.⁶¹ As to the use of the literary portrait, one gets the impression that Dostoevskij returned to the traditional mode of characterization, for each character is given a portrait, even though it is at times a purely physical portrayal. The omission of character traits from the portrait is a frequent occurrence which was made possible because of the extensive psychological characterization elsewhere. This omission is particularly apparent in the introduction of novelistic characters with complex personalities, whose exteriors do not necessarily harmonize with their psychological disposition. In short, by not attaching specific character traits to rather permanent physical features, the author is free to reveal the complexity and changing personality of his protagonist. Is it an attempt to deal with the problem, or rather with the difficulties of capturing in portraiture the most propitious "moment, when one resembles himself most"; or is it a way of getting around the issue?

Of the two novellas from 1859, only *The Village of Stepanchikovo* will be more closely scrutinized. It is artistically the most complete of Dostoevskij's earlier, shorter works and is one of the few with a happy ending. Moreover, the approach to portraiture is more extensive and systematic. Dostoevskij himself considered it at the time one of his best creations and claimed that he created two new types, hitherto neglected in Russian literature:⁶² the kind-hearted and noble landowner of Stepanchikovo, the retired Colonel Jegor Il'ich Rostanev and the hypocritical Foma Fomich Opiskin. The attitude of the author to these two opposing characters can be detected from their names alone--one has the ring of a true Russian epic hero, the other is more reminiscent of Gogol's coinage in mischievous moments and should be obvious to any European reader.

The action of the story revolves around Foma Opiskin, who dominates and tyrannizes the inhabitants of Stepanchikovo. He mystifies everyone with his piety and knowledge and gradually is able to assume total control of the household, including its owner. In reality, however, he is a parasite and hypocrite, whose rule and condescending behaviour come to an end when he spreads false rumours concerning the chastity of Nastasja, the governess with whom Rostanev is in love. Though banned from the house, the cunning and crafty Foma Opiskin manages to return and even accepts Rostanev's apologies for the insults he had to endure. The tension and drama are brought about by the tyranny of Opiskin, who is able to assert himself, simply because the meek and kind Rostanev has for the longest time tolerated the pharisee's behaviour.

The grown-up narrator Sergej Rostanev is an acute observer and never fails to introduce his new acquaintances via portraiture and a detailed characterization of their personalities. We even encounter a lengthy group portrait of the inhabitants of Stepanchikovo at a tea party. What is striking in the structure of this story is the systematic introduction of a character first through a portrait, and then through an elaboration on their personalities. In fact, the story is divided into chapters according to the names of the various characters, with a portrait beginning the characterization. Of his uncle, Colonel Rostanev, the narrator, reports on the very first page:

... There are natures that are perfectly satisfied with everyone and can get used to everything; such was precisely the disposition of the retired colonel. It is hard to imagine a man more peaceable and ready to agree to anything. If by some caprice he had been gravely asked to carry someone for a couple of hours on his shoulder, he would perhaps have done so. He was so good natured that he was sometimes ready to give away everything at first asking, and to share almost his last shirt with anyone who coveted it. He was of heroic proportions [*bogatyrskoj*]; tall and well-built, with ruddy cheeks, teeth white as ivory, a long, dark-blond moustache, a loud ringing voice, and a frank hearty laugh; he spoke rapidly and jerky. He was at the time of my story about forty, and had spent his life almost from his sixteenth year in the hussars.⁶³

The characterization of Rostanev is obviously not done through his physical features. In fact, at first sight the physical description does not harmonize with his character. One would have expected a stronger personality in that herculean body. The initial sketch, containing but a general impression, followed by the most salient features (as in theatrical instructions), became a Dostoevskijan trademark, especially in the portrayal of major figures, like Rostanev. The portraits of secondary characters are frequently physiognomically more meaningful; being limited in its function, the portrait is the most economic device for conveying at least an inkling of their dispositions. The emphasis in that first sketch of Rostanev on his extreme kindness is, indeed, so pronounced that he appears rather foolish; he is one of those "natures that are perfectly satisfied with everyone and can get used to everything" and he is "ready to give away everything at the first asking." Such kindness and naivety invite malicious exploitation. Indeed, this brief characterization contains the theme of the story: the impotence of the good. Aware of the contradiction and foolishness in Rostanev's sketch, Dostoevskij has his narrator hasten to explain in great detail his uncle's "remarkable character," both through action and expository descriptions. He is anxious to convince the reader that his goodness is genuine and that the disharmony between his appearance and disposition should not stop

anyone from forming a perfectly positive image: "Besides being kindhearted in the extreme, my uncle was a man of the most refined delicacy in spite of a somewhat rough exterior."⁶⁴

The image of Rostanev is to be the exact opposite of Foma Opiskin. It was Dostoevskij's first attempt at drawing a "positively beautiful individual."⁶⁵ Dostoevskij was forever painfully searching for the true carrier of the ideal of beauty and goodness, which manifested itself in literary characters such as Myshkin, Zosima and Alesha. But overall he failed to present these Christ-like figures convincingly.⁶⁶ From the very beginning Dostoevskij was aware of the difficulties in portraying an ideal human being in the midst of an evil world. In their Christ-like behaviour these characters emerged as fools in the eyes of others, in the same way as even Christ would be perceived if he were to appear and behave according to his precepts. Ultimately such a figure could not be consistent without creating the opportunity for mischief. The generous, kind and open-hearted Rostanev, who avoids harming others at all costs, in the process of sacrificing himself in the interest of others creates the opportunity for Foma Opiskin's insolent domination of an entire household. We have here the first example of many to come of Dostoevskij's double-edged concept of beauty and goodness as having not only a positive, but also a negative side.⁶⁷ Were it not for the ardent attempt to explain and defend Rostanev's behaviour vis-à-vis Foma Opiskin, one would simply have to dismiss Rostanev's character as a satire of a perfect human being, or perceive it as a portrayal of the impotence of the good in human character. But Dostoevskij's narrator, the learned scholar, admits that Rostanev is weak and soft in disposition, "but it was not from lack of will, but from fear of wounding, of behaving cruelly, from excess of respect for others and for mankind in general. ... He was ... weak-willed and cowardly only when nothing was at stake but his own interest. ..."

Rostanev himself ascribes Foma Opiskin's ignoble doings to his sufferings, to the humiliation he had endured in the past and to the bitterness it left in him. In his opinion such a person must not only be forgiven, but be reconciled with humanity. What is more, he is always "blaming himself for other people's shortcomings,"⁶⁸ an idea which became paramount in Dostoevskij's thinking--namely that we all share in the guilt for evil and immorality in our world. Although it is difficult to argue against such principles, the fact remains that in sheltering Foma Opiskin, Rostanev exposes others in his entourage to his tyranny.

Much more convincing as a type and character is Foma Opiskin who dominates the entire action in Stepanchikovo. Dostoevskij created in him a Russian Tartuffe, but unlike

Molière's character he is not out to gain financial advantages or seduce his benefactor's wife. His extreme vanity and tyranny is a reaction to a crushed and injured ego. It is a defence against previous humiliations; he insists on being addressed as Your Excellency. He mystifies everyone with his pseudo learning and his plan to write a divinely commissioned book. In reality he is a hypocrite and liar who is compensating for a lack of self-respect. Foma Opiskin is similar to Goljadkin (*The Double*), whose reaction to his deprived dignity resulted in obtaining pleasure from treating others with arrogance, disrespect and condescension, all of which stem from his constant psychological need for self-assertion.

Several critics, notably Ju.N. Tynjanov, have not only detected psychological affinities between Gogol and Foma Opiskin, but also convincingly demonstrated that Dostoevskij parodied in this story Gogol himself and Gogol's last work, *Selected Passages from the Correspondence with Friends*.⁶⁹ Even "the portrait of Foma, his life-style in the home of Rostanev is also reminiscent of the exterior and life-style of Gogol towards the end of the 1840's and beginning of the 1850's." By the time Foma Opiskin is directly portrayed by the narrator, the reader is fully aware of his doings and can easily recognize his image and perceive the impact he has upon others. He is portrayed as he enters the salon after having a nap:

I scrutinized this gentleman with intense curiosity. Gavril [a servant] had been right in saying that he was an ugly little man. Foma was short, with light eyebrows and eyelashes and grizzled hair, with a hooked nose, and with little wrinkles all over his face. On his chin there was a big wart. He was about fifty. He came in softly with measured steps, with his eyes cast down. But yet *the most insolent self-confidence was expressed in his face, and in the whole of his pedantic figure* [ital. mine]. To my astonishment, he made his appearance in a dressing-gown--of a foreign cut it is true, but still a dressing-gown--and he wore slippers too. The collar of his shirt unadorned by any cravat was a lay-down one *à l'enfant*; this gave Foma Fomich an extremely foolish look. He went up to an empty arm-chair, moved it to the table, and sat down in it without saying a word to any one. All the hubbub, all the excitement that had been raging a minute before, vanished instantaneously. There was such a hush that one could have heard a pin drop. Madame la Générale became as meek as a lamb. The cringing infatuation of this poor imbecile for Foma Fomich was apparent now. She fixed her eyes upon her idol as though gloating over the sight of him. Miss Perepelitsyn rubbed her hands with a simper, and poor Praskovja Iljinichna was visibly trembling with alarm. My uncle began bustling about at once.⁷⁰

The appearance of this "ugly little man" unquestionably matches his ugly character and the "insolent self-confidence" which "was expressed in his face, and in the whole of

his pedantic figure" is but a compensation for his previous failures and humiliations.

The other characters who dance around Foma Opiskin are drawn in lesser detail, although they belong overwhelmingly to Dostoevskij's favourite types, the impoverished and spiritually void squanderers who occupy no specific position in society, at least not a useful one. They are hangers-on like Foma Opiskin, and pretend to be what they are not. A typical example is Rostanev's lackey, Grigory Vidopljasov. Under the influence of Foma Opiskin he writes poetry and becomes increasingly snobbish. He conceives of himself as a foreigner, particularly in the features of his face. He overestimates his own worth as a poet and contemplates changing his name to a more poetic one like Oleandrov or Tjulpanov in order to avoid being ridiculed by the critics as Baron Brambeus was. Here is how the narrator perceives him:

I glanced at him, and it seemed to me that he, too, was worthy of attention. He was still a young man, well-dressed for a flunkey, just as well as many a provincial dandy. The brown coat, the white breeches, the straw-coloured waistcoat, the patent-leather boots and the pink tie had evidently been selected intentionally. All this was bound to attract attention immediately to the young dandy's refined taste. The watch-chain was undoubtedly displayed with the same object. He was pale, even greenish in the face, and had a long hooked nose, thin and remarkably white, as though it were made of china. The smile on his thin lips expressed melancholy, a refined melancholy, however. His large prominent eyes, which looked as though made of glass, had an extraordinarily stupid expression, and yet there was a gleam of refinement in them. His thin soft ears were stuffed up with cotton wool--also a refinement. His long, scanty, flaxen hair was curled and pomaded. His hands were white, clean, and might have been washed in rose-water; his fingers ended in extremely long dandyish pink nails. All this indicated a spoilt and idle fop. He lisped and mispronounced the letter "r" in fashionable style, raised and dropped his eyes, sighed and gave himself incredibly affected airs. He smelt of scent. He was short, feeble and flabby-looking, and moved about with knees and haunches bent, probably thinking this the height of refinement--in fact, he was saturated with refinement, subtlety and an extraordinary sense of his own dignity. This last characteristic displeased me, I don't know why, and moved me to wrath.⁷¹

The essence of Vidopljasov's character, his affected delicacy and high opinion of himself, is mainly revealed through his attire and speech. Yet underneath that affected appearance and stupid expression of his eyes, the narrator detects elements of refinement and a delicate melancholy on the expression of his lips. The potential inner psychological conflict indicated in this duality subsequently becomes reality, as Vidopljasov is committed to an insane asylum. As a tragic, rather than a farcical figure, Vidopljasov is reminiscent of another lackey, Smerdjakov, in *The Brothers Karamazov*.

Of the group portrait consisting of some ten figures at the tea party given in honour of Sergej Rostanev's arrival, only the sketch of Tatjana Ivanovna merits particular attention, as another example of Dostoevskij's continuous use of the psycho-physical portraits in depicting secondary characters. An orphan, supported by others, she has spent her entire life dreaming of her ideal love. She is a rather simple-minded, harmless, but good-hearted old maid, who has endured no small share of humiliation. But at the height of her poverty she comes into a large inheritance. Although the narrator ironically states that he has much more to say about this real "heroine" of his story, nonetheless in his first encounter he captures the essence of her personality:

Finally, and perhaps most conspicuous of all, was a very strange lady, dressed richly and extremely youthfully, though she was far from being in her first youth and must have been at least thirty five. Her face was very thin, pale, and withered, but extremely animated; a bright colour was constantly appearing in her pale cheeks, almost at every movement, at every flicker of feeling; she was in continual excitement, twisting and turning in her chair, and seemed unable to sit still for a minute. She kept looking at me with a kind of greedy curiosity, and was continually bending down to whisper something into the ear of Sashenka, or of her neighbour on the other side, and immediately afterwards laughing in the most childish and simple-hearted way. But to my surprise her eccentricities seemed to pass unnoticed by the others, as though they had all agreed to pay no attention to them. I guessed that this was Tatjana Ivanovna, the lady in whom, to use my uncle's expression, "there was something phantasmagorical," whom they were trying to force upon him as a bride, and whose favour almost every one in the house was trying to court for the sake of her money. But I liked her eyes, blue and mild; and though there were already crow's-feet round the eyes, their expression was so simple-hearted, so merry and good-humoured, that it was particularly pleasant to meet them.⁷²

In 1861 Dostoevskij published his first full-sized novel, *The Insulted and Injured*. Although it resembles his great novels in its profusion of characters, plots and subplots, and in its intense, melodramatic atmosphere, it belongs at the threshold of the novel-tragedies. L. Grossman labelled it a splinter novel; indeed, it is reminiscent of the novel-feuilleton, albeit with a strong psychological and ideological content.⁷³

Dostoevskij's novel was met with negative criticism; he was accused of lack of knowledge of life and of inventing absurd characters; only the fourteen year old Nelly was singled out by Dobroljubov as worthy of acclaim. Moreover, the novelistic form with which Dostoevskij was experimenting was by the 1860's obsolete and outmoded. Dostoevskij himself attributed the failure of *The Insulted and Injured* to the haste with which it was written. While this may have been the case with this novel, the notion that

Dostoevskij would have produced artistically much greater work if he had had the time, is a myth. He planned, organized and polished like other writers and was much too proud to release anything which he considered not worthy. Which work of his could have been written by a careless and hasty writer?⁷⁴ Dostoevskij himself admitted his shortcomings, when he wrote in 1864: "I agree that in my novel I have presented many dolls, but no people, that there are many walking books, but no artistically developed characters." He felt, however, that when he started to write his work would contain some forceful passages and that two of the characters would be well-developed, "even artistically developed."⁷⁵ Nevertheless, the characters in his novel are not yet drawn as compounded personalities; they are rather simplified and one-dimensional.

Although there are two plots and several sub-plots, they are united both by the narrator, Ivan Petrovich, who is a personally involved participant, and by Prince Peter Aleksandrovich Valkovskij, who determines the fate of all the characters. The narrator is a writer, a humanist, and a defender of the insulted. The subject matter being related by him is the actual novel. Being in the foreground of the novel, and an active character, he functions also as an intermediary; he uncovers relationships, comments, judges⁷⁶ and is therefore in a perfect position to characterize his protagonists.

As an acute observer of character, the narrator has all the makings of a physiognomist, but he is not consistent in painting a meaningful portrait of all of his characters. Although Natasha, one of the main characters, emerges with a definite image, she is not drawn in portrait form even though we encounter detailed accounts of her physical reflection at given moments. Though the narrator does not profess to be a physiognomist, his friend, the investigator Filipp Fillipovich Masloboev, the source for many of the characters' background, is one. On one occasion, when he reads the narrator's disturbed face correctly he adds: "I am going in for the study of physiognomy, you know; it is an occupation too." Immediately thereafter the two meet a drunk acquaintance of Masloboev, but it is the narrator, Ivan Petrovich, who scrutinizes his facial expression:

[He was] a thick-set, corpulent, bald-headed man of fifty, with a puffy, drunken, pock-marked face and a nose like a button, dressed rather carelessly, though he ... had a big pin in his tie and wore spectacles. The expression of his face was malicious and sensual. His nasty, spiteful and suspicious looking little eyes were lost in fat and seemed to be peeping through chinks.

The narrator's observation is correct, for Masloboev describes him as a "beast, a rogue. ... He is a Judas and Falstaff both at once ... but he is a disgusting, sensual brute, up to all sorts of tricks."⁷⁷ Though vividly sketched, this is one of those many superfluous presentations, the function of which is merely to characterize physiologically various types of the Russian capital.

Another example, reminiscent of the physiological sketch, though highly individualized at the same time, is that of an older beggar. He is Jeremiah Smith, an Englishman who had been married to a Russian, and is Nelly's grandfather. Unable to forgive his daughter for cheating him out of his money and squandering it with Prince Valkovskij, he becomes embittered, impoverished and loses his mind. Smith's portrait is striking; here is a man no longer functioning as a human being. That moment before death, when the facial expression is blank, lifeless and meaningless is captured in this depiction:

The old man, stooping and tapping the pavement with his stick, drew near the confectioner's, with his slow, feeble step, moving his legs as though they were sticks, and seeming not to bend them. I had never in my life come across such a strange, grotesque figure, and, whenever I had met him at Müller's before, he had always made a painful impression on me. His tall figure, his bent back, his death-like face with the stamp of eighty years upon it, his old greatcoat torn at the seams, the battered round hat, at least twenty years old, which covered his head--bald but for one lock of hair not grey but yellowish-white--all his movements, which seemed performed, as it were, aimlessly, as though worked by springs--no one who met him for the first time could help being struck by all this. It really was strange to see an old man who had so outlived the natural span alone, with no one to look after him, especially as he looked like a madman who had escaped from his keepers. I was struck, too, by his extraordinary emaciation; he seemed scarcely to have any body, it was as though there were nothing but skin over bones. His large lustreless eyes, set as it were in blue rims, always stared straight before him, never looking to one side, and never seeing anything--of that I feel certain; though he looked at you, he walked straight at you as though there were an empty space before him. I noticed this several times. He had begun to make his appearance at Müller's only lately, he was always accompanied by his dog. ... I wondered, standing still on the opposite side of the street and gazing fixedly at him. ... "What is he thinking about?" I went on wondering. "What is there in his head? But does he still think of anything at all? His face is so dead that it expressed nothing at all. And where could he have picked up that disgusting dog, which never leaves him, as though it were an inseparable part of him, and which is so like him?"

There follows an equally masterful description of the dog, which is fully in harmony with that of the old man; their whole appearance seems almost to cry aloud at every step: "We are old, old. Oh Lord, how old we are!"⁷⁸

The method of portrayal in the remainder of the four portraits, i.e., that of Nelly, Alesha, Katja and Prince Valkovskij is almost the same. They are introduced in portrait form with an account of their appearance and a more detailed description of their facial features and expression. Alesha, the Prince's son, is described this way: "The full crimson lips of his small, exquisitely modelled mouth almost always had a grave expression, and this gave a peculiarly unexpected and fascinating charm to the smile which suddenly appeared on them, and was so naive and candid that, whatever mood one was in, one felt instantly tempted to respond to it with a similar smile. ... He dressed ... elegantly ... elegance ... was innate with him." Then there is Nelly: "With her flashing black eyes ... her thick, dishevelled, black hair, and her mute, fixed enigmatic gaze. ... The expression in her eyes was particularly striking. There was the light of intelligence in them, and at the same time an inquisitorial mistrust, even suspicion. Her pale, thin face had an unnatural sallow ... and her lips were exquisitely formed with a peculiar proud bold line. ..." And lastly there is Katja, Alesha's last love:

She was a short, soft little blonde ... with a mild and serene expression of face, with eyes of perfect blue. ... it was not a case of beauty. ... But this was only the first impression. ... I succeeded in getting a fuller insight into her in the course of the evening. The very way in which she shook hands with me, standing looking into my face with a sort of naively exaggerated intentness, without saying a word, impressed me. ... I felt at once that I had before me a creature of the purest heart.⁷⁹

These are excerpts from otherwise full portraits in which the narrator is able to capture only some of the main character traits. But we cannot detect, for example, that Alesha is also weak, naive and prone to betraying his love or that much of these characters' misfortune and suffering is in no small part due to the fact that all of them act in a somewhat impulsive, egotistical manner. Although these characters are still depicted with specific predominantly pleasant character traits, in reality they are actually complex characters. This demonstrates that Dostoevskij had not yet been fully comfortable in depicting a complex personality in portrait form.

The most complete portrait is that of Prince Valkovskij, who gradually emerges as the arch villain in the novel, and also as the main protagonist. E. Tur, a nineteenth-century critic, singled out Prince Valkovskij's depiction as being "the most prominent, the most complete, the most true to life and to the reality of a character."⁸⁰ Prior to Valkovskij's direct appearance in the novel, we learn that he had married for money, prospered, and tormented his wife to death. He took money from Nelly's pregnant mother and abandoned her. He prevented his son's marriage to Natasha; he

schemed and plotted to have him marry the rich Katja, but not so much for his son's sake as to enrich himself. His evil will, in short, determined the fate of all of the characters. Aware of this cunning and deceitful character, the narrator takes special note of him upon confronting him face to face:

He took us all in in a rapid attentive glance. It was impossible to guess from this glance whether he had come as a friend or an enemy. But I will describe his appearance minutely. He struck me particularly that evening.

I had seen him before. He was a man of forty-five, not more, with regular and strikingly handsome features, the expression of which varied according to the circumstances; but it changed abruptly, completely, with extraordinary rapidity, passing from the most agreeable to the most surly or displeased expression, as though some spring were suddenly touched. The regular oval of his rather swarthy face, his superb teeth, his small, rather thin, beautifully chiselled lips, his rather long straight nose, his high forehead, on which no wrinkle could be discerned, his rather large grey eyes, made him handsome, and yet his face did not make a pleasant impression. The face repelled because its expression was not spontaneous, but always, as it were, artificial, deliberate, borrowed, and a blind conviction grew upon one that one would never read its real expression. Looking more carefully one began to suspect behind the invariable mask something spiteful, cunning, and intensely egoistic. One's attention was particularly caught by his fine eyes, which were grey and frank-looking. They were not completely under the control of his will, like his other features. He might want to look mild and friendly, but the light in his eyes was as it were twofold, and together with the mild friendly radiance there were flashes that were cruel, mistrustful, searching and spiteful. ... He was rather tall, elegantly dressed, rather slimly built, and looked strikingly young for his age. His soft dark brown hair had scarcely yet begun to turn grey. His ears, his hands, his feet were remarkably fine. It was pre-eminently the beauty of race. He was dressed with refined elegance and freshness but with some affectation of youth, which suited him, however. He looked like Alesha's elder brother. At any rate no one would have taken him for the father of so grown-up a son.⁸¹

At first sight it looks as if we are dealing here with a handsome human being whose features are perfectly chiselled. What is handsome and beautiful are the individual anatomical parts of his face. In short: "It was preeminently the beauty of race." We have here then a true villain endowed with beautiful features, an impossibility in the Dostoevskijan concept of a beautiful human being [*prekrasnogo cheloveka*]. Exterior perfection plays a role, when it pertains to objects, but in a beautiful human being there must be harmony, an organic union between body and soul, between content and form, between physical beauty and spiritual beauty. This Dostoevskijan concept of beauty is intimately related to Schiller's "beautiful soul" which unites and harmonizes all possible opposites in man's existence and will bring about peace and freedom.⁸²

Ultimately, according to Dostoevskij, it is spiritual beauty that determines the beauty in a human being; only inner spiritual life is important to Dostoevskij and not inherited beauty. Precisely this inner harmony, the expression of soul and heart which forms one organic union, is absent in the face of Prince Valkovskij. The facial expression does not harmonize with individual beautiful features. Already the general impression is indecisive, and it is not clear whether he has come as a friend or as an enemy. Then the narrator notices the rapid change in his facial expression, passing from an agreeable to a most surly expression. In spite of the beauty of individual features, his face does not make a pleasant impression; in fact, it "repelled because its expression was not spontaneous," it is artificial, deliberate and gives the impression that it is borrowed. Valkovskij uses his beautiful features to disguise his real character. But the experienced narrator discovers that behind the mask a cunning, spiteful and intense egoist lies hidden. Also the eyes, which became for Dostoevskij the most reliable source of inner reflection, further reveal a cruel and mistrustful character streak.

The rapidly changing facial expression which turns from agreeable to surly, underlines the duality in Valkovskij's character. There are also opposing elements on his face--the pleasant features and the unpleasant expression--but they are not indicative of a dual personality simply because the beautiful individual features do not convey anything by themselves. What comes across is the expression, which is overwhelmingly suspicious and unpleasant. Thus we are not dealing here with a dual personality as is suggested by S.M. Solov'ev⁸³ but rather with a totally evil egoist. True, he has at times a pleasant expression, but it is premeditated, and a mere mask hiding his true self. As a father, he is naturally concerned with the welfare of his son, but again, we know that he had left him alone and gone abroad. Moreover, whatever he did for his son was an indirect feeding of his own ego.

Valkovskij's portrait (one in which beautiful features do not harmonize with character) is the first of many to come. It is Dostoevskij's first detailed character portrait and his narrator has all the makings of an acute physiognomic observer who is able to discern behind a mask the true character of the protagonist. Dostoevskij, like physiognomists before him, came to the conclusion that individual beautiful features do not presuppose a beautiful character. Valkovskij's facial expression confirms that his beauty is false and imaginary. Valkovskij is also the first character who confesses his philosophy of life at length to a narrator, and in doing so reveals himself in all his hideousness. His tirade is directed against the prevailing idealism and humanism, and more specifically against what the Prince called "Schillerism."

Valkovskij justifies his own debauchery and evil by maintaining that all humanity is saturated with viciousness and evil. The truth of humanity would come to light, if it were possible for everyone "to describe all his secret thoughts, without hesitating to disclose what he is afraid to tell and would not on any account tell other people. ... you charge me with vice, corruption, immorality, but perhaps I am only to blame for being more open than other people ... for not concealing what other people hide even from themselves. ..." This argument is typical of Dostoevskij after his Siberian period and could have been uttered by the author himself, for it marks a turning point away from the humanitarian and utopian ideals of the earlier period. The Prince charges that at the root of all human virtues lies the most profound egoism: "And the more virtuous a deed, the more egoism there is in it. Love yourself, that is the only rule I recognize. ... I have no ideals. ... I have never had any conscience-pricks about anything. ... And this fully justified my maxim that the louder and more conspicuous a person's magnanimity, the greater the amount of revolting egoism underlying it. ... I will never give up what's to my advantage for anyone."⁸⁴ To all this perversity, villainousness and insolence (save perhaps the Prince's theory of egoism, for all characters in the novel are to a degree egoists) the narrator reacts in a corresponding manner: "He produced on me the impression of some sort of a reptile, some huge spider, which I felt an intense desire to crush."⁸⁵ Valkovskij is but a forerunner of the hero in *Notes from the Underground*.

From what we learn about Valkovskij's character, from his action, from the commentaries of others and especially from his own confession (which covers some ten pages), he emerges as a one-sided, evil person. Yet a totally evil or totally good character is seemingly incompatible with Dostoevskij's concept of human character. In discussing Gogol's characters, he maintained that personalities like Manilov or Sobakevich are mere types and consequently they can never be seen as truly complete characters, and he added: "It is impossible to have in this world a person who is only a villain and nothing else."⁸⁶ This statement of his is usually cited by critics in support of Dostoevskij's concept of human personality. But the fact remains that we encounter, especially during the 1860's, totally evil characters; moreover, Dostoevskij made this statement at the end of his career. While it is true that Valkovskij in his forty-five year life must have done something good in order to survive--at least two women (whom he promptly ruined) had married him. But in the novel itself not a single good deed is recorded. By the time that Dostoevskij wrote his novel, his humanistic concept of man had been severely shaken. In any case, the novel is a clear statement that natural goodness, love, and compassion are not strong enough forces to conquer evil. Though just and kind, the injured and insulted

face at the end a shattered life; their humiliations go unavenged, while the embodiment of evil, the man who causes everyone's misfortune is left with a bright future and ill-gotten possessions. Evil triumphs at the expense of the good.

Notes from the House of Death (1861) stands apart from the rest of Dostoevskij's fiction. It is not a product of imagination, but rather of Dostoevskij's own experience among convicts and thus resembles a documentary account of Russian prison life. The story tells of a former inmate who had spent ten years among some four hundred convicts in the confines of a Siberian fortification. Out of boredom, the author and narrator records in his memoirs the minute details of his study and observation of prison life. This he achieves by rapidly sketching the personalities, manners, habits, and customs of only a few representative types of inmates. Just after his release from prison Dostoevskij announced to his brother that "he brought with him types of characters hitherto unknown in literature."⁸⁷ Dostoevskij was not so much concerned with the physical deprivation of the prisoners, as he was with their depraved personalities and the working and suffering of the minds of individuals deprived of freedom, and consequently, also of humanity. In being subjugated to the will and force of others, Dostoevskij, along with his fellow prisoners, witnessed the realization of Schiller's dictum: "man is only then totally man when he is free."

Having embarked on a documentary, Dostoevskij deprived himself of various novelistic devices, especially the process of personality development in the depiction of the various convicts. This omission resulted in a heavy reliance on physiognomy and pathognomy. In no other work does he use physical appearance so systematically and extensively as a mode of characterization. Indeed, no character escaped the intense observation of his external features, and consequently literary portraiture came to occupy a central place in this work. The terrible world of Russian prison life is thus objectively depicted, not through a direct exposure of the horrible conditions, but through vivid portraits of representative types of prisoners, among whom are various nationalities and men from all walks of life. Never again was Dostoevskij to indulge so intensely in the pictorial, descriptive method as here, which is not to say that his presentation lacks dynamic and dramatic qualities. Though he still engages in his usual psychologizing, one is nonetheless struck by the narrator's persistent observation, analysis and preoccupation with external features as a source of delineating character. He is forever watching their "grim, branded faces," he tries "to guess what they were thinking," attempting to read their faces as to "what kind of people they are, and what sort of character they have."⁸⁸

Morally speaking, the prisoners are divided into good and evil. In most cases their physical appearance harmonizes with their psychological disposition; in other instances a prisoner with a rather wholesome appearance may turn out to be "a monster, a morally deformed Quasimodo."⁸⁹ And then there are those pleasant human beings who are even capable of crying, but who at a moment of despair had committed murder. Here are only a few examples of the type of portraiture which Dostoevskij employed in introducing his prisoners. In the case of Gazin, the most monstrous prisoner encountered, the narrator begins the portrait with the usual, general impression:

This Gazin was a frightful creature, who produced a gruesome, agonizing impression on everyone who saw him. It always seemed to me that nothing could be more savage and more monstrous than he. In Tobolsk I once saw Kamenev, the notoriously cruel highway robber, and later Sokolov, a deserter and callous murderer ... but neither had seemed as repulsive as Gazin. He reminded me of a gigantic spider, the size of a man. He was a Tatar, stronger than any of the convicts, slightly above medium height, but of Herculean build. He had an ugly, disproportionately enormous head, and walked with a stooping gait and with a distrustful look. ... He spoke very little and was pointedly unsociable. His movements were measured and confident. It was clear from his eyes that he was both intelligent and shrewd, but there was something cruel, haughty and derisive about his face and especially his smile.⁹⁰

The frightful general impression conveyed by Gazin's appearance, is reinforced by an equally general reference to two notorious bandits, neither of whom could equal Gazin's repulsive appearance. The comparison to a gigantic spider has not so much a physical as a psychological and ethical connotation. The shrewd, cruel, derisive and haughty expression of his face further indicates his evil character. The only specific reference to his physical features is his medium height, Herculean build and the disproportionately enormous head. Physical disproportion has always been an all important feature for the physiognomist as an indication of disharmony and character flaws, and here it accords fully with the distrustful, cruel expression of Gazin's face. The information hitherto related is based on the narrator's direct analysis of Gazin's features. To complete the portrait and to clarify somewhat further Gazin's cruel image, the narrator adds that it is rumoured "that he had taken special pleasure in killing little children. ... But perhaps all these horrors had been invented because of the painful impression Gazin produced on all of us. Still all these inventions somewhat fitted him and harmonized with his face."⁹¹ Dostoevskij's description is a typical physiognomic portrayal of a strong personality embodying pure evil.

The very opposite of Gazin is Alej, the Caucasian Tatar, who is strong-willed, but at the same time gentle. The narrator took a special liking to him, taught him Russian and soon there developed a mutual friendship. Here is one of the most sympathetic portraits ever drawn by Dostoevskij:

... Alej was no more than twenty-two and looked even younger. ... His handsome, frank, intelligent and yet gentle, childlike face drew my heart to him the moment I saw him and I was truly glad that fate had sent me such a neighbour. His whole soul was reflected in his handsome--one might almost say beautiful--face. His smile was so trusting, so childishly naive and his large dark eyes so tender, when looking at him I always felt particular pleasure and even relief from my anguish. And I am not at all exaggerating. ... It was hard to imagine how this boy could have preserved such softness of heart, such unbending honesty, such warm understanding all through his years of imprisonment, instead of growing callous and corrupt. But to this I ought to add that his nature was both well-balanced and firm in spite of his gentle appearance. ... He was chaste as an innocent girl and any cynical, foul, shameful act fired his fine eyes with indignation, making them even more beautiful. Though no coward ... he avoided quarrels. ... He was intelligent, modest, tactful ... and was the favourite of all."

This portrait of Alej hardly needs any elaboration, particularly since Dostoevskij provides it himself when he concludes: "I may simply say that I thought him an exceptional human being. ... There are some natures so naturally good and richly endowed by God that the thought that they might at some time or other change for the worse, seems absurd. One never worries about them."⁹²

It would be superfluous to cite additional examples of Dostoevskij's portraiture from this work. The two examples above, representing two distinct types of prisoners, reflect the same approach and devices as the other portraits, although in each portrait Dostoevskij paints an individualized, distinct personality. Whenever appropriate, he characterizes the voice, the gait, the mouth and especially the eyes, which always render a meaningful expression. Although peculiar physical features are noted, on the whole detailed physical description is absent. The emphasis is always on the facial expression, as if the narrator presents only the result of physiognomic and pathognomic analysis. Indeed, the main tool of the narrator is the same as for the physiognomist--skilful observation. Dostoevskij, however, would never allow himself to admit that in this particular work he analyzed his characters according to a particular system. His overwhelming use of the exterior as a mode of characterization is undoubtedly due to the fact that he is not dealing with fictitious characters, but with real people. The majority of characters described are based on real prototypes, i.e., convicts whom Dostoevskij had

actually encountered in prison.⁹³ This account is a literary re-working of his experience in the penal colony, but with a strong stylistic feature reminiscent of his journalistic writings, particularly in the portrayal of one prisoner after another each of whom receives some three to four pages. His success is evident in the profound impact the work had on his contemporaries and the ensuing prison reforms. Tolstoj praised the Christian humanistic spirit, which permeated the *Notes from the House of Death* and considered it one of the great works in world literature.⁹⁴

Chapter III: The Beginning of the Period of the Great Novels:
Notes from the Underground (1864), Crime and Punishment (1866),
The Gambler (1867), The Idiot (1868)

Although Dostoevskij's next important work *Notes from the Underground* (1864) is of central importance in Dostoevskij's thinking, as it reveals the coming of new psychological and philosophical penetration, it is for our purpose of lesser importance, simply because its emphasis is on the purely psychological and not on the literary portrait per se. The principal means of expression is self-analysis. It is a morbidly effective psychoanalysis of oneself, a confession of a split personality, spiteful and vicious, yet dreaming of a paradise on earth. The underground man, the protagonist is "a disenchanted idealist and humanist put to shame."⁹⁵ In an endless dialogue with himself he renounces enlightenment and culture as they have not ennobled mankind; in fact man's existence had become worse. According to the underground man, the mere occurrence of war is testimony that man is not a rational creature; man is basically an irrational being whose chief aim is to preserve his free will, his ego. In the process of self-assertion man has become immoral and sinful and has stored away all kinds of things which he is afraid of revealing to others. The underground man, however, mercilessly lays bare his inner self and the cause of his own existence. Extremely sensitive and rebuffed already as a schoolboy, he retreated ever more from society and, whenever he tried to mix with humanity he again had to endure insults and rejection. Though he feels superior and despises others, he basically seeks their recognition. His failure to assert himself and repeated pathological humiliation shapes and determines his extreme consciousness of himself. Though he substitutes his intellectual superiority and haughtiness for his failures, he cannot escape his own consciousness of himself and the ensuing psychological torture. One of the chief causes of his torturous consciousness is his appearance--more specifically his face--which, in his perception, is ugly.

Although the *Notes from the Underground* has no portrait and no specific physical description of the protagonist, his concern with his own physical appearance is decisive in shaping his personality. Already in the first line he confesses: "I am a sick man. ... I am an evil man. I am an unattractive man." The underground man hates his face, because he feels that it is not only ugly, but also the window to his own inner self. Consequently he avoids looking at anyone, yet he is perfectly aware, or so his consciousness convinces him, that his office companions regard him not only as a queer fellow, but also as a somewhat loathsome person. He wonders why others, equally ugly,

do not display the slightest self-consciousness about their countenance and character. As an example he describes an office-mate: "One of the clerks had a most repulsive, pock-marked face, which looked positively villainous. I believe I should not have dared to look at any one with such an unsightly countenance."

To alleviate this psychological torment he argues that perhaps the reason for looking upon himself with furious discontent is simply due to his vanity and the high standards which he has set for himself:

I hated my face, for instance: I thought it disgusting, and even suspected that there was something base in my expression, and so every day when I turned up at the office I tried to behave as independently as possible, and to assume a lofty expression, so that I might not be suspected of being abject. "My face may be ugly," I thought, "but let it be lofty, expressive and, above all, *extremely* intelligent." But I was positively and painfully certain that it was impossible for my countenance ever to express those qualities. And what was worst of all, I thought it actually stupid-looking. ... I would even have put up with looking base if, at the same time, my face could have been thought strikingly intelligent.⁹⁶

This ugly face is again in the protagonist's way at the most sensitive moment, when he meets Liza, to whom he is attracted, and again he has to compensate with his arrogance to the point that he is even glad that he has such a face. Like Devushkin in *Poor Folk*, Dostoevskij has his hero glimpse himself in the mirror: "I accidentally caught sight of myself in the mirror. My agitated face seemed to me repulsive in the extreme, pale, angry, depraved and with dishevelled hair. 'Let it be, I am glad of it,' I thought, 'I am glad that I will appear repugnant to her; I like that.'"⁹⁷

Even though Dostoevskij depicts his underground man in a purely psychological portrait without any detailed description of his appearance, he nonetheless is able to evoke a full portrait in the reader's mind. The repeated reference to his ugly face suffices to evoke an image which corresponds to his character. The protagonist's hatred for his own face is not simply a matter of aesthetics, but most definitely also of his physiognomic awareness. The underground man is fully conscious of his ugly appearance and no less so of his corresponding sick and evil qualities. Moreover, he displays his physiognomic skill when he correctly delineates Liza's character after intently observing her facial features and expression at their first encounter.⁹⁸

With *Crime and Punishment* (1866) Dostoevskij initiated the true polyphonic novel, in which characters personifying various ideas receive a fair hearing. Though ultimately didactic, the novel can be appreciated on several levels. One of the central ideas is the theory which Raskolnikov attempts to prove, that superior beings are outside the moral

law and may commit a crime for the sake of the welfare of mankind. Though Raskolnikov succeeds in killing the parasitic old woman pawnbroker, his theory fails him, for he is unable to bear the psychological torture caused by the memory of his crime. But most of all he is ashamed of his own weakness, i.e., the realization that his subconscious moral sense is stronger than his rational intellect. The criminal turns out to be a double who alternates between good and evil, and it is to this inner struggle that much space is devoted. Through a series of external influences and especially through the prostitute Sonja, another outcast in society, Raskolnikov begins his moral regeneration, an act which is, however, incomplete and not fully convincing.

Dostoevskij's profound psychological analysis of his hero's soul, in which he masterfully lays bare the innermost secrets of his being, made a presentation of Raskolnikov in full portrait, superfluous. Dostoevskij obviously refrained here from any characterization through physical appearance. Any attempt to reflect the complexity and multiplicity of Raskolnikov's character in a single portrait would have been not only difficult but artistically next to impossible.⁹⁹ At best, he could have depicted Raskolnikov's different faces and the many roles which he had to assume in separate portraits, but then again, each one would have remained incomplete in relation to his total character. Thus Dostoevskij gave only a meagre description of his physical appearance to which the reader could easily attach either the one or the other psychological face of Raskolnikov:

An expression of the profoundest disgust gleamed for a moment in the young man's refined face. He was, by the way, exceptionally handsome, above average in height, slim, well-built, with beautiful dark eyes and dark brown hair. Soon he sank into deep thought, or more accurately speaking into a complete blankness of mind; he walked along not observing what was about him and not caring to observe it.

What we do encounter, however, in abundance are pathognomic descriptions depicting momentary psychological states. Here are only two examples. After reading the letter from his mother who expresses her concern and reminds him of his prayers in childhood and worries that he may have fallen prey to modern thinking, Raskolnikov, who is about to commit his crime, reacts in the following manner: "Almost all the time when he was reading, from the beginning of the letter, his face was wet from tears; and when he finished reading it was pale and distorted from convulsion, and a severe, bitter, malicious smile was gliding over his lips. ... His look and thought demanded space. ... When he walked he did not notice the road; he whispered to himself and even talked with

himself aloud. ... Many thought he was drunk." Haunted by the memory of his crime and driven to despair, to the point that he has fallen ill, Raskolnikov is visited by Luzhin, at that time still a stranger to him: "Raskolnikov was lying there silently and persistently without thought, he looked upon the stranger. His face ... was extremely pale and expressed an unusual suffering, as if he had undergone an agonizing operation, or as if he had just come off the torture rack. But the stranger awakened in him more and more attention, at first bewilderment, then distrust and even fear."¹⁰⁰

What has been said about Raskolnikov's pathognomic portrayal is equally applicable to the remainder of the characters in the novel. Unlike Raskolnikov, they are all depicted in a physical portrait at the moment they make their first appearance. Their physical description is, however, much more detailed than that of Raskolnikov. With the exception of a few hints as to character traits in the portraits of the old pawnbroker and Svidrigailov, they lack on the whole references to the psychological make-up. Indirect delineation, through action and behaviour have taken over the function of the psycho-physical portrait. Yet at the same time, great attention is devoted to attire, accommodations, and peculiarities of speech of the individual characters--features all of which are utilized as elements of characterization.

L. Grossman is rather enthusiastic about Dostoevskij's portraiture in *Crime and Punishment*. The rich collection of Petersburg types of the 1860's in the novel brought to his mind engravings of the period, particularly those of Gavarin and Agin, some of the artists whom Dostoevskij admired, particularly those of the latter, who illustrated Gogol's *Dead Souls*. Grossman seemingly does not distinguish between direct and indirect portrayal and uses the term "portrait" in a general sense, for he asserts: "An original and keenly observant painter from nature, the novelist produced incisive, detailed portraits, remarkably close to life despite the grotesque quality they sometimes possessed." He noted further that Dostoevskij is a "fast" painter and that the portraits in this work are characterized by an "all inclusive brevity. ... A few lightning strokes of the brush take the place of the pages of lengthy description, encountered in his later works." He mentions the portraits of Alena Ivanovna, the pawnbroker, and Svidrigailov as examples of Dostoevskij's portraiture, but these are also the only ones that come close to a psycho-physical portrait, while the remainder consist of physical attributes. Appropriately Grossman notes: "In the six lines of his portrait of the old woman, Dostoevsky gives us an image that is so astonishingly lifelike that much that is unexpected in Raskolnikov's behaviour is explained by this outwardly repulsive appearance of the revolting moneylender."¹⁰¹ In the eyes of Raskolnikov she is but a

loathsome, useless louse who is sucking life out of people, an image he later applies to himself.¹⁰² The heartless woman who dominated her sister and demanded enormous interest from needy people, and who is brutally murdered by Raskolnikov, is indeed characterized in a befitting portrait, reminiscent of Gogol's grotesque depictions.

The old woman stood facing him [Raskolnikov] in silence and looking inquiringly at him. She was a diminutive, withered-up old woman of sixty, with sharp malignant eyes and a sharp little nose. Her colourless, somewhat grizzled hair was thickly smeared with oil, and she wore no kerchief over it. Round her thin long neck, which looked like a hen's leg, was knotted some sort of flannel rag, and, in spite of the heat, there hung flapping on her shoulders, a mangy fur cape, yellow with age. The old woman coughed and groaned at every instant. The young man must have looked at her with a rather peculiar expression, for a gleam of mistrust came into her eyes again.¹⁰³

Monological depictions similar to the one above of the pawnbroker are also employed for other lesser characters like Marmeladov's wife Katerina Ivamovna, Raskolnikov's friend Razumikhin, Raskolnikov's physician, Zosimov, Raskolnikov's mother Pul'kheria Romanovna, and the police clerk Zametov. They all display one major character trait. Accordingly, they are given a befitting physical portrayal containing an incisive description of their most salient features, but no specifics as to their character traits, and if there are any indications, they are rather vague without reference to their facial expressiveness or lack thereof. Here is only one example of the proud and pretentious physician Zosimov, who tried to impress others with his competence:

Zosimov was a tall, fat man with a puffy, colourless, clean-shaven face and straight flaxen hair. He wore spectacles, and a big gold ring on his fat finger. He was twenty-seven. He had on a light grey fashionable loose coat, light summer trousers, and everything about him was loose, fashionable and spick and span; his linen was irreproachable, his watch-chain was massive. In manner he was slow and, as it were, nonchalant, and at the same time studiously free and easy; he made efforts to conceal his self-importance, but it was apparent at every instant. All his acquaintances found him tedious, but said he was clever at his work.¹⁰⁴

In contrast, the more important characters like the clerk Marmeladov, his daughter Sonja, Raskolnikov's sister Avdotja Romanovna (Dunja), the detective Porfirij Petrovich and Peter Petrovich Luzhin are more complex in character and correspondingly are depicted in more protracted portraits. Some of them even receive two portraits. In every case, a portrait is presented the moment a character is introduced. In the case of Marmeladov, for example, the narrator relates the impression Marmeladov made on

Raskolnikov after their chance encounter in the tavern:

The young man often recalled this impression afterwards, and even ascribed it to presentiment. ... At the other persons ... the clerk looked with a condescending contempt ... as persons of station and culture inferior to his own. ... He was a man over fifty, bald and grizzled, of medium height, and stoutly built. His face, bloated from continual drinking, was of a yellow, even greenish, tinge, with swollen eyelids, out of which keen, reddish eyes gleamed like little chinks. But there was something very strange in him; there was a light in his eyes as though of intense feeling--perhaps there were even thought and intelligence, but at the same time there was a gleam of something like madness. He was wearing an old and hopelessly ragged black dress coat, with all its buttons missing except one, and that one he had buttoned, evidently clinging to this last trace of respectability. A crumpled shirt front, covered with spots and stains, protruded from his canvas waistcoat. Like a clerk, he wore no beard, nor moustache, but had been so long unshaven that his chin looked like a stiff greyish brush. And there was something respectable and official about his manner too. But he was restless; he ruffled up his hair and from time to time let his head drop into his hands dejectedly resting his ragged elbows on the stained and sticky table.¹⁰⁵

The complexity of Marmeladov's character is revealed primarily through his confession to Raskolnikov. His contradictory feelings and mood, his tragic greatness and at the same time his behaviour as a holy fool (*jurodivij*) is reflected in the disharmony of his facial expression with the "light in his eyes as though of intense feeling" and the "gleam of something like madness." Marmeladov's portrait becomes really meaningful, however, after he fully reveals himself to Raskolnikov and we learn of his weakness, his failure to hold positions, his acceptance of blame for the plight of his family, his low estimation of himself and his firm belief that God will save him in the end. What is interesting in the encounter of Raskolnikov and Marmeladov is their intense mutual observation of each other. Marmeladov is as perceptive as Raskolnikov when he approaches the latter with the words: "Young man ... in your face I seem to read some trouble of mind. When you came in I read it, and that is why I addressed you at once."

The difficulty of capturing a multiplicity of character traits, particularly when the character consciously attempts to camouflage his feelings, is illustrated in the portrayal of Svidrigailov. He is Raskolnikov's double, a kind of projection of his negative self. Svidrigailov, a rich dissolute landowner, is void of any idealism, has totally succumbed to debauchery. His career of crime serves as a warning to Raskolnikov that his crime and self-isolation and rationality will only lead to the same spiritual self-destruction in which his double finds himself.

Before revealing Svidrigailov's true character, Dostoevskij depicts him in at least two partial and one full portrait merely as a mysterious stranger. He has come to Petersburg in pursuit of Raskolnikov's sister Dunja with whom he had fallen in love while she was engaged as governess at his estate. At this stage the reader is not aware, nor for that matter is the narrator, of Svidrigailov's background, and thus Dostoevskij gives only a general depiction of his appearance as he approaches his newly rented quarters in the same house where Sonja is residing:

He was a man of about fifty, rather tall and thickly set, with broad high shoulders which made him look as though he stooped a little. He wore good and fashionable clothes, and looked like a gentleman of position. He carried a handsome cane, which he tapped on the pavement at each step; his gloves were spotless. He had a broad, rather pleasant face with high cheekbones and a fresh colour, not often seen in Petersburg. His flaxen hair was still abundant, and only touched here and there with grey, and his thick square beard was even lighter than his hair. His eyes were blue and had a cold and thoughtful look; his lips were crimson. He was a remarkably well-preserved man and looked much younger than his years.¹⁰⁶

This portrait of Svidrigailov reflects nothing of the baseness and banality of his character. He seems to be at peace with his conscience; his fresh complexion and his fashionable attire indicate a rather handsome man. Only his eyes with their cold look may betray the mask he is wearing, and his attire reveals that he is accustomed to taking care of himself. It is nonetheless a realistic account based on a general observation without any intentional scrutinization. In any case, Dostoevskij's narrator is not strongly physiognomically minded in this novel; any meaningful analysis is presented through the eyes of one of the characters. It is the characters themselves who forever examine each other and read each other's faces. It is precisely at such a moment of intense observation that Svidrigailov's second portrait is drawn through the eyes of Raskolnikov. Raskolnikov has learned of his monstrous background and knows that Svidrigailov has found out his secret, which he was about to use as a weapon to carry out his design on Dunja.

Raskolnikov ... stared intently at Svidrigailov. For a full minute he scrutinized his face, which had impressed him before. It was a strange face, like a mask; white and red, with bright red lips, with a flaxen beard, and still thick flaxen hair. His eyes were somehow too blue and their expression somehow too heavy and fixed. There was something awfully unpleasant in that handsome face, which looked so wonderfully young for his age. Svidrigailov was smartly dressed in light summer clothes and was particularly dainty in his linen. He wore a huge ring with a precious stone

in it.¹⁰⁷

That "something awfully unpleasant in that handsome face" assumes a concrete feature during their conversation as Svidrigailov reveals further details about his hideous past. Like Prince Valkovskij, he is governed by passion, sensuality and rationalism at the same time and has a special predilection for young girls. He is responsible for his wife's death and his servant's suicide; he appears even more brutal in earlier drafts of the novel. His cynicism and tendency to experience everything to excess bring him to the recognition that he has fallen too far and the only path left is suicide. His only chance to live he sees in Dunja, but when she rejects him and declares that she can never love him or give herself willingly to him, he is brought to a terminal crisis and commits suicide.

Svidrigailov, however, is depicted not only as a villain. Rather, he is composed of diametrically opposed character traits. Svidrigailov himself admits to Raskolnikov that he has much swinishness in him, but also honesty at the same time. Though a cynic, murderer and tyrant, he can also be magnanimous and is capable of self-sacrifice, altruism and even strong feelings of love. He takes care of Marmeladov's wife and children financially, gives money to Sonja to accompany Raskolnikov to Siberia and provides his fifteen-year old fiancé with much money. But most of all he releases Dunja from his claws when he could have molested her.

The most interesting feature in Dostoevskij's characterization of both Svidrigailov and Raskolnikov is that he has drawn each with a complex or composite personality, the so-called "*širokaja natura*." Such characters, in whom both good and evil, the highest ideal and the lowest banality reside side by side are frequently to be encountered in the remainder of the novels.¹⁰⁸ Svidrigailov, too, speaks about this all-embracing, broad personality. When Dunja expresses dismay at her brother's crime and wonders about its causes, Svidrigailov explains:

Ah, Avdotja Romanovna, everything is in a muddle now; not that it was ever in very good order. Russians in general are broad in their ideas and characters, Avdotja Romanovna, broad like their land and exceedingly disposed to the fantastic, the chaotic. But it is a misfortune to be broad without being a special genius. Do you remember what a lot of talk we had ... on the subject. ... Why, you used to reproach me with this broadness [*širokost'ju*].¹⁰⁹

Although Dostoevskij's short novel *The Gambler* (1867) interrupts the sequence of the great psycho-philosophical novels, it contains some unique psychological sketches of characters who are as haunted by certain passions as are the characters in *Crime and*

Punishment. The setting is an imaginary German gambling place, Roulettenburg, and the characters all belong to the circle of the General. Most of these characters, the Russians, French, and Germans, are dominated by the passion of love and gambling, especially the courageous, intelligent and proud Polina and the narrator-gambler Aleksej Ivanovich. The material in this novel is drawn mainly from Dostoevskij's personal experiences at the time, his love for his future wife Snitkina and his unrestrained passion for gambling. Thus his use of the first person narration seems natural. In the novel the narrator, while at first driven by his feelings of love and his passion for gambling, eventually is dominated only by a mania for roulette. He recognizes that it is not love he is seeking, but rather the quest for it and his gambling passion is caused not by a desire for money, but by the idea of winning, the element of chance and the delirium of the triumph of the irrational in him.¹¹⁰

Being basically anti-European, the narrator draws rather negative comparisons between the German, French and Russian national character traits. He concludes that the Franco-German types are set in their national character; they have a specific and well-fixed form, while the Russian character is still formless. The Russian temperament is generous, free and broad, unrestrained and true to the vastness of its native land. Correspondingly the Russian character, particularly Polina, the general's stepdaughter, is portrayed as an independent, free creature who is capable of all the horrors of life and of passion while the Europeans are drawn as stereotypes.

Although most of the characters are endowed with specific physical features, only Mlle Blanche and "granny," the general's elderly aunt, are depicted in meaningful portraits. By the time Mlle Blanche's portrait is drawn the reader already has an inkling of her main character traits. Her primary goal in life is to live well; to this end she is in search of a rich husband. A dazzling beauty, she easily attaches herself to no less than five men, but she drops each one as soon as she learns of his dismal financial situation. Even the narrator is infatuated with her and falls prey to her predatory and seductive ways. He pays fifty thousand francs for a month of fun with her in Paris, during which time she is also permitted to see other men. Here is how the narrator Aleksej Petrovich sees her:

Mademoiselle Blanche is a beautiful woman. But I don't know if I shall be understood if I say that she has one of those faces of which one becomes frightened. I, in any case, have always been afraid of such women. She is probably about twenty-five. She is tall and has broad and sloping shoulders; her neck and bosom are magnificent; her complexion is swarthy yellow. Her hair is black like ink, and she has got a great deal of it, enough to make two coiffures. Her eyes are black with yellowish

whites; she has an insolent look, her teeth are very white and her lips are always painted; she smells of musk. She dresses effectively, expensively, with style and with much taste. Her hands and feet are exquisite. Her voice is a husky contralto. Sometimes when she laughs she shows all her teeth, but usually she wears a silent and impudent expression. ... I fancy Mlle Blanche is wholly uneducated ... and perhaps not even intelligent, but she is cunning and always suspicious.¹¹¹

Although her true character is only fully revealed in the course of the action, her cunning and suspicious expression and the fear which emanates from her face cause the narrator to be on guard in the presence of such women. Her careful attention to her appearance points towards the shallow seductress which she turns out to be.

A rather humorous note is introduced into the novel when Dostoevskij describes the sudden arrival of the seventy-five year old Antionida Vasil'evna Tarasevicheva at Roulettenburg. The general and his circle are anxiously awaiting a telegram of her death, as they all hope to inherit a great deal from her. Her unexpected arrival causes a catastrophe, which Dostoevskij uses to display his pathognomic skills as he captures their reaction to her appearance. Although Tarasevicheva has lost the use of her legs and has to be carried everywhere in a chair, she is alert, captious, and self-satisfied. She delights in thwarting their expectation, breaking the silence with a peal of laughter, betraying thereby her malicious joy. Here is how the general and his circle react to their surprise visitor:

Seeing granny, the general was struck dumb. His mouth dropped open and he broke off in the middle of a word. He gazed at her open-eyed, as though spellbound. ... De Grioux was petrified ... a look of extreme uneasiness flitted over his face. Mlle Blanche raised her eyebrows, opened her mouth and gazed wildly at granny. ... Polina's expression revealed utmost wonder and perplexity, and she suddenly turned as white as a handkerchief; a minute later blood rushed rapidly into her face. ...¹¹²

But granny's arrival also causes further excitement among the other guests. Arriving with her own servants and all kinds of trunks and boxes, she shouts in a loud peremptory voice and scolds everyone. The narrator notes her bearing, her

commanding and authoritative appearance as she was carried up in the chair which was chiefly responsible for the sensation she caused. Wherever she met any one fresh she scrutinized him inquisitively and questioned me [the narrator] about him in a loud voice. Granny was powerfully built, and though she did not get up from the chair, one could see that she was quite tall. Her back was as straight as a board and she did not lean back in her chair. Her large gray head with its large bold features was held erect; she had a positively haughty and defiant expression and

one could see that her attitude and gestures were perfectly natural. In spite of her seventy-five years there was still a certain vigour in her face and even her teeth were almost perfect. She was wearing a black silk dress and a white cap.¹¹³

Although a secondary character who makes only a fleeting appearance, granny emerges as a superbly drawn convincing character. Her commanding and authoritative bearing, her haughty and defiant facial expression bespeak of a truly independent, self-assured, straightforward and honest matriarchal type so often encountered in Russian society of the past century. Grossman characterizes her as a truly remarkable "epic figure. ... a magnificent old Moscow lady of merchant stock, cheerful, active, imperious, generous and domineering. This is a masterly portrait of Dostoevskij's maternal grandfather's second wife."¹¹⁴ Like most characters in the novel she tastes the temptation of gambling and promptly loses all the one hundred thousand roubles she has brought with her. She admits her foolishness and returns to Russia somewhat tempered.

Moral regeneration through the affirmation of religious spirit is the theme in *The Idiot* (1868). The setting is the Russian capital of the 1860's and more specifically the homes and environment surrounding several prominent families. In unfolding their lives, the novel makes clear that much of the existing evil within this society can be attributed to irreligion and the prevailing nihilism among the younger generation. The frequently encountered statement in the novel: "They don't believe in God and they don't believe in Christ," seems to echo the author's own view of Russia's moral problems of the time. The actual events and plot of the novel are intimately connected with the thought movements and criminal trials of the 1860's. Though profound and in line with Dostoevskij's psycho-philosophical novels, *The Idiot* was ultimately perplexing and ambiguous for many a critic of the time. Too many authorial digressions and subplots obscure the novel's main direction and blur its main ideas.¹¹⁵

In its structure the novel is built on antithesis and consequently the action unfolds around powerful opposing forces: moral sensibility, embodied in the main hero, Prince Myshkin, on the one hand, and on the other, sentiments like vanity, revenge, lust and avarice represented by most of the other characters. Into the midst of this society full of jealousy, greed, hatred and petty crime, Dostoevskij plunges his innocent and naive hero. Unwittingly he becomes entangled in intrigue. The treatment of this involvement, particularly Myshkin's love for two women provide the substance of the novel.

Consonant with its complexity, the novel is teeming with diverse characters ranging from the depiction of highly composite personalities to minor stock characters. In all cases they are introduced via physical portraits which are strikingly uniform in length and

method (the depiction of the most salient features). However Dostoevskij's chief mode of characterization takes place from within, i.e., he once more displays his great psychological acumen and an astounding grasp of the workings of the human character. Dostoevskij naturally devotes special attention to the characterization of the more prominent characters, especially when they are larger than themselves and symbolize a specific idea. Although the characters are introduced in portrait form, the separate psychological analysis is so profound in comparison to the meagre character traits revealed in the portrait that this type of portrayal can hardly be regarded as a major mode of characterization. Indeed, it seems as if its primary function is to aid the reader in the visualization of a character. When Dostoevskij refrains from revealing character in his verbal portraiture, he seems to do so not only because of the difficulties of portraying composite personalities in a single portrait, but because the act of not saying it all adds curiosity and heightens suspense, and suspense is a vital component of Dostoevskij's narrative art. By not attaching specific character traits to a newly introduced personality, the creator is free to unfold character as he wishes, revealing a variety of hitherto unknown and diverse attributes.

Long before the middle of *The Idiot* Dostoevskij introduces all of his players, i.e., some thirty characters in portrait form. We meet them in three successive groups according to importance--first the three major protagonists, Prince Myshkin, Parfion Rogozhin and Natasja Filippovna, then the various characters of the middle group comprised mainly of members and friends of the Epanchin and Ivolgin families, and lastly representatives of the younger generation, mostly nihilists. It is the negative and superficial portrayal of the nihilists that angered M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin and provoked him to say that Dostoevskij, indeed, depicted "on one hand characters, which are full of life and truth, and on the other some kind of mysterious dream-like marionettes. These could have been created only by hands which were trembling from anger."¹¹⁶

Dostoevskij must have been concerned with the multitude of characters in *The Idiot* and the manner of depicting them, for at the beginning of part IV of the novel, he devotes in one of his many authorial digressions at least five pages to this problem. Dostoevskij realized that he could not present only interesting and unusual characters to his reader all the time. In order to be truthful to life he had to present some of those "commonplace people" who constitute the immense majority in a society, "people of whom it is difficult to say anything which will ... describe them at once and wholly in their typical characteristics."¹¹⁷ The essence of the nature of such people lies in their perpetual and unchangeable commonplaceness. Such people eventually emerged into a type,

immortalized in Molière's Georges Dandin and Gogol's Podkolesin. A commonplace type is never contented; in spite of his yearning to escape the common and his endeavours to be original, interesting and independent, he will always remain routine. Dostoevskij's narrator assures his reader that there is nothing more annoying than to be rich, pleasing in appearance, kind-hearted, well-educated and of a good family, and yet to remain ordinary, to "have no talent at all, no originality, no single idea of one's own," in short to be like everyone else, to have a pleasant face which expresses nothing.¹¹⁸ Dostoevskij admitted that he has several of this type in his story, but as an artist he felt it was his duty to present them in such a form that they would appear interesting.

Belonging to this category of unoriginal and ordinary people are Varvara Ivolgin, Ivan Ptitsin, Ganja Ivolgin and many others of the younger generation, particularly the nihilists, who often behave outrageously or have assimilated the ideas of others merely for the sake of being original and different. Dostoevskij devotes considerable space, for example, to Ganja Ivolgin categorizing him as a "clever commonplace person," and consequently much more conscious of his ordinariness. He longs to be original. He is proud and embarrassed by his family's poverty and his father's loss of self-respect. His passionate desire to excel leads him to the rash step of initiating a scheme to marry for money and thereby overcome his mediocrity and become somebody. Selfish and unprincipled, Ganja is a representative of the new man dominated by greed and avarice. Convinced that money will give him power and make him an original man of talent, he sets as his goal accumulating a fortune irrespective of obstacles. Although ready to do a base action for the sake of his objective, he proves to be too honest when the moment arrives. Myshkin, who emerges in the novel as extremely knowledgeable about people's faces, discovers at once that this young man who serves as Epanchin's secretary does not display his true self:

"Are you Prince Myshkin?" he [Ganja] asked with the greatest courtesy and amiability. This was a remarkably good-looking young man, also about twenty-eight, fair-haired and of medium height, with a small imperial beard and an intelligent and very handsome face. Only his smile, for all its amiability, was somewhat too thin, revealing a row of altogether too dazzling and even teeth; his gaze, in spite of its gaiety and apparent good nature, was somewhat too intent and inquisitive.

Although no details of Ganja's character are revealed, his beautiful face appears nonetheless disharmonious. His extreme courtesy, the intent and inquisitive look, and his smile are all too controlled to be altogether agreeable. The Prince obviously reads more in that face, for the narrator has him react with this thought: "Most definitely, when he is

alone he looks quite different and most likely he does not laugh at all."¹¹⁹ Though Ganja in his behaviour reveals himself as a complex character with contradictory character traits, in his portraits he is depicted with no apparent distinguishing features, and as such he fits the author's description of the ordinary type. He has a pleasant face, even a very handsome one, but which expresses nothing specific, not only because he is wearing a mask, but simply because behind that successful camouflage there is but an ordinary, vain and ambitious person. Though handsome, he is conscious of his ordinariness, and attempts to camouflage it by assuming another face. What Dostoevskij wrote in 1873 in the *Diary of a Writer* about lying and camouflaging one's true self is most applicable to a type like Ganja: "We are all ashamed of ourselves. Indeed, every one of us carries in him an almost innate shame of himself and of his face; and the moment Russians find themselves in company, they hasten to appear at all cost something different from what they in reality are; everyone hastens to assume a different face."¹²⁰

However, as in all his works, here too, Dostoevskij displays his predilection for the extraordinary, both in events and character. In fact, the novel begins with the introduction of two of the most unusual types, Rogozhin, a murderer, and Myshkin, a Saint. They are sitting opposite each other in a third class compartment of the Warsaw-Petersburg train; both are far from fashionably dressed and yet both are rather striking, each in his own fashion. Without naming them or giving any background, Dostoevskij juxtaposes the two in portrait form, presenting them as diametrically opposed to each other both in appearance and in character. The difference between Rogozhin and Myshkin is further emphasized through their attire. While the former is warmly dressed in a Russian lamb's wool-lined black overcoat, his fellow passenger is clad in a cloak without sleeves and with an enormous hood as worn abroad, for example in Switzerland. The narrator stresses the Prince's peculiarities, his poverty and foreignness, as opposed to Rogozhin, referring to his bundle made up of "faded silk kerchiefs" which contains all his belongings and his "thick-soled shoes and gaiters," all of which is "very un-Russian."¹²¹

Much more glaring is the difference in their physical attributes and their facial expressions as described in their portraits, which give a strong indication of their different characters and the roles the two are to play in the course of the novel. Although the specifics of Rogozhin's personality are not spelled out, the description suggests an unpleasant, even a dangerous and evil character:

One of them [Rogozhin] was a short man of about twenty-seven with curly hair that was almost black, and with small grey, fiery eyes. His nose was broad and flat and he had high cheekbones; his thin lips were constantly compressed into a kind of impudent, sarcastic and even malicious smile;

but his forehead was high and well-shaped, and atoned a great deal for the ugliness of the lower part of his face. The most striking thing about the face was its death-like pallor, which gave this young man an utterly exhausted appearance [*fizionomii*] in spite of his rather sturdy build, and at the same time a sort of [*chto-to*] agonizingly passionate look, all of which did not harmonize with his coarse and insolent smile and his surly and self-satisfied expression.¹²²

Rogozhin's face is analyzed in two parts: the upper part consists of his black, curly hair and well-shaped forehead; the ugly lower part, his small fiery eyes, thin, compressed lips, high cheekbones and flat broad nose. In themselves, these features tell us little except of the ugliness of his face. Grossman believes that Dostoevskij had Shakespeare's Othello in mind: "That his appearance calls to mind the Moor of Venice is no accident."¹²³ The essence, however, of Rogozhin's character is implied in the expression of his face., in the impudent, sarcastic and even malicious smile and most of all in the disharmony of the facial expression. In spite of his sturdy build, his death-like pallor gives his "physiomy," to use Dostoevskij's term, an exhausted look. Moreover, it imparts to his face a kind of "agonizingly passionate look," which does not "harmonize with his coarse and insolent smile and his surly and self-satisfied expression." That death-like pallor accompanies Rogozhin throughout the novel and is a constant reminder of the dichotomy in his character.

This analysis of Rogozhin's face is based on the principles of physiognomy and pathognomy. Here Dostoevskij attempts to depict his hero's complex personality in his countenance. Rogozhin is one of those all-embracing, broad Russian characters in whom one encounters a variety of contradictory attributes. Dostoevskij takes special care in drawing a convincing type in Rogozhin and consequently employs all possible modes of characterization. He is not a very cultured person, knows no Russian authors, reads nothing and speaks in the manner of common people, frequently using slang expressions. No one has ever taught him refined behaviour or discipline and restraint. His guiding force is spontaneity. Thus he seems crude and displays an impulsive and all absorbing passion. That mean streak in him is already apparent when he first meets Myshkin and, after observing the Prince in his light clothes, asks him, whether he is cold. This remark is made, in the opinion of the narrator, "with that rude enjoyment of the discomfort of others which the common class often shows." Rogozhin comes from a merchant family who for generations has been accumulating large sums of money. But money ennobles neither his family nor him.

Rogozhin is dominated by the primitive impulse for power. In his case, his greed is not for money as it was for his forbears, but for a woman, Nastasja Filippovna, the object

of his unbridled lust and demonic passion. In his pursuit he knows no barriers; in fact, his only goal throughout the novel is to possess and dominate her. To this end he is ready to kill, even his rival, Myshkin, whom he loves and with whom he exchanged crosses as a token of friendship and brotherhood. Though Rogozhin is at times good natured and displays a capacity for loving to the point of self-oblivion and sacrifice, his easily enflamed nature triumphs and makes him a murderer. He kills Nastasja out of despair and jealousy, out of love and hatred, so no one else can have her. Basically, however, Rogozhin is a violent character, as already indicated in his portrait. He is violent in love and hatred and symbolizes the fallen man in whom the divine and the devil are struggling, in whom old fashioned piousness exists next to vulgarity and criminality. Rogozhin is a tragic figure, a victim of disbelief. Lack of religion and loss of faith are ultimately the cause of his murderous deed; such is the opinion of Myshkin.¹²⁴

The principle of contrast employed in the portrait of the two protagonists is also extended to other characters. What distinguishes Myshkin from others is his total lack of personal ambition and pride. Contrary to Raskolnikov who placed himself above both human and divine law, Myshkin moves totally and voluntarily within the bounds of Christian order. But the Prince's unselfish, compassionate and merciful behaviour, his indifference to material gain and, indeed, his "Christlike" behaviour present a strange phenomenon in a society dominated by the fatal power of money and the passion for profit. Myshkin's totally honest manner can only be perceived as the behaviour of an idiot. Like G. Hauptmann's "Christlike" hero in *The Fool in Christ, Emanuel Quint* (1910) Myshkin, some fifty years earlier is looked upon as just another fool, when he finds himself in a world which has divested itself of Christian principles. Although he is mocked and laughed at, everyone is drawn to him and he, in turn, forgives everyone. Myshkin is uniformly kind, generous and good, he doesn't judge nor does he accuse, he merely wishes to save everyone, and yet his practical influence is ineffective; in fact, wherever he appears he causes tragedy. It is this enigma about him, which is so perplexing and ambiguous and gives rise to questioning not only the "Christlike" figure, but even the morally beautiful human being.

Dostoevskij's idiot has been variously interpreted--as a Russian Don Quixote, as an artistic self-portrait or a spiritual biography of Dostoevskij, but most often as the embodiment of Christian love, as a perfectly beautiful human being who approaches Christ. The idea of incorporating a "Christlike" figure in Myshkin stems from Dostoevskij himself; at least in the earlier drafts he had entertained the idea.¹²⁵ In the final analysis the Prince is neither a Don Quixote, because he is too passive and does not

fight for his ideals, nor a "Christlike" figure, for to Dostoevskij "there is only one positively beautiful person on earth--Christ."¹²⁶ Myshkin is not even a perfect human being; he is ultimately too weak and unstable in moments of a crisis, too naive and impractical to cope with the world of reality, the passion raging around him. Though endowed with an extraordinary sensitivity which enables him to read character from the faces of others, he does not understand human nature, least of all its evil, destructive side.

While the Prince is, from a moral point of view, a perfect human being, he is defective in other aspects. His mental disturbance and epilepsy prevent him from ever becoming fully integrated into society, and when his health necessitates a four-year cure in a sanatorium in Switzerland he is further isolated from actual life. No wonder he dreams in his naivité of a childlike paradise on earth. In children he sees the undisturbed harmony which adults have lost. Myshkin's life is morally perfect, however, because of his isolation, because he has never been tempted by his own feelings or by those of others. In fact, it is hinted that his chastity is also a matter of physical deficiency. Considering Dostoevskij's concept of man, he could not possibly have depicted a perfect human being, for then he would be another Christ. Thus for Dostoevskij depicting a character who approaches Christ's moral perfection, required a physically defective type like Myshkin, who led an unnatural life of isolation, at least until he had to cope with the passion of his fellow Russians.

There is also room for questioning the ultimate effect of Myshkin's humanism. It is precisely his exemplary Christian behaviour that brings destruction to himself and others. Though impotent, he offers marriage to Nastasja Filippovna, not out of love, but out of pity to save her from destruction. This action in itself is not only dishonest, but provokes his rival's, Rogozhin's anger and leads to his murderous act. Uncharacteristic of the Prince's humanism is also his passionate tirade against Socialism and Catholicism, both of which he brands as betrayals of Christ. But most of all he is estranged from the Russian people and ignorant of Russian ways, and yet he visualizes the salvation of mankind as emanating from Russia. Here the Prince obviously functions as Dostoevskij's mouthpiece.

But if there is any final message to be learned from the depiction of a nearly perfect, beautiful being who comes to save through his own exemplary behaviour and ultimately fails, then it is the Dostoevskijan conviction that the eradication of falsehood and the restoration of humanity can be brought about only through a long process of reeducation, a reform from within the individual. Seemingly the exemplary behaviour of one single person is not enough. It is noteworthy that the path to the restoration of harmony and

humanity within man is not to be achieved by adhering to specific religious teaching, but rather through beauty both in art and man. Beauty, which has an ennobling effect on humans, will restore harmony and unite everything which is divided within and among man. Thus it is not surprising that Dostoevskij has his hero proclaim: "Beauty will save the world."¹²⁷

Although the image of a perfect, beautiful human being did not attain its complete embodiment in the novel, Dostoevskij nonetheless succeeded in presenting a morally perfect human being, albeit defective when he faced the actual world. Indeed, in his basic character traits, Myshkin is endowed with only positive and permanent character traits. He is consistently honest, kind, and generous and therefore is portrayed in a monological manner, at least in regard to his morality. The inner harmony encountered in a monological type is invariably also reflected in the verbal portrait of the protagonist. Such is the case in the portrait of the Prince when he is first encountered at the beginning of the novel. His sensitive, gentle look is indicative of his subsequent behaviour, but the narrator also notes the heavy expression associated with an epileptic:

The owner of the cloak with the hood was also a young man of about twenty-six or twenty-seven, slightly above medium height, with very thick, fair hair, hollow cheeks, and a thin pointed and almost white little beard. His eyes were large, blue, and piercing, and there was something gentle but heavy in their look, something of that strange expression which makes people realize at the first glance that they are dealing with an epileptic. The young man's face, however, was pleasant, sensitive, and lean, though colourless and, at this particular moment, blue with cold.¹²⁸

Though Myshkin's portrait is in harmony with his character, there is nothing "Christlike" in his appearance. In fact the "Christlike" manifestation in his behaviour which causes him to appear rather strange and somewhat queer is absent in the portrait. Here he is more humanized, and is infected with epilepsy, but at the same time displays the stylized features of a saint as Yarmolinsky suggests: "Prince Myshkin's face, with its large blue eyes, hollow cheeks, thin blond beard, is suggestive of the face on the icon."¹²⁹ Although epilepsy is not a moral feature or a negative character trait in itself, it ultimately shapes Myshkin's character and behaviour and on one hand makes him, or rather forces him to behave in a nearly morally perfect fashion and on the other prevents him from being a wholly admirable human being.

The most un-Christlike feature is the hint of epilepsy in Myshkin's countenance, even though epilepsy was at one time considered the secret illness of prophets and mystics, those somewhat closer to the Almighty than ordinary mortals. Yet epilepsy

makes him experience the acme of harmony and beauty, a feeling of completeness, the highest synthesis of life. Myshkin knows the sense of life and consciousness of self, multiplied ten times; "his mind and his heart were flooded with extraordinary light," in moments before epileptic fits.¹³⁰ But even without these extraordinary flashes, the Prince has a tendency to emotional mysticism which makes his faculties work at the highest tension. He shows meticulous attention to detail, is keenly observant and his mind reacts with exceptional clearness to every external object around him.

Whether this intense experience and feeling is due to the Prince's epilepsy matters little--important for our purpose is that he is endowed with an extraordinary power of empathy which enables him to divine the feeling of others.¹³¹ But most of all he is forever correctly reading the faces of others. And this reading is always connected with an analysis of facial features and expressions, i.e., it is based both on a pathognomic and physiognomic observation. Moreover, such an analysis is always preceded by the phrase "according to the facial expression [*po litsu*]. ..." What Kirpotin said about Dostoevskij's unusual gift for penetrating the psyches of others, namely that it was not due to some special psychic power, but was based on observation of physical appearance, is equally true for Myshkin.¹³² In short, like Lermontov's Pechorin, the Prince emerges in the novel as a physiognomist, even though Dostoevskij would not approve of this "mechanistic" label.

During his initial contact with Mrs. Epanchin and her three daughters, the Prince already reveals his ability to read faces. When Mrs. Epanchin assures him that she can see in her daughters' faces that they love him, the Prince retorts with a particular stress on the words: "I know their faces too." And upon hearing the question "What do you know about our faces?" Myshkin declares that of late he has developed a strong habit of scrutinizing people's faces ("*ja teper' ochen' vsmatrivajus' v litsa.*"):

You have asked me about your faces, and what I could read in them. ... You, Adelaida Ivanovna, have a very happy face; it is the most sympathetic of the three. Besides your being very good looking, one can't help saying when one looks at you, "She has the face of a kind sister." You approach one simply and gaily, but you are quick to know another's heart. That is what I read in your face.

You, Aleksandra Ivanovna, also have a very sweet and beautiful face, but I think you may have some secret sorrow. Your heart is undoubtedly one of the kindest, but you are not gay. There is something special about your face, which reminds me of Holbein's Madonna in Dresden. Well, so much for your face; am I a good diviner [*ugadchik*]? After all, you yourself conceive me as a diviner. But as for your face, Elizaveta Prokofevna--he said, turning to the mother--your face tells me--and I am not conjecturing, but I can say so with absolute confidence, that you are a perfect child in everything, in everything good and bad.¹³³

Whatever this process of reading faces is called by Dostoevskij--guessing or divining--the Prince delineates character, albeit in general terms, on the basis of the countenance and its expression; we are dealing, then, with physiognomy and pathognomy. For Dostoevskij to have called this process by its proper name would have meant admitting the use of a specific formula in determining human character and for him man's character is too complex.¹³⁴ And yet, he employs the principle of these pseudo-sciences. For artistic reasons he needed portraits, and his characters required faces, meaningful ones. Although physiognomy and pathognomy play their role in his portraiture, they are often used so generally, that the character traits revealed through them may simply be attributed to common sense. But even when applying common sense one still requires keen observation in order to arrive at a meaningful interpretation of certain facial expressions. Dostoevskij through the Prince is a careful observer. He simply avoids systematizing this observation into a specific formula; at no time does he attribute character traits to a particular feature. His portraits, nonetheless, are based on the principle of organic unity, the interaction of the outer and the inner.

Although the Prince is a novice in reading faces, his diagnosis of the three women proves to be correct; they are, indeed, the most pleasant characters in the novel. But like his creator, who knows that the exterior is capable of revealing inner attributes, Myshkin is puzzled as to how specific this revelation can be, especially when a character consciously puts on a mask. Moreover, he has difficulty with the perfectly beautiful face of the third daughter Aglaja. He admits that beauty is still a "riddle" for him. All he can say about her is that she is "almost as beautiful as Nastasja Filippovna, except that her face is quite different."

This problem of perfect physical beauty and its relation to inner moral beauty is intensified when Myshkin faces a photograph of Nastasja Filippovna for the first time. In fact he has to contemplate her portrait three times and meet her personally before he arrives at a definite conclusion as to her true character. The Prince has already learned about this unusual woman from Rogozhin. Upon seeing her photograph, he studies it with intent curiosity exclaiming: "She is wonderfully beautiful!" and the narrator adds:

The portrait was indeed of an extraordinarily beautiful woman. She was photographed in a black silk dress of an extremely simple and elegant cut; her hair, which appeared to be a dark brown colour, was done up in a simple, homely style; her eyes were dark and deep, her forehead was pensive; her expression was passionate and, as it were, haughty. She was rather thin in the face and, perhaps, pale, too.¹³⁵

In this description the narrator disassociates himself from any physiognomic interpretation, leaving this task to the Prince. The photograph seems to capture Nastasja Filippovna when she resembles herself most, for the Prince is beginning to grasp the essence of her being as he examines the portrait for the second time:

A remarkable face! ... And I'm sure her life has not been an ordinary one. Her face looks cheerful, but she has suffered a lot, hasn't she? Her eyes show it and her cheekbones, those two points under her eyes. It's a proud face, a terribly proud face, but what I can't tell is whether she is kind-hearted or not. Oh, if she were! That would make everything right for her!¹³⁶

The Prince's physiognomic perception and his prediction of her behaviour is once again emphasized when he is asked whether Rogozhin would marry such a woman. He replies affirmatively: "He would marry her tomorrow!--marry her tomorrow and murder her in a week!" This second observation still does not assure that the Prince will also discover spiritual beauty next to her pride and suffering.

It is only after scrutinizing Nastasja's portrait for the third time that Myshkin discovers contradictory character traits and the complexity of her personality. The immense suffering caused by humiliation arouses his compassion and he raises the portrait to his lips:

He seemed anxious to solve some mystery that was hidden in that face and that struck him before. The impression it had made on him had scarcely left him, and he seemed to be in a hurry to verify it. He was even more struck now by the extraordinary beauty of her face and by something else in it. There was a sort of immense pride and scorn, almost hatred, in that face, and, at the same time, also something trusting, something wonderfully good-natured; this striking contrast seemed almost to arouse in him a feeling of compassion as he looked at it. That dazzling beauty was quite unbearable--the beauty of that pale face, those almost hollow cheeks and burning eyes--a strange beauty!¹³⁷

The Prince's correct reading of Nastasja Filippovna's face results in the discovery of the true nature of the disharmony which he had detected earlier: immense pride and disdain, almost hatred and at the same time a kind of trustworthiness full of simplicity. The discovery of this contrasting spirituality cannot possibly be attributed to some "peculiar gift of perception" or some "strange power of clairvoyance."¹³⁸ Whatever one may call it, in essence it is physiognomy. If it were the result of clairvoyance, then it probably would not have required three different examinations. Moreover, it was not the result of a face to face analysis, but an analysis of physical features and facial expressions

in a photograph. In fact, in every one of the three analyses, the Prince makes references to specific physical features and expressions reflecting inner qualities. These references belong to the realm of physiognomy; clairvoyance or some divine perception could have dispensed with them. It is true, Nastasja Filippovna's individual features are not described, i.e., we don't learn why she is so beautiful, but this omission is an aesthetic matter and speaks only in the author's favour, for it leaves the reader free to imagine his own perfect beauty.

To the observer, however, this unusual beauty has specific features, which the Prince is able to read, although he gives only an overall impression simply calling it "a strange beauty," a "blinding beauty" which is almost "unbearable" to look at. But this "blinding" and "strange" beauty does not seem to be true beauty, for it does not correspond to the Dostoevskijan concept of perfection of both form and content, i.e., complete harmony between the outer and the inner qualities. In fact, Nastasja Filippovna's beauty is negative and turns out to be her greatest defect, for it arouses in her rivals discord, passion and jealousy, and eventually causes her own violent destruction. Here Dostoevskij seemingly takes recourse in the old axiom that an excess of any quality, whether positive or negative, constitutes a tragic flaw.

Nastasja Filippovna's profound and complex personality becomes even more intricate in the course of the novel. We learn how a simple, shy, modest and kind youngster gradually acquired sensual passion, boundless pride, and the desire for revenge. The cause of her inner suffering and the object of her hatred is the rich landowner Totskij, who undertook the task of bringing her up and educating her, when Nastasja was orphaned at the age of seven. But this egocentric Totskij also made her his mistress, abused her with no intention of marrying her. This humiliation caused her suffering; it crushed her feeling of self-esteem, evoked a feeling of guilt and shame and convinced her that she was the lowest creature and the most fallen woman. It is this mixture, her former warm qualities and the new spirit of revenge which the Prince detects that make Nastasja a tragic character and a wronged heart. Her vacillation between Rogozhin and Myshkin, who represent debasement and compassionate love, indeed, reflect her inner struggle. She yearns for salvation and turns to Myshkin, but feels unworthy of his love. She sacrifices herself and runs away with Rogozhin fully aware that she will be his victim.

Myshkin's difficulty in determining Nastasja's character through her physical features is connected with the problem of positive and negative beauty, for in other cases he easily delineates character after studying a person's face. In fact, Dostoevskij utilizes

the Prince along with the narrator as the major sources for drawing portraits. Although the principles of physiognomy are not as prominent and systematically employed as in Dostoevskij's other novels, particularly in the second and third rate characters, the use of physiognomy is quite visible throughout the novel. As before Dostoevskij continues to use the colour of dress and faces to characterize his protagonists--a pale face and dark dress are usually indicative of inner discord. Like Balzac, Gogol and Dickens, Dostoevskij effectively employs possessions and the entire milieu to illuminate character. For example, Rogozhin's gloomy character corresponds fully to the gloomy exterior and interior of his house. After presenting a lengthy description of it, Dostoevskij has the Prince remark to Rogozhin: "Your house has the appearance [*fizionomiju*] of your entire family and of your entire Rogozhin life style."¹³⁹

**Chapter IV: The Novels of the 1870's: *The Eternal Husband* (1870),
The Possessed (1871-72), *A Raw Youth* (1875)**

The short novel *The Eternal Husband* (1870) is a diversion from Dostoevskij's larger pursuit, but it is one of his most accomplished works. Here he seemingly took heed of Strakhov's criticism and retained proportion and harmony, unity and a sense of measure. In substance it is a psychological duel between Trusotskij, "the eternal husband" and his wife's lover Velchaninov. Although the two are rivals and repulse each other, there exists at the same time a mutual attraction between them as if they see in each other a supplement to themselves. Dostoevskij's intense, penetrating insight into the working of the unconscious which is revealed in describing this mysterious love/hate relationship is equalled only in the *Notes from the Underground*.

Even though Dostoevskij's interest centres on the husband who is henpecked and destined to forever be deceived by his wife, to play the role of the "eternal husband," he is endowed with only a laconic portrait, which reveals merely that he is somewhat strange, unpleasant and ridiculous in appearance. Trusotskij's real character is revealed in a psychological sketch, depicting his blind adoration of his unfaithful, domineering wife. But most of all it reveals his suffering as an offended spouse, and his unsuccessful attempt to be an ideal lover, a Don Juan, like his rival.

In contrast, Velchaninov, in addition to a psychological portrayal, is depicted in a rather extended portrait. In fact, the novel begins with his description, outlining two distinct, contradictory images--the former fun-loving Don Juan and the present physically and spiritually distressed lover. Velchaninov is introduced in a state of inner crisis: he suffers from loss of memory; he is nervous and depressed and feels that everything in his life has changed for the worse. But the cause of this mysterious anguish remains for some time hidden from him. He explained it to himself as old age brought on by fast living. In the meantime, however, Velchaninov's nervousness and hypochondria increase every day. Here are only excerpts of the protracted portrait devoted to him:

He was ... by no means young, thirty-eight or even thirty-nine. ... In appearance he was still strong and hearty. He was a tall, sturdily-built fellow, with thick flaxen hair without a sign of greyness and a long fair beard almost half-way down his chest; at first sight he seemed somewhat slack and clumsy, but if you looked more attentively, you would detect at once that he was a man of excellent breeding, who had at some time received the education of an aristocrat. Velchaninov's manners were still free, assured and even gracious, in spite of his acquired grumpiness and slackness. And he was still, even now, full of the most unhesitating, the most snobbishly insolent self-confidence, the depth of which he did not

himself suspect, although he was a man not merely intelligent, but even sometimes sensible, almost cultured and unmistakably gifted. His open and ruddy face had been in old days marked by a feminine softness of complexion which attracted the notice of women; and even now some people, looking at him, would say: "What a picture of health! What a complexion!" And yet this picture of health was cruelly subject to nervous depression. His eyes were large and blue, ten years earlier they had possessed great fascination; they were so bright, so gay, so careless that they could not but attract every one who came in contact with him. Now that he was verging on the forties, the brightness and good-humour were almost extinguished. Those eyes, which were already surrounded by tiny wrinkles, had begun to betray the cynicism of a worn-out man of doubtful morals, a duplicity, an ever-increasing irony and another shade of feeling, which was new: a shade of sadness and of pain--a sort of absent-minded sadness as though about nothing in particular and yet acute. This sadness was especially marked when he was alone. And, strange to say, this man who had been only a couple of years before fond of noisy gaiety, careless and good-humoured, who had been so capital a teller of funny stories, liked nothing so well as being absolutely alone. But, by degrees, in solitude even his vanity began to change its character. ... it began at times to suffer from different causes--from unexpected causes which would have formerly been quite inconceivable, from causes of a "higher order" than ever before-- ...¹⁴⁰

Velchaninov's portrait clearly reflects his transformation from snobbish and insolent self-confidence to melancholy, nervousness and cynicism. He begins to reflect more clearly on the causes of his depression and has to come to the conclusion that his inner ailments stem from guilt feelings for some events in his past. The causes of a "higher order" refers to his moral consciousness. His subconscious thoughts and feelings are beginning to surface and give him sleepless nights. (While the portrait only indicates Velchaninov's change in appearance, the actual causes are presented only in the passages following the portrait, but still in the same chapter entitled "Velchaninov." The entire chapter must be viewed as an extended portrait of the protagonist.) Things suddenly come into his consciousness with an amazing exactness and details of impressions as though they were happening for the first time. He recalls certain failures and humiliations and events of which he is ashamed: he slandered and publicly insulted others, left debts unsettled, and seduced and promptly abandoned a young girl with whom he had a child. The narrator tells us that "it seemed that he had hundreds of such reminiscences and each one of them seemed to bring others." Yet Velchaninov develops a dual attitude towards his past--his moments of repentance and remorse are followed by a feeling of indifference and the conviction that he does not have the power to change. The feeling of guilt, however, mounts and culminates in the confrontation with Trusotskij, for he was not only his wife's lover, but also had fathered Trusotskij's only

child. Here as elsewhere we encounter Dostoevskij's favourite theme, the conflict between the rational and irrational, between the conscious and unconscious within a character who is endowed with an extreme self-consciousness. These conflicts caused by the awareness of his previous guilt inevitably lead to dissociation of personality.

Dostoevskij's *The Possessed* (1871-72), also known as *The Demons*, is his most complex, most chaotic, and most didactic novel, but it also contains some of his loftiest creations, and consequently is also his most controversial work. It is chaotic, full of sensationalism and elaborate intrigue, because the epoch he depicted, following the emancipation in 1861, was chaotic. This period has justifiably been called the "Epoch of Russian Enlightenment" and that of the "Fighting Intelligentsia."¹⁴¹ However, it was also the epoch that permanently thwarted Russia's spiritual reforms, and liberalism alternated with nihilism and terrorism. The incompatibility of the old conservative and new liberal forces, inevitably resulted in instability and altercations and paved the way for the formation on an entirely new social concept, eventually leading to revolutionary and terrorist activities. Dostoevskij explores, analyzes and criticizes the entire revolutionary movement on the basis of an actual episode, the famous political murder which became known as the "S.G. Nechaev Affair." But having no faith in any political solution for human problems, least of all in the ideas advanced by the nihilists and revolutionaries for enforced happiness, Dostoevskij proceeded with a savage attack on some radical youth, who had organized themselves in a provincial town. Their ultimate goal was a totalitarian order with absolute equality. The revolutionaries challenged established traditions and accepted norms of society; they totally rejected God and consequently everything was permissible--lying, cheating, suicide, even murder.

Dostoevskij viewed these liberal ideas as a European product born out of despair, irreligion and atheism. In proceeding as severely as he did, Dostoevskij was bound to paint an exaggerated picture, which hardly coincided with reality. Mirsky aptly maintains that *The Possessed* is no more a true picture of the terrorist of the sixties than Gogol's Plyushkin is the true picture of a typical miser.¹⁴² Dostoevskij was simply not objective in his presentation; exaggeration and literary caricatures, such as the caricature of Turgenev depicted in the fictional writer Karmazinov, render the novel too reactionary and controversial. It is true, the older, conservative generation fares no better; they are portrayed as inept and intellectually inferior, and are unable to counteract the revolutionary fervor. Only the faith of the Russian people provides a vague and distant hope and is the only positive note in an otherwise hopeless and negative portrayal. However, to present an objective picture of the situation of nihilism and the revolutionary

activities of the time, Dostoevskij would have had to demonstrate also that, apart from Western influences, the real cause of doubt and scepticism, irreligion and atheism, in an age of transition, was to be sought in the lack of faith in the direction taken by the state and the official church of Russia. The diffusion of atheism among the intellectuals and the ensuing revolutionary activities were indicative that the official church had utterly failed in its duty as religious educator of Russia's youth.¹⁴³

Although there is a vague positive view expressed in the novel, the fact that at the end Dostoevskij has the revolutionary leaders commit suicide or escape abroad strongly implies that neither an individual nor a group can transform the world and impose an ideal by force and violence. It is always a vain enterprise to impose an ideal by the use of force; any improvement of the moral order must come from within people. If *The Possessed* were, however, only a novel about terrorist conspiracy, it certainly would not have outlived its time. The strength and unity of the novel is to be found in the remarkable depiction of the psychology of a number of Russian revolutionary types. Because of their metaphysical significance and symbolism and their intensity, these characters have, indeed, become universal types. The mentality of the revolutionary and the reasons for becoming one, as varied as they are, are everywhere the same. While Dostoevskij centers his argument on the phenomenon of misguided idealism among the youth of his time, and presenting their endless discussions on liberty, social reform and their interest in the people, he strongly suggests that the ultimate motive for becoming a revolutionary is not so much the ideals of revolutionary doctrine, as lust for power. Moreover, he shows that the strength of the nihilists (and the revolutionaries) derives not from their tightly knit organization or their doctrine, but from the leadership of a few individuals, like Nikolaj Stavrogin and Peter Verkhovenski. What captivates the weaker members is the charisma of their personalities, not their particular ideologies.

It is then on the basis of its many and varied characters with their intensely individualistic features that Dostoevskij's novel has survived. Indeed, *The Possessed* contains one of the richest galleries of portraits in all of Dostoevskij's works. Although for Dostoevskij his characters' spirituality constitutes the essence of their personalities, he does not neglect their physical attributes in his portrayal; their bodies and distinct faces often mirror their personalities, but just as often do not, especially when their physical portrait is preceded by a detailed character sketch. Almost all the characters are based on prototypes like Bakumin, Nechaev and their companions. But since *The Possessed* is a political satire against the revolutionary movement, it stands to reason that Dostoevskij had no intention of faithfully reproducing his prototypes. He not only degrades the

political leaders from the opposite camp in a series of sarcastic depictions, but also has them perish through violent murder or suicide.

The novel begins with a detailed background of the widower Stepan Trofimovich Verkhovenskiĭ and the widow Varvara Petrovna Stavrogina, the surviving parents of the two main protagonists. The two have been friends for the last twenty years. In describing their relationship, Dostoevskiĭ fully outlines their personalities without using the portrait as an additional mode of characterization. In the case of Varvara Petrovna we learn "that she could not be called a beauty. She was a tall, yellow, bony woman with an extremely long face, suggestive of a horse."¹⁴⁴ Somewhat more colourful is the description of Stepan Trofimovich, which begins with his costume, which was designed by Varvara Petrovna:

It was elegant and characteristic; a long black frock-coat, buttoned almost to the top, but stylishly cut; a soft hat (in summer a straw hat) with a wide brim, a white batiste cravat with a full bow and hanging ends, a cane with a silver knob; his hair flowed on to his shoulders. It was dark brown, and only lately had begun to get a little grey. He was clean-shaven. He was said to have been very handsome in his youth. And, to my mind, he was still an exceptionally impressive figure even in old age.

While Varvara Petrovna's long face is likened to that of a horse, Stepan Trofimovich's visual image is intensified through a comparison to a prominent figure at that time:

... dressed as described, tall and thin, with flowing hair, he looked almost like a patriarch, or even more like the portrait of the poet Kukolnik, engraved in the edition of his works published in 1830 or thereabouts. This resemblance was especially striking when he sat in the garden in summertime, on a seat under a bush of flowering lilac, with both hands propped on his cane and an open book beside him, musing poetically over the setting.¹⁴⁵

Although the introduction of the engraving of Kukolnik adds little to the characterization of Stepan Trofimovich, it evokes the sentimental spirit of the liberal generation of the 1840's. The engraving came into Varvara Petrovna's hands when she was in boarding school and promptly fell in love with the portrait. The narrator explains: "What is interesting in this is ... the fact that even at fifty Varvara Petrovna kept the engraving among her most intimate and treasured possessions ..." a fact which may explain why she had designed a costume "somewhat like the poet's in the engraving." Having devoted a page to this kind of elaboration the narrator appropriately concludes:

"But that, of course, is a trifling matter too."

Laconic and, indeed, trifling are many portraits of secondary characters, such as the members of Peter Verkhovenskiĭ's inner circle--Liputin, Kirillov, Shigalev, Ljamshin, Virginskiĭ and Tolkachenko. Yet in the chapter dealing with the duel between Nikolaj Stavrogin and Artemij Gaganov the narrator wishes he had more time to describe the duelists and their seconds' facial expressions: "I am sorry that I have no time for descriptions. But I can't refrain from some comments." After noting the melancholic expression of one, the perfectly calm and unconcerned look of the other and Stavrogin's frowning and ill humour, the narrator adds: "But Gaganov was at this moment more worthy of mention than anyone, so that it is quite impossible not to say a few words about him in particular." But as to his portrait, even though the narrator begins with: "I have hitherto not had occasion to describe his appearance," he offers a mere general impression: "He was a tall man of thirty-three, and well fed, as the common folk express it, almost fat, with lank flaxen hair, and with features which might be called handsome."¹⁴⁶ Gaganov's true character, as everyone else's, is revealed by other means.

More elaborate and more meaningful from a physiognomic point of view are the portraits of Liza Tushina, Ivan Shatov, captain Lebjadkin and his sister Marja Timofeevna, Peter Verkhovenskiĭ and especially Nikolaj Stavrogin,¹⁴⁷ all of whose characters are drawn in harmony with their physical appearance. In fact, they are presented in several drawings, depicting them at different stages. The sketching of their portraits along with the reading of their faces is done by the omnipotent narrator, who knows everything. If he does not witness a certain event, he hears about it, and then relates it, embellishing the information with his own commentary. The other person who is rather shrewd in reading character or a particular momentary facial expression is Varvara Petrovna, Stavrogin's mother. Of all the more detailed portrayals the depiction of Stavrogin merits particular attention.

Stavrogin, the embodiment of evil, is one of Dostoevskiĭ's most supreme creations. Although he is admirable as an artistic creation, he is ultimately repulsive and evokes only contempt. The moment he makes his appearance everything begins to revolve around him. Everyone becomes dependent on him, yet he is cold and indifferent to people; in fact, he is irritated by their devotion to him. He believes in nothing, although he teaches contradictory ideologies--one he imbues with faith, the other with atheism. His behaviour is extreme, he offends people, has others murdered, precipitates scandals, yet his mother lives for him and three women are in love with him. Peter Verkhovenskiĭ sees in him the kind of magic personality who can be a leader of a revolution. He is

refined, handsome, wealthy and intelligent. But in spite of the details of his character, Stavrogin remains a mystery. He confesses at the end, but does not repent; he merely wants to forgive himself. At the end there is nothing left for him. He commits suicide, not because he is threatened or because of his guilt, but out of sheer boredom, because he was spiritually empty and had neither an intellectual pole nor a goal. But most of all he had no God. Demonstrating that life without God, particularly in the case of a very intelligent mind, leads to "moral insanity" and psychopathic behaviour, seems to have been the primary purpose in depicting such a debased character, other than the obvious gratification of having been able to create such a monstrosity.

Before Stavrogin is introduced in his first portrait, the narrator relates our hero's past experiences. The reader learns that "Prince Harry," as he was called by Stepan Timofeevich, his tutor in youth, was a very delicate and shy child, but now as an adult is never able to grasp reality and continues to display infantilism. After he finished school, he gained a commission in a cavalry regiment and was about to embark on what seemed to be a brilliant career. But suddenly Stavrogin began to behave in a rather cruel and reckless manner. He seemingly found great joy in offending people and in running over them in the street with his horses; he precipitated duels in which he killed one of his adversaries and maimed another. In the punitive regiment he again distinguished himself rising to the rank of officer, but then he resigned suddenly and began to associate with the dregs of the St. Petersburg society, becoming involved in all kinds of debauchery. This extreme behaviour provokes the comparison to Shakespeare's Prince Harry (*Henry the Fourth*), who as a boisterous youth cavorted with Falstaff and maintained bad company. Shortly after Stavrogin's arrival in the provincial town, the narrator is able to get a "very distinct impression of him" and draws his first verbal portrait of this rather complex character, who forever surprises the reader with some contradictory behaviour:

He was a very handsome young man of about twenty-five and I must admit I was impressed by him. I had expected to see a dirty ragamuffin, sodden with drink and debauchery. He was, on the contrary, the most elegant gentleman I had ever met, extremely well dressed, with an air and manner only to be found in a man accustomed to culture and refinement. I was not the only surprised person. It was a surprise to all the townspeople to whom, of course, young Stavrogin's whole biography was well known in its minutest details, though one could not imagine how they had got hold of them, and, what was still more surprising, half of their stories about him turned out to be true. All our ladies were wild over the new visitor. They were sharply divided into two parties, one of which adored him while the other half regarded him with a hatred that was almost blood-thirsty: but both were crazy about him. Some of them were particularly fascinated by the idea that he had perhaps a fateful secret

hidden in his soul; others were positively delighted at the fact that he was a murderer. It appeared too that he had had a very good education and was indeed a man of considerable culture. ... I must mention as a peculiar fact that almost from the first day we all of us thought him a very sensible fellow. He was not very talkative, he was elegant without exaggeration, surprisingly modest, and at the same time bold and self-reliant, as none of us were. Our dandies gazed at him with envy, and were completely eclipsed by him. His face, too, astounded me. His hair was of a peculiarly intense black, his light-coloured eyes were somewhat too light and calm, his complexion was somewhat too soft and white, the red in his cheeks was too bright and clear, his teeth were like pearls, and his lips like coral--one would have thought that he must be a paragon of beauty, yet at the same time there seemed something repulsive about him. It was said that his face suggested a mask; so much was said though, among other things they talked of his extraordinary physical strength. He was rather tall. Varvara Petrovna looked at him with pride, yet with continual uneasiness.¹⁴⁸

Stavrogin's attributes in this verbal portrait and the narrator's impression of him are in direct contrast to the protagonist's image as conveyed prior to the portrait depiction. Instead of a debased ragamuffin, the narrator encounters an elegant, cultured and refined gentleman. The dichotomy and complexity of Stavrogin's character is thereby clearly indicated. His contradictory personality is the main aspect in the portrait and is further disclosed through high society's dual attitude towards him. Although they were all fascinated by him, some conceived him as modest and sensible, while others found him secretive and hated him. The narrator himself detects an element of disharmony in his facial expression. His facial features are too perfect and possess an excess of particular qualities, which is always indicative in Dostoevskij's characters that their morals are deficient. Stavrogin is a "paragon of beauty," but at the same time repulsive. His contradictory personality is seemingly imprinted on his face, which "suggested a mask," confirming his need to camouflage his real being.

Although no specifics as to his character are indicated, the reader knows of Stavrogin's extreme behaviour and thus the vague reference to his mask-like face assumes definite meaning. The enigmatic facial expression corresponds fully to his enigmatic behaviour, a fact which is to be observed even in his mother's attitude, when the narrator notes that "Varvara Petrovna looked at him with pride, yet with continual uneasiness." In chronicling the reaction of his mother and especially those of the high society towards Stavrogin, Dostoevskij introduces a new element which enables him to report objectively in a polyphonic fashion even within the framework of a portrait.

Shortly after arriving in his native town, Stavrogin, the modest and sensible gentleman, exchanges masks or rather, loses control of himself and begins to show a new

face by committing incredibly stupid outrages, which seem out of character. Out of sheer boredom and without remorse "the wild beast suddenly showed his claws." His mother, however, though proud of him, was always suspicious and afraid of something "vague and mysterious" in him and "she often stole searching glances at 'Nicolas,' scrutinizing him reflectingly."¹⁴⁹ Stavrogin resembles Prince Valkovskij and Svidrigailov, who were placed into diverse situations where they had to play different roles and consequently wear different masks. For various unexplained psychological reasons, they had lost their true faces or perhaps never had any. Herein lies the difficulty in determining or understanding fully the actual character of a type like Stavrogin. But then it is doubtful whether he understood himself.

Although he is variously depicted, he is never fully explained. Consistent as he is in this respect, Dostoevskij presents the phenomenon, but never the psychological causes, for the complexity of the human mind make it almost impossible to explain the duality, or contradictory behaviour of man. It is also the complexity of human personality containing the potential for both good and evil that in the opinion of Dostoevskij causes at one time or another to resort to wearing a mask. Stavrogin, indeed, has ample reason to disguise his dark side. How else could he function as a rich young bachelor who in reality is secretly married to a woman whom he keeps in a convent? His marriage to Marja Lebjadkina, a mentally deficient and much older woman, was again an act of extreme behaviour, the height of absurdity. Retrospectively we also learn that he violated a young girl, who, as a consequence, committed suicide. But in moments of obvious psychological crisis Stavrogin gave vent to his other side. It is not clear whether he committed his outrageous acts in moments of "acute brain fever," or (as it is also stated) he was "capable of any mad action even when in full possession of his faculties."¹⁵⁰

Stavrogin's second portrait is drawn after his return from a long sojourn in Europe. Once again the narrator is preoccupied with his appearance:

I was struck by the first sight of him just as I had been four years before, when I saw him for the first time. I had not forgotten him in the least. But I think there are some countenances which always seem to exhibit something new which one has not noticed before, every time one meets them, though one may have seen them a hundred times already. Apparently he was exactly the same as he had been four years before. He was as elegant, as dignified, he moved with the same air of consequence as before, indeed he looked almost as young. His faint smile had just the same official graciousness and complacency. His eyes had the same stern, thoughtful and, as it were, preoccupied look. In fact, it seemed as though we had only parted the day before. But one thing struck me. In old days, though he had been considered handsome, his face was "like a mask," as some of our sharp-tongued ladies had expressed it. Now--now, I don't

know why he impressed me at once as absolutely, incontestably beautiful, so that no one could have said that his face was like a mask. Wasn't it perhaps that he was a little paler and seemed rather thinner than before? Or was there, perhaps, the light of some new idea in his eyes?¹⁵¹

Although the narrator finds Stavrogin almost the same as four years ago, i.e., he observes the same elegant and dignified bearing, the same "faint smile," the "same official graciousness and complacency," the same stern and thoughtful eyes, there is one striking thing in his countenance. His face is no longer like a mask, but rather it impresses him "at once as absolutely, incontestably beautiful, so that no one could have said that his face was like a mask." Although the narrator is unable to explain this change, Stavrogin, as before, continues to wear a mask. The fact that he appears to the narrator "incontestably beautiful" is just another Dostoevskijan device to create an effect, and alert the reader. Stavrogin's may have been the most beautiful face, but the reader knows that there is no relation between his physical beauty and moral behaviour. In the Dostoevskijan sense, external beauty which does not reflect beauty of the soul is not true beauty.¹⁵² In the light of what follows, we can only conclude that Stavrogin becomes more adept at wearing his masks, i.e., controlling his emotions. He remains a Faustian type, forever seeking and rebellious. True, he is chivalrous and polite to his mother and speaks in a caressing voice and with an "extraordinary tenderness and respectful attitude" to his wife, when she suddenly arrives in town, but at the end he has her murdered along with his brother and has others driven to suicide. He remains a member of aristocratic society, yet at the same time he is the most influential revolutionary. He teaches Shatov that one must believe in God, while he preaches to Kirillov that God cannot exist and that suicide is the supreme expression of man's will.

The narrator seems to summarize Stavrogin's true being, when he compares him to the legendary Decembrist L-n (M.S. Lunin, 1787-1845) of whom it was said, that he was always seeking danger, that he revelled in sensation, and that it had become a craving of his nature. But the daring acts of L-n were seemingly mild in comparison to Stavrogin and he "would, perhaps, have looked down on L-n, and have called him a boastful cock-a-hoop coward. ..." Stavrogin would have defended himself against a brigand or a bear as successfully and fearlessly, "but it would be without the slightest thrill of enjoyment, languidly, listlessly. ..." The craving for those direct and unmixed sensations by the gentlemen of the good old days were now incompatible with "the nervous, exhausted, complex character of the men of to-day." The ultimate cause of Stavrogin's behaviour lies in his profound anger, for the narrator states: "In anger, of course, there has been progress compared with L-n, even compared with Lermontov," and in

Stavrogin, he adds, there was perhaps more malignant anger "than in both put together, but it was a calm, cold, if one may say so, a reasonable anger, and therefore the most revolting and most terrible possible."¹⁵³

A more detailed disclosure of Stavrogin's psyche is the substance of the suppressed ninth chapter of *The Possessed*. It contains Stavrogin's confession, which he presented for reading to the saintly elder, Tikhon. Here we learn of Stavrogin's additional crimes and his inward struggle. Of his many crimes his violation of a girl of twelve left the strongest impression on him. The incident haunted him every night to the point that he realized that his dreams would eventually drive him to insanity. But most of all, Stavrogin admits that every base and humiliating act which he committed and every stupid and ridiculous situation which he precipitated in his life caused him grief and incredible anger, but at the same time it provided him with immense pleasure. An equally pleasurable sensation he experienced, when committing the most horrible crimes or when he was in a dangerous situation. What provided him, however, with the ultimate sensation was not so much the baseness of the crime or vice itself, as the actual awareness of being base and vicious.¹⁵⁴

Unlike *The Idiot* and especially *The Possessed*, Dostoevskij's next to last novel *A Raw Youth* (1875) is almost void of criminality and violence and the habitual catastrophic ending. Although one is faced with the usual discord of the time, anarchistic activities, intrigues and the clashes of diverse ideas, on the whole there prevails a reconciliatory atmosphere and a happy denouement. Aware of the tendency to overload his novels, Dostoevskij at the initial stage had firm intentions to adhere to economy of means, to clarity of thought and plot. Indeed, he constantly reminded himself to write "à la Pushkin," but in the final version the virtue of sobriety seemingly deserted him, for this work is just as complex and full of intriguing episodes as his previous novels.¹⁵⁵ In essence the story is an autobiographical account of a "raw youth," a twenty year old adolescent Arkadij Dolgorukij. It relates the process of the formation of a young personality in the midst of social and political upheaval following the post-reform period, but even more so, it is the story of the upbringing of a youth without parental guidance; life itself is his teacher. Arkadij is the illegitimate son of the landowner Andrej Petrovich Versilov and the eighteen year old Sofja Andreevna Dolgorukij, the wife of Versilov's gardener Makar Dolgorukij. Although Sofja comes to live with Versilov, young Arkadij, who bears the name of his mother's legal husband, grows up among strangers in boarding school. It is this neglected childhood, his loneliness and the consciousness of his illegitimate position that determine two passions in him, the longing for his true father

and the idea that he has to become a Russian Rothschild, not for the sake of wealth, but rather for its power which will make him independent and free. Upon his arrival in St. Petersburg, it soon becomes obvious that the idea of becoming a Rothschild is a mere dream. He experiences the exaltation of adolescent love and its enchantment, and plunges into a life of excitement and gambling. However, under the influence of the pilgrim Makar who offers a firm stand in life, based on humility and selfless love, Arkadij undergoes a transformation and triumphs over life's dark and evil forces. His childhood dream to get to know his father and experience the comfort of belonging to a family is ultimately realized, when his love/hate relationship with his father gives way to sheer admiration.

Arkadij is Dostoevskij's most omnipotent narrator around whom all the action revolves. In having selected an adolescent as his narrator and making him, at the same time the author of his first novelistic venture, Dostoevskij is able to attribute any artistic innovation or deficiency to the author's inexperience as a writer, indeed, an ingenious excuse, should the need arise. On the other hand, one must assert that by the time Dostoevskij was writing *A Raw Youth* he had adopted certain devices which seemed defective to some critics, one being the principle of not explaining everything, leaving somethings a mystery so as to involve the reader. Consequently, some of the characters are mere symbols and others, particularly the female "portraits are deliberately, it would seem, left unfinished."¹⁵⁶

Considering his age, Arkadij turns out to be an excellent observer and an efficient judge of character. He seems to be particularly concerned with the exterior of any new character and systematically describes the person's appearance, and the impression made upon him, or he may simply dismiss a new character by saying: "He is not worth describing." But most often his portraits begin with statements like: "I did look at her rather carefully"; "I remember being awfully impressed by her features"; "More than once ... I was surprised by his face"; "Kraft's face I shall never forget"; "I looked at him eagerly." What follows then is usually a physical portrait consisting of a description of the most salient features and the general facial expression. Once again there is no consistent use of physiognomy. Versilov, one of the principal characters whose personality is the driving force behind all the actions, is only depicted in a purely physical portrait, while others, who are not even named, are endowed with full psycho-physical sketches. This predilection for physical appearance is so pronounced that Arkadij manages to present even glimpses of his own appearance. When Arkadij expresses a profound dislike of women the old Prince Sokolskij exclaims: "... with your rosy cheeks,

your face blooming with health and such aversion." Similarly Versilov admonishes Arkadij to be forthright and speak his mind: "You are obviously an intelligent person. ... And yet, you are shutting yourself up, though your honest countenance and your rosy cheeks bear witness that you might look everyone straight in the face with perfect innocence."

Even more striking is the use of pathognomy, mimic and gesture and the momentary change of facial expression during a controversial discussion. Thus the dialogues are interspersed with such expressions as: "I could read anger in his face"; "Her face suddenly revealed great joy"; "His whole face became distorted and displayed a grin of senseless inquiry"; "Her face was full of infinite suffering and compassion"; "She looked into my face with impatient inquiry"; "His face betrayed an intense and stupid uneasiness." In fact, this rapidly changing expression became a characteristic feature of old Prince Sokolskij. During the conversation between Sokolskij and Arkadij, the latter repeatedly observes--"the Prince's face changed again"; "He suddenly broke off with an air of fatigue"; "His whole face was instantly transformed"; "As I talked, the Prince's face changed from a playful expression to one of great sadness." This changeability also becomes the main distinguishing feature in the Prince's portrait:

Sometimes I looked with extreme astonishment at the old man and wondered how he could ever have presided at meetings. ... More than once, too, I was surprised by his face; it was very serious-looking, almost handsome and thin; he had thick curly grey hair, wide-open eyes, and besides, he was slim and well built; but there was a kind of unpleasant, almost unseemly peculiarity about his face--it would suddenly change from excessive seriousness to an expression of exaggerated playfulness, which was a complete surprise to a person who saw him for the first time. I spoke about this to Versilov, who listened with curiosity; it seemed that he had not expected me to be capable of making such observations.¹⁵⁷

What Arkadij observes in the face of this wealthy, religious, sentimental and generous old Prince is the reaction of a senile old man who is a bit paranoid and fearful after having had a mental breakdown; this information is revealed outside the scope of his portrait.

Consonant with the general reconciliatory tone of the novel, Dostoevskij also depicts the revolutionary populists with whom Arkadij comes into contact, though he is out of sympathy with their views. They are no longer the murderers of *The Possessed*, but rather dreamers and talkers, idealists aspiring to a kind of brotherhood. Arkadij introduces all of them in portraits, which in turn are based on prototypes from the Dolgushin circle which was on trial in 1874. For the most part the depictions are short,

but they evoke a specific image. Dergachev, their leader is described during a meeting as "a strong, broad-shouldered, dark-complexioned man of medium height, with a big beard. His eyes showed acuteness, habitual reserve, and a certain incessant watchfulness; though he was for the most part silent, he evidently controlled the conversation."¹⁵⁸

This kind of laconic depiction, though very revealing, is also applied in the portrayal of the other youthful populists. Short and precise is also the portrait of Vasin, another member of the Dergachev circle:

Vasin's face [*fizionomija Vasina*] did not impress me much, though I had heard that he is extraordinarily intelligent. He had fair hair, large light grey eyes, and a very open face, but at the same time there was something, as it were, too hard in it. One had the presentiment that he would not be very communicative, but he looked undeniably intelligent, cleverer than Dergachev, more profound--cleverer than anyone in the room; but perhaps I am now exaggerating everything.¹⁵⁹

In spite of Vasin's aloofness and the humiliation which he evokes in Arkadij, the latter seeks his advice and thus has occasion to visit him in his apartment, a visit which, in turn, allows him to use a traditional mode of characterization, for the apartment confirms his impression of Vasin: "First of all, I began to feel an intense dislike for Vasin's room." He adds: "Show me your room and I will tell you your character."¹⁶⁰

More attention is devoted to the gentle and pensive Kraft. Kraft has come to the conclusion that the Russians are destined to be a second rate people and will not play a major role in the fate of mankind. He has lost faith in Russian messianism; without this faith in Russia he cannot live, and, thus, he extinguishes his own life. Kraft's view of Russia is in direct contrast to the passionate belief in Russia's calling, so ardently expressed by Dostoevskij and his characters in other novels. In a manuscript left behind by Kraft, he sets forth the physiological basis for this conviction. Arkadij records the opinions of Kraft's friends and the irony with which they rejected this negative concept of Russia's destiny: "[It was a] book full of abstruse theories, proving by phrenology, by craneology, and even mathematics, that the Russians are a second rate race, and that therefore, since he was a Russian, life was not worth living for him."¹⁶¹ Arkadij draws Kraft's portrait, shortly before his suicide, at the very moment when he is discussing his theory. He seems to capture Kraft's inner dissolution and the powerful feelings which dominate his being and give his face a peculiar something which Arkadij finds disturbing:

Kraft's face I shall never forget. There was no particular beauty about it, but a positive excess of mildness and delicacy, though personal dignity was conspicuous in everything about him. He was twenty-six, rather thin, above medium height, fair haired, with an earnest but soft face; there was a peculiar gentleness about his whole personality. And yet if I were asked I would not have changed my own, possibly very commonplace, countenance for his, which struck me as so attractive. There was something in his face I should not have cared to have in mine, too marked a calm (in a moral sense) and something like a secret, unconscious pride. But I probably could not have actually formed this judgement at the time. It seems so to me now, in the light of later events.¹⁶²

The second half of the novel is heavily dominated by the image of Arkadij's mother Sofja Andreevna (Sonja), whose kindness and human qualities are drawn in warm lyrical tones as only an affectionate son can depict a mother. Although she is not very pretty, semi-literate and submissive, meek and defenceless, obedient and oppressed and considers herself insignificant in the presence of Versilov, she emerges in the novel as the typical gentle Russian mother full of spiritual beauty. Mochulsky is perhaps overzealous when he sees in "the poor orphaned peasant girl ... the image of the Eternal Feminine, Sophia, the Divine Wisdom."¹⁶³ The man for whom she left her husband in her tender youth, Versilov, loves her only with a compassionate love while at the same time he looks for passionate love with others. At the end, however, he recognizes her spiritual excellence and admits that no one is more capable of understanding his failures and that never in his life has he met a woman with so much insight and delicacy of heart as she. To his son Arkadij he says that humility, submissiveness, self-abasement and at the same time firmness and strength, which derive from the common people, describe his mother. He admonishes him to keep in mind "that she is the best of all the women whom ... [he has] met on earth."¹⁶⁴ Here is the portrait drawn by Arkadij when he asks his mother to call him by the more endearing Arkasha:

She blushed all over. Certainly her face had at times a great charm. ... It had a look of simplicity, but by no means of stupidity. It was rather pale and anaemic, her cheeks were very thin, even hollow; her forehead was already lined by many wrinkles, but there were none round her eyes, and her eyes were rather large and wide open, and shone with a gentle and serene light which had drawn me to her from the very first day. I liked her face, too, because it did not look particularly depressed or drawn; on the contrary, her expression would have been positively cheerful, if she had not been so often agitated, sometimes almost panic-stricken over trifles, starting up from her seat for nothing at all, or listening in alarm to anything new that was said, till she was sure that all was well and as before. What mattered to her was just that all should be as before; that there should be no change, that nothing new should happen, not even new happiness. ... It might have been thought that she had been frightened as a

child. Besides her eyes, I liked the oval of her rather long face, and I believe if it had been a shade less broad across the cheekbones she might have been called beautiful, not only in her youth but even now. She was not more than thirty-nine, but grey hairs were already visible in her chestnut hair.¹⁶⁵

Although this purely physical portrayal of Arkadij's mother is hardly indicative of her real being, her face provides the departure for a general commentary. When Arkadij visits one of Versilov's apartments his attention is caught by a portrait of his mother; it is a photograph in a magnificent carved frame. What strikes him most is the "likeness which was remarkable in the photograph, the spiritual likeness of it, so to say; in fact, it looked more like a real portrait by the hand of an artist than a mere mechanical print."

Having established that the photograph is both a physical and a spiritual likeness of Sofja Andreevna, Versilov echoes Dostoevskij's concept of portraiture and the difficulties of capturing the complexity of human character in one single portrayal. This also explains once again Dostoevskij's reluctance to depict his main characters, who are most often complex, in portrait form or present them only in a laconic, impressionistic drawing. In expounding the limitation of the photographic portrayal as opposed to a portrait painting, Versilov at the same time offers a physiognomic analysis of the portrait which by a stroke of luck captures the essence of Sofja Andreevna's personality. But this is possible only because she is basically a monological character with specific dominant attributes. Versilov explains:

Observe ... photographs very rarely turn out good likenesses that one can easily understand: the originals, that is all of us, are very rarely like ourselves. Only on rare occasion does the human face express its dominant quality, its characteristic thought. The artist studies the face and captures its characteristic meaning, even though at the actual moment he is painting, it may not have been in the face at all. Photography takes a man as he is and thus it is quite possible that at certain moments Napoleon would have turned out stupid, and Bismarck gentle. Here in this portrait, as if on purpose, the sun caught Sonja in her characteristic moment of shy, modest gentle love and rather wild fearful chastity. And how happy she was ... when I eagerly desired her portrait. When this was taken ... she was younger and handsomer, and yet then she had those hollow cheeks, those lines on her forehead, that shrinking, fearful timidity in her eyes, which seems to increase with the years. ... Russian women go off quickly, their beauty is only a passing gleam, and this is not only due to ethnographic peculiarities, but also because they are capable of unlimited love. The Russian woman gives everything at once, when she loves ... she keeps nothing in reserve, and her beauty is quickly consumed upon him whom she loves. ... Her beauty too has been consumed by me.¹⁶⁶

The physiognomic reading of Sofja Andreevna's face from the photograph is executed in a rather sophisticated manner, although there is no new description of specific expressions or features, but only a repetition of what the reader already knows from Arkadij's first portrayal. What the reader learns is the conclusion of a physiognomic analysis by Versilov. It is he who reads from her eyes her main qualities, such as gentle love, chastity and shrinking timidity.

Although a characteristic dominant quality in a personality is, logically according to Dostoevskij's theory, depictable only in a monological concept of character, in actual practice Dostoevskij does not adhere to his theory, which is, indeed, not surprising. Even in the most laconic depictions of his major characters, he seems to be striving to give an indication of their complexity and contradictions, at least by referring to one or two typical characteristics, although his narrator frequently notes the difficulty of capturing their changing personalities. This is the case with the old Prince Sokolskij whose dominant quality is precisely his changeability, and we also find it in Sergej Petrovich Sokolskij (no relation to the old Prince) and in Katerina Nikolaevna Akhmakova.

Sergej Sokolskij's complicated character with its ensuing inner discord could only be hinted at in his portrait. When we meet him he is beset by debts and in his attempt to extricate himself he indulges in a variety of ventures which make him both morally and legally guilty. He turns to gambling, becomes involved in a counterfeiting scheme, dreams of a favourable match and becomes involved with women who may receive large dowries. He lies to Liza, who is pregnant by him, about other women and spreads false rumours when it is to his advantage. Guilt-stricken and disgusted with his conduct, Sergej undergoes intense inner conflict and at the end apologizes to everyone, confesses his guilt and is fully prepared to suffer the consequences. Basically Sergej is not so much evil as he is weak and full of false pride; his passion to play a role in the whirl of high society leads him to incriminating acts. Arkadij's first impression of Sergej results in the following portrait:

A handsome young officer walked in. I looked at him eagerly, I had never seen him before. I call him handsome for every one called him so, but there was something not altogether attractive in that handsome young face. I note this as the impression made the first instant, my first view of him, which remained with me always. He was thin and finely built, with brown hair, a fresh but somewhat sallow skin and an expression of determination. There was a rather hard look in his beautiful dark eyes even when he was perfectly calm. But his resolute expression repelled one just because one felt that its resoluteness cost him little. But I cannot put it into words. ... It is true that his face was able to change suddenly from hardness to a wonderfully friendly, gentle and tender expression,

and, what is more, with unmistakable frankness. It was just that frankness which was attractive. I will note another characteristic: in spite of its friendliness and frankness his face never looked gay; even when he laughed with whole-hearted mirth there was always a feeling that there was no trace in his heart of genuine, serene, lighthearted gaiety. ... But it is extremely difficult to describe a face like this. I'm utterly incapable of it.¹⁶⁷

The capturing of that unadulterated first impression of a character, not only of Sergej, but also of others, is characteristic of Arkadij, the budding physiognomist. Unwittingly or not, Arkadij employs the basic principles of physiognomy, as he proceeds to delineate character from the perception that "man is what he looks" and that any physiognomic reading must be based on that first encounter with the subject under observation. Only that first sight, without any previous contact, affords a purely objective, uncorrupted impression and consequently only then can a face be physiognomically gauged, provided the observer has a well developed physiognomic sense. But as soon as a conversation or any other intercourse takes place, the subject under scrutiny no longer shows his true natural being, as he or she is apt to apply the art of dissimulation and reveals qualities which were appropriated. Conversely the observer is likewise distracted by the pathognomic elements, mimic and gestures and the play of features and the eyes, and this may corrupt his judgement. In the words of Schopenhauer: that "first glass of wine is the one which gives us its true taste., in the same way, it is only at the first encounter that a face makes its full impressiom upon us."¹⁶⁸

It is precisely that first impression of Sergej's face which Arkadij captures in his portrayal, and it is never obliterated from his mind. With the penetrating eye of the physiognomist, he deciphers with one glance the general or the prevailing expression of Sergej's beautiful face. It is, however, not true beauty which he observes; the harmony is disturbed by an inner discord, which makes it "extremely difficult to describe a face like this." Nonetheless the complexity of Sergej's personality is revealed by first noting something (*čto-to*) unattractive in his features and then pinpointing it to an expression of determination and the hard look in his eyes. But most of all it is that resolute expression, which is both repelling and attractive at the same time, attractive because of its frankness, repelling because of the ease with which he is able to assume such an expression. He has the amazing ability to suddenly change his hardness to a tender friendly expression. Yet, in spite of his friendliness and frankness, his face never looks gay and joyful; even when he laughs, one feels it is not genuine and not from the heart. In this respect Sergej is reminiscent of Lermontov's Pechorin, whose eyes likewise did not reflect gaiety when he

laughed. Dostoevskij almost always employs the expression of the eyes to reveal the inner disposition of those characters who otherwise successfully camouflage their countenance by wearing a mask.

The difficulty in reading Katerina Nikolaevna's face correctly is due not so much to her changeability, but rather to confusion and prejudice on part of Arkadij. In fact, she is fairly stable and her only fault seems to be that she is an attractive woman who invariably is wooed by several men, including Versilov, Arkadij's father, but her behaviour is not calculated to attract suitors. Aware that Katerina and Versilov were once briefly united by passion and flirtation, Arkadij is predisposed against her, viewing her as an enemy who has come between his parents. Notwithstanding, later, when he is able to appreciate her true being, he becomes, like his father a victim of her beauty. As secretary to her father, Arkadij is able to observe her portrait in his study. But in this "wonderful portrait," which he scrutinizes for a whole month, he reads only confusion. Equally confusing is the image, when he first meets her in person for some three minutes. It seems to Arkadij as if she throws "a nasty glance" at him and smiles impudently, yet he mainly remembers her beauty. Her image and her introduction into the novel in the form of a portrait is reminiscent of Nastasja Filippovna in *The Idiot*. Except here we are not dealing with excessive beauty; moreover, Katerina Nikolaevna emerges as the embodiment of simplicity and integrity. She is courageous and strong-willed and on the whole a remarkably ingenious and beautiful woman.

A prolonged interview finally allows Arkadij to observe Katerina fully. By that time he no longer has the feeling of lowering himself whenever he praises someone and ceases hating those whom he praises. Thus this meeting with Katerina is in reality a spontaneous expression, a confession of a sensitive, though naive and impetuous youth. The account of this meeting is the basis for her portrait, as indeed, the entire interview deals with the recollection of her appearance and character. Having arrived at the meeting place with a hostile attitude toward Katerina, he is completely overwhelmed after the first exchanges, for her face and her voice are so utterly incongruous with what he has been expecting:

I raised my head; there was no trace of mockery or anger in her face, there was only her bright and gay smile and a kind of mischievous expression on her face. Indeed, her face always had an expression of almost childlike mischief. ... I lowered my head again ...; to look at her meant to be flooded with radiance, joy and happiness, but I did not want to be happy. Indignation had stung me to the heart. ... Then I began to speak, I hardly knew what about ... about something irrelevant and incoherently. ... At first she listened with a serene, patient smile, which

never left her face, but little by little signs of surprise and then of alarm passed over her countenance. The smile persisted, but from time to time it seemed tremulous. ... I remember I talked about her face.

'I can't endure your smile any longer!' I cried suddenly. 'Why did I ... picture you as menacing and magnificent. ... When I was coming here I dreamed of you all night in the train. For a whole month before you came I gazed at your portrait, in your father's study, and could make nothing of it. The expression of your face is childish mischief and boundless good nature--there! ... Oh, but you know also how to look haughty and to crush one with a glance. I remember how you looked at me at your father's. ... I saw you then ... but I could not even have told you whether you were tall or short. As soon as I saw you I was blinded. Your portrait is not in the least like you: Your eyes are not dark, but light, and it is only the long eyelashes that make them look dark. You are plump, you are of medium height, but you have a buxom fullness, the light, full figure of a healthy village girl. And your face is that of a peasant girl, the face of a village beauty--don't be offended, because it is fine that way, it is better so--a round, rosy, clear, bold, laughing and ... bashful face! Yes bashful. ... Bashful and chaste, I swear! More than chaste--childlike!--that is your face! I have been astonished by it all and have been asking myself, is this the same woman. ... You have a bright and lively mind, but without any embellishments. ... Another thing I like is that your smile never deserts you: that is my paradise! I also love your calmness, your quietness, and the manner in which you utter your words so smoothly, so calmly, almost lazily--it is that laziness I like. ... I imagined you as the acme of pride and passion ... yet you talked to me like an equal. I never imagined that you had such a forehead; it is rather low, like that of statues, but white and soft like marble under glorious hair. Your bosom is high, your movements are light. You are extraordinarily beautiful, and yet there is no trace of any pride about you."¹⁶⁹

This protracted description of Katerina is rather bluntly executed and requires hardly any commentary. It is obvious that Arkadij's hostile feeling or rather the love/hate feeling for her has been replaced by total devotion and love, which has been summoned forth in him by her beauty, beauty both physical and moral. There is nothing offensive in her, neither in her external appearance nor in her inner disposition, as is so often the case with other beautiful characters. But most of all, she is void of any trace of pride and egoism, the source of distortion of harmony which he detected when he saw her for the first time. Katerina is one of the few personalities in whom there is total harmony; she emerges as an ideal not only in the eyes of Arkadij, but also in those of his creator. She is a synthesis of life and thus reflects Dostoevskij's aesthetic concept, representing positive beauty which emanates tranquility and joy.¹⁷⁰ In his earlier versions Dostoevskij himself characterized her as "life itself," as a "simple Russian beauty," concluding: "Katerina Nikolaevna is a rare type of society lady, a type which may not even exist in this circle. She is a simple and exceedingly straightforward type of woman."¹⁷¹

One of the most unattractive characters, in the eyes of Arkadij, is Vasin's wealthy, overbearing stepfather, a certain Mr. Stebelkov. He is one of those minor figures who is endowed with a meaningful description, but who, because of his complexity and rapid changeability is difficult to depict. Stebelkov is a speculator who is engaged in counterfeiting stocks. He frequently spreads rumours and is not above implicating people and deceiving them. Although Arkadij gets to know him better, whatever he remembers is to his disadvantage. Once again Arkadij relates that first impression upon their first encounter, when Stebelkov is about to enter the room:

Someone ... opened the door far enough for me to see in the passage a tall man who had already obviously seen me and, indeed, had carefully scrutinized me. ...

He was a well-dressed gentleman, evidently turned out by a good tailor, as they say, "like a real gentleman," though there was nothing of "the real gentleman" about him, in spite, I fancy, of his desire to appear one. He was not exactly free and easy, but somehow naturally insolent, which is anyway less offensive than an insolence practised before the mirror. His brown, slightly grizzled hair, his black eyebrows, big beard and large eyes instead of helping to define his character, actually gave him something universal, like every one else. This sort of man laughs and is ready to laugh, but for some reason one is never cheerful in his company. He quickly passes from a jocular to a dignified air, from dignity to playfulness or winking, but all this seems somehow put on and causeless. ... However, there is no need to describe him further. I came later on to know this gentleman more intimately, and therefore I have a more definite impression of him now than when he opened the door and came into the room. However, even now I should find it difficult to say anything exact or definite about him, because the chief characteristic of such people is just their incompleteness, their artificiality and their indefiniteness.¹⁷²

The incompleteness of Stebelkov's character delineation, so emphatically stated in the last sentence of the above portrayal, is undoubtedly done deliberately. Unfinished portraits occur frequently in the later stages of Dostoevskij's creativity. The principle of not spelling out everything and thereby involving the reader to a greater degree is intentionally employed as an innovative device in *A Raw Youth*. The inexperienced narrator's statement in the preface to his first novelistic venture that he will "exclude everything extraneous, especially all literary graces" indicates an innovative approach. That the author could not adhere systematically to a new descriptive method is another matter. In either case, that incompleteness is a further reinforcement of the Dostoevskijan concept of human character, i.e., that there is infinitely more to human personality than can be revealed within the short span of a novel.

If Arkadij's wandering and searching for his identity and a firm footing is symbolic of the spiritual crisis of the 1870's, then the old pilgrim Makar Dolgorukij is symbolic of the spiritual force which alone can restore order and harmony and unite mankind. Makar's image as a positive, beautiful being is contrasted to the crumbling world of passion in which people have abandoned the idea of God, a prevailing theme in Dostoevskij's great novels. Makar, the pious vagabond, is likened to Nekrasov's Vlas. But unlike Vlas, Makar does not undergo a conversion; he is naturally good and pious and has an innate firm concept of life based on a religious view of the universe.. This humble former serf, with his serene outlook and selfless love, combines in himself a naive poetic quality and the dignity of a peasant thinker. Here is how Versilov conveys Makar's image to Arkadij:

I found in him a sort of benign serenity, an evenness of temper and ... something almost like gaiety ... a very great capacity for talking sense. ... And above all--respectfulness, that modest courtesy ... which made him superior. ... There was a complete absence of conceit and he showed himself secure in his self-respect in his own station in life. ... But above all, Makar had an extraordinary stateliness and was, I assure you, very handsome. It is true, he was old, but dark visaged, tall and erect, simple and dignified.¹⁷³

At the time Arkadij meets Makar in person, he is about seventy years old and in poor health; but Arkadij immediately recognizes in his physical features the inner world of that beautiful soul, that absolutely pure heart, indeed, a countenance which is void of any pride and egoism, just as Versilov had described him. Arkadij's observation yields this portrait:

There was sitting there a very grey-headed old man, with a big and very white beard. ... He was, it could be discerned, tall, broad-shouldered, and of a cheerful appearance, in spite of his illness, though he was somewhat thin and pale. He had a rather long face and thick, but not very long hair. ... Though I had not the slightest idea of meeting him, I instantly guessed who he was. ...

He did not stir on seeing me, he looked intently at me in silence, just as I did at him, the only difference was that I stared at him with the greatest astonishment, while he looked at me without the slightest. Scrutinizing me ... from head to foot during those five or ten seconds of silence, he suddenly smiled and even laughed a gentle noiseless laugh, and though the laugh was soon over, traces of its serene gaiety remained upon his face and above all in his eyes, which were very blue, luminous and large, though they were surrounded by innumerable wrinkles, and the eyelids were swollen and drooping. This laugh of his was what had the most effect on me.¹⁷⁴

Makar has a profound impact on Arkadij, one which ultimately leads to his conversion. This impact is due not only to the prolonged discussions on the mysteries of God and the edifying stories Makar poetically relates, but also to the childlike simplicity and tranquility emanating from his countenance, something Arkadij calls "seemliness" or "comeliness" (*blagobrazie*). Arkadij himself states: "What attracted one first of all, as I have observed already, was his extraordinary pure-heartedness and his freedom from *amour-propre*; one felt instinctively that he had an almost sinless heart. He had 'gaiety' of heart, and therefore 'comeliness'."¹⁷⁵ With this commentary Arkadij notes the expression of Makar's face with its beautiful serenity, marvelous simplicity, tender harmony and gaiety. "Gaiety" especially radiates from his face; moreover, Makar himself is very fond of the word "gaiety" and often uses it. Indeed, Makar, Arkadij, and their creator himself attach special significance to a personality endowed with gaiety, postulating that it is a sure measure of human character. In fact, gaiety or its absence is noted in most of Dostoevskij's character sketches.

Makar's gaiety of heart which manifests itself physically in his gentle laugh, must have, indeed, affected him most, for Arkadij immediately after his observation indulges in a long discourse on laughing. It is a serious account without any irony, testifying to the infinite variety and mobility of man's psyche, which the human face is capable of expressing. True, it is Arkadij who is the exponent of laughter as a true measure of human character, but then it is the first and only account in Dostoevskij's writing where we find such a categorical statement, postulating an emotional expression of the face as indicative of general character. Arkadij feels so strongly about his discovery that he addresses the reader by saying: "I am intentionally introducing here this long tirade on the subject of laughter and am sacrificing the continuity of the story for the sake of it, because I consider it as one of the most serious deductions I have drawn from life. ..."

The following passage from Arkadij's two-page account, contains his most pertinent observations on laughter: "... most often something vulgar, something degrading surfaces on the face when a man laughs, although he is almost unconscious of the impression he is making. In the same manner he does not know, as everyone does not know what they look like when they are asleep. ... I only want to say that people who are laughing, like those who are asleep, most often don't know what they look like." The assumption here is that genuine laughter is an involuntary act, in no way controlled by the will. Merriment when sincerely felt, manifests itself spontaneously. In a playful instinct laughter reflects an inner state of harmony, or the reverse may be the case.

Arkadij further maintains that laughter is a gift and cannot be cultivated: "One can only cultivate it, perhaps, by training oneself to be different, by developing and improving it and by struggling against the evil instinct of one's character: then a man's laugh might change for the better. A man will sometimes give himself away completely by his laugh and you suddenly know him through and through. ..." Having made this categorical statement, Arkadij proceeds to describe the type of laughter which is indicative of an expression of good spirits, i.e., he is not interested in judging a human face according to its aesthetic or intellectual components, but according to its moral aspects, its non-verbal communication of an emotion:

What is most essential in laughter is sincerity. ... A good laugh must be free from malice, and people are constantly laughing maliciously. A sincere laugh free from malice is gaiety. ... A man's gaiety is what most betrays the whole man from head to foot. Sometimes one will be unable to read a character for a long time, but if the man begins to laugh his whole character will suddenly lie open before you. It is only the loftiest and happiest natures whose gaiety is infectious, that is, good-hearted and irresistible. I am not talking of intellectual development, but of character, of the whole man. And so if you want to see into a man and to understand his soul, don't concentrate your attention on the way he talks or is silent, on his tears, or the emotion he displays over exalted ideas; you will see through him better when he laughs. If a man has a good laugh, it means that he is a good man. Take note of every shade; a man's laugh must never, for instance, strike you as stupid, however gay and good-humoured he may be. If you notice the slightest trace of stupidity in his laughter, you may be sure that that man is of limited intelligence, though he is continually dropping ideas wherever he goes. Even if his laugh is not stupid, but the man himself strikes you as being just a bit ridiculous when he laughs, you may be sure that the man is deficient in personal dignity, to some extent anyway. Or if the laughter though infectious, strikes you for some reason as vulgar, you may be sure that that man's nature is vulgar, and all the generous and lofty qualities you have observed in him before are either intentionally assumed or unconsciously borrowed and that the man is certain to deteriorate. ...

Although laughter may be induced by all kinds of conscious affectations, Arkadij speaks only of sincere laughter, which alone radiates true gaiety. Moreover, a man's gaiety betrays his entire being; it is part of the physiognomy of his countenance. Gaiety is a reflection of inner harmony and beauty. "Laughter is the surest test of the heart" because it is an involuntary activity and thus mirrors the true self. It is such gaiety which Arkadij associates with good-hearted people and which he observes in old Makur. He likens Makar's gentle noiseless laugh to the laughter of a child, innocent and pure, and adds: "... some children know how to laugh to perfection; ... a laughing, merry one is a

sunbeam from paradise, it is a revelation from the future, when man will become at last as pure and simple-hearted as a child. And indeed, there was something childlike and incredibly attractive in the momentary laughter of this old man."¹⁷⁶

In the last part of his account Arkadij fuses virtue and morality with aesthetics, and in doing so, indirectly expounds a physiognomic principle, namely that beauty and ugliness in the expression of a face have a direct and exact relation to inner moral beauty and ugliness. Vice produces ugliness, virtue alone beautifies. Physiognomic in principle is no less the idea that in order to get to understand a man's soul, it is safer to observe the movements of his expressions, as they reveal more truly his thought and intentions than do words, which may be falsified. That these ideas on facial movements and expressions are the fruit of Dostoevskij's own observation seems clear. But they were also part and parcel of many theoreticians before him like Le Brun, Ch. Bell, Ch. Darwin and Piderit, all of whom wrote on non-verbal aspects of human communication, and especially on the expression of emotions, as manifested in the face. Although Piderit's works on mimicry and physiognomy were translated into Russian by the 1870's, it seems that if Dostoevskij ever read any of these works, it could only have been Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872). The work had been translated into Russian immediately; moreover, Dostoevskij owned an edition, and reading it, especially the chapter on laughter, may have inspired him to deal with the subject in his novel.¹⁷⁷ Darwin's theory on heredity is especially prominent in Dostoevskij's last novel.

Chapter V: *The Brothers Karamazov* (1879-80)

Dostoevskij's last novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*, is without doubt his most complex, best known and artistically most accomplished work. Even without the promised sequel which never materialized, it is a compendium of all of Dostoevskij's ideas and thoughts on literature and art, philosophy and freedom, social and political life, religion and human psychology. But most of all it reveals with startling penetration the multiplicity and contradiction of human personality. Although many of these aspects and problems had been touched upon in his earlier work, *The Brothers Karamazov* became a synthesis of his mature reflection on Russian life of the 1870's; indeed, it is a socio-psychological portrayal through an array of no less than fifty characters representing various views and trends of that society. In depicting contemporaneity, he was bound to describe a world of chaos, a disintegration and decomposition of human characters who have abundant divine guidance. It is a world diametrically opposed to that of the harmony and beauty so ardently desired by its author and most vividly described in *The Dream of the Ridiculous Man* (1877).

In its framework the novel is the history of the Karamazov family, the rivalry of the sons with their father leading eventually to patricide. The action, however, is determined by the diverse moral and ethical concepts of the various characters. Consequently, we encounter a variety of psychological types ranging from criminals to saints who discuss eternal problems--the duality and complexity of human personality, the existence of God and theodicy, the infinite suffering of mankind, common guilt, the role of beauty and faith in the redemption of man.

The treatment of such diverse subjects coupled with a wealth of numerous subplots, which are no less suspenseful and intricate than the main plot, makes it possible to interpret the novel on different levels. But if we attempt to approximate Dostoevskij's reading of the novel (and his goal was always that the readers have the same perception as its creator), then it seems clear that the underlying idea was the regeneration of man by laying bare the ills of his age as Dante had done in *The Divine Comedy* and Balzac in *The Human Comedy*.¹⁷⁸ Here then, as in most of Dostoevskij's work, the central question is the problem of good and evil and the ultimate redemption of man. The final message is therefore that man can achieve salvation not through the intellect and rationalism, but only through suffering, humiliation and Christ, through feelings of love.

Since the novel is a summation of Dostoevskij's thoughts and ideas, it is only logical that the bearers of these ideas should be familiar types, encountered in Dostoevskij's

previous works. The majority of them are lost souls who are in need of redemption. Although most of the characters may be classified into specific psychological types, such as rationalists, sensualists, saints, and schemers, there are only a few monological characters. The majority are complex, broad personalities, capable of fluctuating from one extreme to the other, from tenderness to murderous lust. Indeed, the tension and conflict within the novel is built not only upon sharp contrast between the characters, but also on the contradictions within one and the same personality.

Dostoevskij's narrator displays a special interest in the personalities of the characters. In fact, he has to his credit a number of character studies of various types which also account for the classification of types within the novel. This depiction of types is both in the tradition of the portrayal of types and at the same time in accord with Dostoevskij's own concept of the presentation of complex personalities in portrait form. As types, most of the characters are larger than themselves, i.e., they symbolize specific ideas. Yet, at the same time they all emerge as truly individualized characters; they are real and are endowed with vitality and life force. They are unique and distinct in their physical properties and expressions, most of which even harmonize with their pathological complexes, moral values and general character traits.

Contrary to the practice employed in *A Raw Youth*, the portrait of a character is drawn only after the reader has already learned a great deal about the protagonist in question. The portrait is thus not employed to introduce a character, but rather to complete the portrayal, i.e., to give the soul a meaningful body. The portrait is, as it were, a miniature which isolates and momentarily frames a personality, and thus gives the reader a clearer picture of both the physical and spiritual attributes of the subject under scrutiny. All the characters are drawn in such direct sketches, save Ivan Karamazov, the chief catalyst in the novel, but then Ivan has a double (Smerdjakov) who indirectly mirrors him.¹⁷⁹

By the time Fedor Pavlovich, the patriarch of the Karamazov family, is presented in portrait form, the reader is thoroughly familiar with his background and character. Basically he is a sensualist who personifies lust and greed. Already in his youth he displayed a voluptuous nature and an insatiable lust for women. He went through two marriages and was always ready to run after a petticoat; a case in point is L. Smerdjachaja, a stupid and idiotic looking woman. On the whole he led a most disorderly life, and rumour had it that his marriages were stormy. After his first wife ran away, he abandoned himself to orgies of drunkenness; following the death of his second wife, he became even more debased and revolting in his behaviour. He neglected his

three sons, not to mention the illegitimate one, all of whom had to be brought up by other families. But all the while he developed a peculiar faculty for making and hoarding money. He successfully managed several taverns. Dostoevskij viewed his greed and passion for money as well as women as tragic flaws that eventually led to his murder. Aware of his shameful depravity, he became fond of acting and playing the wicked buffoon and developed a propensity for making fools of others. His cynicism and blasphemy were attributed by the narrator to his wounded dignity.

Yet this creature of cold pride, irreligion and absolute evil was capable of perceiving beauty and good and at times was even able to conjure up a sense of justice and religious feeling. Alesha's arrival at the home of Karamazov seemed to affect his moral side. He approved Alesha's decision to enter the monastery and recognized the honesty and goodness of the monk Zosima. He genuinely loved Alesha, as he was the only one who did not judge and condemn him. Though he did not believe in God, he was fearful of the devil and asked his son for his prayers. And then suddenly, this man, who never before had spent a penny for the church, donated a thousand rubles for a requiem for his first wife (who had actually mistreated him), but not for the second. The very same day he got drunk and spoke ill of the monks to Alesha. To these sudden changes and contradictions of wickedness, sentimentality and religious feelings, the narrator could only say: "Strange impulses of sudden feelings and sudden thoughts are common in such types."

But in spite of such flashes of benevolence, Fedor Karamazov is depicted as basically a buffoon, whose decadent character is fully in harmony with his unpleasant appearance:

I have mentioned already that he looked bloated. His countenance [*fizionomija*] at this time bore traces of something that testified unmistakably to the life he had led. Besides the long fleshy bags under his little, always insolent, suspicious, and ironical eyes; besides the multitude of deep wrinkles in his little fat face, his Adam's apple hung below his sharp chin like a great, fleshy goitre, which gave him a peculiar, repulsive, sensual appearance; add to that a long rapacious mouth with full lips, between which could be seen little stumps of black decayed teeth. He slobbered every time he began to speak. He was fond, indeed, of making fun of his own face though I believe he was well satisfied with it. He particularly used to point to his nose, which was not very large, but very delicate and conspicuously aquiline. "A regular Roman nose," he used to say, "with my goitre I've quite the countenance [*fizionomija*] of an ancient Roman patrician of the decadent period." He seemed proud of it.¹⁸⁰

Having learned a great deal about Fedor's negative character traits, their complexity and contradictions immediately before his portrait, the reader is readily capable of

associating his personality with his visual image. In his bloated general appearance, the fleshy bags under his little eyes with their constant insolent, suspicious and ironical look, and the obviously revolting description of the lower part of his face, one is confronted with not only a repulsive appearance, but also an image bearing the imprint of all his negative thoughts and endeavours in life. Karamazov's self image, when he likens himself to a Roman patrician of the decadent period, is also indicative of the dichotomy in his personality. Although he pokes fun at his appearance, which is in character with his buffoonery, he seems fully pleased with it.

His face, with its unpleasant individual features is, so to speak, a compendium of all he will ever be. It is a striking description to which one can apply the principle that a man is as he looks; his outer face is a mirror of his inner one. Here Dostoevskij relies on physiognomic analysis and the application of the principle of organic unity. The prevailing negative attributes in this pictorial description leave no doubt as to his attitude towards a type like Fedor Karamazov.

Following the portrait of Fedor Karamazov, the other protagonists are introduced in rapid succession. Here too, their physical properties comprise the main component of their portraits, simply because the psychological disposition of their characters has already been disclosed. Thus, one can even speak of a separate psychic and physical portrayal, especially if one is faced with a monological character. Such is the case with Alesha and Father Zosima who are characterized as being harmonious, each displaying throughout a dominant character trait. Alesha and his spiritual mentor Zosima, both angelic types, are the antithesis of the degenerate libertines in the novel.

Alesha personifies moral purity and unstinting love, and represents Dostoevskij's attempt to depict an ideal Christian. As the action of the novel begins, he is about twenty, a novice in the local monastery. Though he believes he has found the truth and wholeheartedly wants to enter the monastic life, he accepts Zosima's counsel to leave the monastery temporarily and return to the world to endure life's experiences. Here he is exposed to temptations and experiences doubts. He recognizes that he too has an element of the Karamazovs' baseness in him and acknowledges his guilt in his father's death by failing to watch more closely over his brothers. But Alesha's values are based on religious faith; and being armoured in that faith and compassionate love, he is able to overcome all temptation and return to the monastery and pray. Alesha's actions throughout the novel are exemplary and always guided by the highest principles. But his goodness is not acquired; it is innate, dating back to his childhood.

Much space is devoted to an account of his character immediately before his portrait.¹⁸¹ Here we are told of his humility and active love and how every one loved him wherever he went and how he in turn evoked good feelings and love in others. He never resented an insult; his forgiveness and his love was unconscious and inherent, and he never acted from design or from artfulness in winning affection. Having characterized him thus, the narrator endows him with an equally pleasant physical appearance:

Some of my readers may imagine that my young man was a sickly, ecstatic, poorly developed creature, a pale, consumptive dreamer. On the contrary, Alesha was at this time a well-grown, red-cheeked, clear-eyed lad of nineteen, radiant with health. He was very handsome, too, graceful, moderately tall, with dark brown hair, with a regular, rather long, oval-shaped face, and wide-set dark grey, shining eyes; he was very thoughtful, and apparently very serene. I shall be told, perhaps, that red cheeks are not compatible with fanaticism and mysticism; but I fancy that Alesha was more of a realist than any one. Oh! no doubt, in the monastery he fully believed in miracles, but, to my thinking, miracles are never a stumbling-block to the realist. It is not miracles that dispose realists to belief.¹⁸²

Although Alesha in his naiveté and child-like behaviour, in his radiant serenity and simplicity, resembles Myshkin, he is not a Christ-like figure or a mere symbol of holiness. Unlike the Prince, he does not suffer from any defects, is not isolated, but rather is in touch with the turmoil of real life, and consequently he is more convincing as a human being who approaches perfection both in his spiritual and physical make-up. The harmony of his sensual and rational forces, the perfection of his physical features which correspond to his inner attributes and, in addition, his graceful movements free of strain and his spontaneous goodness make him a beautiful soul in the Schillerian sense. He is Dostoevskij's idea of a positive type of beauty, for there are no traces of inner discord to distort the harmony of his exterior. Of all the characters Dostoevskij has created, he comes closest to the ideal and is most certainly the character closest to his heart.¹⁸³

The eldest of the Karamazov brothers, Dmitrij, the principal hero of the novel, is Dostoevskij's most complex character. Like his father, he is a sensualist and knows no measure; he is loose in morals and is forever driven and dominated by an unbridled lust and passion. He is arrogant, brutal and quick to insult and hurt the moment his anger is aroused. Already in his youth, which had passed without parental guidance, he led an irregular and disorderly existence. He entered the military where he had both success and failure. Being a man of impulses, he was bound to fight duels, squander a great deal of

money and incur large debts. Upon leaving the army, he hoped to come into his maternal inheritance, but discovered that old Karamazov had swindled him out of it. The ensuing feud between father and son is intensified when they both compete for the favours of the beautiful and proud Grushenka. It is with this rather overwhelmingly negative information that Dmitrij is introduced in portrait form and, indeed, one would expect a monotone depiction reflecting a specifically negative character:

Dmitrij Fedorovich, a young man of twenty eight, of medium height and with an agreeable countenance, looked considerably older than his years. He was muscular and showed signs of considerable physical strength. Yet there was something unhealthy in his face. It was rather thin, his cheeks were hollow, and there was an unhealthy sallowness in their colour. His rather large, prominent, dark eyes had an expression of firm determination, and yet there was a vague look in them, too. Even when he was excited and talking irritably, his eyes somehow did not follow his mood, but betrayed something else, sometimes quite incongruous with what was passing. "It's hard to tell what he's thinking," those who talked to him sometimes declared. People who saw something pensive and sullen in his eyes were startled by his sudden laugh, which bore witness to mirthful and lighthearted thoughts at the very time when his eyes were so gloomy. A certain strained look in his face was easy to understand at this moment. Every one knew, or had heard of the extremely restless and dissipated life which he had been leading of late, as well as of the violent anger to which he had been aroused in his quarrels with his father. ... It is true that he was irascible by nature, "of an unstable and unbalanced mind," as our judge S.I. Kachal'nikov happily described him.

He was stylishly and irreproachably dressed in a carefully buttoned frock-coat. He wore black gloves and carried a top hat. Having only lately left the army, he still had a moustache and no beard. His dark brown hair was cropped short, and combed forward on his temples. He had the long determined stride of a military man.¹⁸⁴

The expectations of the reader are not met. True, we learn that he looks older than his age, obviously the consequence of his unrestrained and dissolute life. But then the dichotomy and contradictions set in; he is masculine and strong, but looks sickly; his eyes have a determined look, yet at the same time they express something vague and obscure. This is apparent even when he is excited--his eyes, the usual source of inner reflection, do not harmonize with his actual thoughts, but betray something totally different, so that it is difficult to tell what he is thinking. At other times when his eyes have a pensive and gloomy expression, he startles people with a sudden laugh which bears witness to his playful thoughts. These are not the expressions of a monological character. The reader is startled at this stage because there is no permanent character trait indicated, not even a hint, but only obscurity, changeability and something quite indefinite. The reader is thus

alerted that there is more to Dmitrij than the negative attributes the narrator related earlier.

Although the portrait does not specify that other side of Dmitrij, it is nonetheless the portrayal of a complex character of extremities, another broad personality typical of Dostoevskij. Only in the course of the action is it revealed that baseness and exalted feelings, humiliation and arrogance, impulses of good and evil reside in him side by side. Dmitrij's oscillation between baseness and idealism, between love and hate and the desire to be honourable manifests itself in the sudden changes and disharmony of his facial expression. He loves both Katerina Ivanovna and Grushenka, but in either case it is a love/hate relationship. He struggles to be honourable, not resting until his debts are settled. He is overcome by human suffering and sorrow, especially that of children, and is ready to battle against it. Even more revealing is Dmitrij's artistic sensibility; an admirer of Schiller, he repeatedly quotes him and writes poetry himself. His discourses on philosophy and aesthetics are profound, especially the problem of beauty, its caprice and mystery, both of which evoke spiritual exaltation and physical lust. The fact that man cherishes both is a riddle to him and thus he defines beauty as a terrible force in which "the devil struggles with God and the field of battle is the human heart."

Dmitrij's tragedy is that he is fully aware of the debauchery and idealism in him, and at one time even contemplates suicide, but he is unable to overcome his Karamazov heritage. He is simply a slave of his sensual desires and too weak to control his passion. Yet towards the end, Dmitrij begins to undergo a transformation, largely through aesthetic experience, specifically through reading Schiller. Lapshin pointedly remarks that even though "Schiller did not fully save him from shame and fall he prevented him from becoming a second example of his father."¹⁸⁵ Grushenka characterizes Dmitrij succinctly when she says to him, "although you are an animal, you are at least a noble one." But the most profound analysis of Dmitrij's contrasting character traits are found in the speech of the prosecutor who notes the extremities in his personality, characterizing him as "genuinely noble, and ... genuinely base. And why? Because we are all broad characters, of the Karamazov type (*natury shirokie, karamazovskie*), ... capable of the greatest heights and of the greatest depths."¹⁸⁶ And this broadness, indefinite as it may be, is indicated in Dmitrij's portrait. Lastly, when Dmitrij is falsely sentenced to twenty years of penal servitude for murdering his father, he accepts the verdict with a feeling of joy, not as punishment for the murder which he did not commit, but as punishment for all the wrong he committed against humanity. A new Dmitrij seems to be in the making, and he even accepts God above him.

That indefinite element captured in Dmitrij's verbal portrait suddenly becomes meaningful the moment the other side of his character is disclosed, once we learn that he is poised between extremities, the actively struggling forces of sin and idealism. Only the elder Zosima is able to read in Dmitrij's face the suffering in store for him. Whether Zosima has a special gift for foretelling the future or whether his ability is due to his physiognomic awareness, in either case it is (as in the case of Prince Myshkin) after a scrutiny of the facial expression. Thus he is able to say to Alesha: "I seemed to see something terrible ... as though his [Dmitrij's] whole future was expressed in his look. He had such an expression in his eyes, that I was instantly horror-stricken at what that man was preparing for himself. Once or twice in my life I have seen such an expression in people's faces ... reflecting as it were their future fate, and that fate, alas, came to pass."¹⁸⁷

The use of a character, other than the narrator, for the purpose of disclosing the impression or portrait of another figure is a recurring device in the novel. The portrait of Father Zosima is rendered, for example, through the eyes of Miusov, a libertine and Westerner who observes Zosima, when arbitrating the feud between the Karamazovs. After a cursory glance at everything around him, Miusov who has a "high opinion of his own insight" stares intently at the elder:

At the first moment he did not like Zosima. There was indeed something in the elder's face which many people besides Miusov might not have liked. He was a short, stooped man, with very weak legs, and though he was only sixty-five, he seemed from illness much older, at least by ten years. His whole face, besides, was very dry and sown with fine wrinkles, especially around the eyes. His eyes were small, light-coloured, quick and shining like two bright points. His fine greyish hair was preserved only about his temples, his wedge-shaped beard was very small and rather sparse, and his lips, which smiled frequently, were thin like two little threads. His nose, though not long, was rather sharp like that of a little bird.¹⁸⁸

Father Zosima's appearance has very little relation to his spiritual beauty, which is only fully revealed by indirect means, through his actions and his teaching. He propounds the idea of a union of brotherhood, a paradise on earth, and the idea that "all men are guilty for everyone."¹⁸⁹ His compassionate and forgiving nature, his selfless love and humility are the acquired attributes of the converted Zosima and are contrasted to his worldly existence in his younger years. Thus, he symbolizes the transformation of a sinner into an ideal Christian, and his qualities are those treasured by Dostoevskij in his saint-like characters. It is rather strange that Zosima's portrait is drawn through the prism of an opponent of the church, and especially of an elder from the monastery with which

Miusov had controversies in the past. No wonder his perception of the elder's exterior led him to say that he is a "malicious soul, full of petty pride," a judgement obviously based on preconceived notions about the clergy in general. But then the narrator tells us that this is only "at the first moment" that he and others "did not like Zosima," which means that later when they got to know the essence of Zosima, they changed their opinion of him. Moreover, the narrator seemingly does not fully relate Miusov's perception of Zosima, for his appearance, though not very pleasant, is still related in a rather lyrical manner, full of endearing diminutives, reflecting both the style and description of the prototype¹⁹⁰ and the author's obvious sympathetic attitude towards his subject.¹⁹¹

The only features attesting to Zosima's humanism are his frequently smiling lips and eyes, an element of gaiety found in all of Dostoevskij's benevolent characters. Even when he neared his final hour and looked very tired "his face was nonetheless bright and joyful and it wore an expression of gaiety, friendliness and cordiality."¹⁹² Indeed, he parted from this world "quietly and joyfully" with a "smile on his face."¹⁹³

Elaborately drawn portraits are devoted to Grushenka and Katerina Ivanovna, the two principal female characters who are intimately involved with the Karamazov family. Both of them are depicted through the prism of Alesha, and both emerge as complicated personalities. Katerina Ivanovna is presented in two successive portraits when she is betrothed to Dmitrij. She met him under rather unusual circumstances, when he provided some 4,500 rubles to replace the governmental funds which her father had misappropriated. She was expected and indeed fully ready to offer sexual favours in exchange. Her father's honour, however, was saved without any sacrifices on her part, for Dmitrij merely gave her the money and bowed to her. This chivalrous and generous act immensely impressed Katerina and initiated her involvement with the Karamazovs. She declared her love, begged him to marry her and is determined to save him from destroying himself. Though she is generous, virtuous and honourable, and ready to share Dmitrij's burden, her persistence in saving him reveals a strong tendency to establish her dominance. It is also disclosed that Katerina listened to and gave way to no one but her benefactress. This tendency is even more evident when Dmitrij becomes infatuated with Grushenka. It is at this stage that Dmitrij introduces his brother Alesha to Katerina. Though Alesha does not participate in the conversation, he is a close observer and "had seen a great deal clearly." After having been impressed by her beauty without specifying the nature of it, the narrator conveys further Alesha's observation:

He was struck by the imperiousness, proud ease, and self-confidence, of the haughty girl. And all that was certain, Alesha felt that he was not exaggerating it. He thought her great glowing black eyes were very fine, especially with her pale, even rather sallow, longish face. But in those eyes and in the lines of her exquisite lips there was something with which his brother might well be passionately in love, but which perhaps could not be loved for long. He expressed this thought almost plainly to Dmitrij when, after the visit, his brother besought and insisted that he should not conceal his impressions on seeing his betrothed.¹⁹⁴

Having conveyed his impression of Katerina and noting her haughtiness, proud ease, self-confidence and something indefinite in her eyes and lips, Alesha feels foolish and ashamed for having expressed so frankly an opinion about a woman whom he hardly knows. He feels even more guilty, when he meets her for the second time alone, for he now becomes convinced that he was utterly mistaken in his judgement of her:

This time her face was beaming with spontaneous good-natured kindness, and direct warm-hearted sincerity. The "pride and haughtiness," which had struck Alesha so much before, was only betrayed now in a frank, generous energy and a sort of bright strong faith in herself. Alesha realized at the first glance, at the first word, that all the tragedy of her position in relation to the man she loved so dearly was no secret to her; that she perhaps already knew everything, positively everything. And yet, in spite of that, there was such brightness in her face, such faith in the future. Alesha felt at once that he had gravely wronged her in his thoughts. He was conquered and captivated immediately. Besides all this, he noticed at her first words that she was in great excitement, an excitement perhaps quite exceptional and almost approaching ecstasy.¹⁹⁵

In both accounts Alesha delineates Katerina's disposition on the basis of her facial expression and in both cases it is a correct, though contradictory analysis, emphasizing such qualities as pride, self-assurance, and haughtiness, on one hand, kindness, warm-hearted sincerity and a general spontaneous goodness on the other. Indeed, she is all of that and much more. Her extreme emotions ranging from kindness to rage and hysteria are displayed the moment she is unable to assert herself and extract a promise from Grushenka to leave Dmitrij alone and return to her former lover. The duality of her personality is also indicated when she becomes involved with Ivan, thus finding herself torn between the two brothers. Yet all the while she attempts to establish her dominance over Dmitrij and in doing so she torments Ivan at the same time. After Dmitrij's arrest, she engages the best lawyers, testifies in his favour at court, but then, after Ivan implicates himself, Katerina reverses her role as she now defends Ivan and accuses Dmitrij of the murder of his father by producing a letter in which he threatened to murder

him. Although she feels guilty in this betrayal and seeks a reconciliation with Dmitrij, her actions are governed by a deep-seated hatred for having been abandoned for another woman. Yet her offended pride and selfishness later give way to a spontaneous gesture of good-will to help Dmitrij and preserve him for Grushenka. As the story unravels, pride and haughtiness dominate this contradictory personality, giving her a theatrical air.

Grushenka's portrait is drawn immediately after that of Katerina Ivanovna. They were produced, so to speak, in one sitting with the obvious intention of contrasting the two rivals. Grushenka's portrait is the most elaborate and complete depiction in the novel and could easily be compared to any physiognomic portrayal. It is comprised of all the components of a true verbal portrait: a description of her physical attributes and her facial expression followed by an account of the impression she created in the observer, which in essence is the disclosure of her character traits. It also contains details of her gait and speech and a digression on beauty, aspects all of which add further to the delineation of her personality:

... Grushenka herself, smiling and beaming, came up to the table. A violent revulsion passed over Alesha. He fixed his eyes on her and could not take them off. Here she was, that awful woman, the "beast," as Ivan had called her half an hour before. And yet one would have thought the creature standing before him most simple and ordinary, a good-natured, kind woman, handsome certainly, but so like other handsome ordinary women! It is true she was very, very good-looking with that Russian beauty so passionately loved by many men. She was a rather tall woman though a little shorter than Katerina Ivanovna, who was exceptionally tall. She had a full figure, with soft, as it were, noiseless, movements, softened to a peculiar over-sweetness, like her voice. She moved, not like Katerina Ivanovna, with a vigorous, bold step, but noiselessly. Her feet made absolutely no sound on the floor. She sank softly into a low chair, softly rustling her sumptuous black silk dress, and delicately nestling her milk-white neck and broad shoulders in a costly black cashmere shawl. She was twenty-two years old, and her face looked exactly that age. She was very white in the face, with a pale pink tint on her cheeks. The modelling of her face might be said to be too broad, and the lower jaw was set a trifle forward. Her upper lip was thin, but the slightly prominent lower lip was at least twice as full, and looked pouting. But her magnificent, abundant dark brown hair, her sable-coloured eyebrows and charming grey-blue eyes with their long lashes would have made the most indifferent person, meeting her casually in a crowd in the street, stop at the sight of her face and remember it long after. What struck Alesha most in that face was its expression of child-like good-nature. There was a child-like look in her eyes, a look of childish delight. She came up to the table, beaming with delight and seeming to expect something with childish, impatient and confiding curiosity. The light in her eyes gladdened the soul--Alesha felt that. There was something else in her which he could not understand, or would not have been able to define, and which yet perhaps unconsciously affected him. It was that softness, that

voluptuousness of her bodily movements, that catlike noiselessness. Yet it was a vigorous, ample body. Under the shawl could be seen full broad shoulders, a high, still quite girlish bosom. Her figure suggested the lines of the Venus de Milo, though already in somewhat exaggerated proportions. ... Although Alesha was fascinated, he wondered, why she was drawing out the words and did not speak naturally? She did so evidently feeling that there was a charm in the exaggerated, honeyed modulation of the syllables. It was, of course, only a bad, underbred habit that showed bad education and a false idea of good manners. And yet this intonation and manner of speaking impressed Alesha as almost incredibly incongruous with the childishly simple and happy expression of her face, the soft innocent joy in her eyes.¹⁹⁶

Having just witnessed the fight between Fedor Karamazov and his son Dmitriy, the chief cause of which was the sensual beauty of Grushenka, it is not surprising that her sudden appearance from behind the curtain produced but an expression of revulsion in Alesha. What he had learned about her, namely that she is a "rogue," "a deceitful and shameless hussy," who tantalized both father and son seems to have momentarily affected his judgement. But upon looking at her more closely, Alesha sees that "that awful woman," "the beast" turns out to be nothing but a simple, ordinary, good-natured woman. A contrast between "the beast" and kindness characterizes the rest of Grushenka's description. She is very beautiful, but it was an ordinary beauty. Her movements are soft and gentle, but with a "particular over-sweetness." In contrast to Katerina Ivanovna's bold step, hers is abnormally noiseless. Great attention is devoted to the proportion of her facial features. Here too irregularities are recorded: a thin upper lip and a lower pouting one, a lower jaw slightly protruding and the outline of her face a bit too broad. These, not fully perfect features, are contrasted to her magnificent hair and charming eyes, which combined produce a lasting sensual impression. But in this beautiful sensual face, so passionately loved by many men, there also resides a child-like good-natured expression. This child-like simplicity and innocent gaiety strike Alesha especially and arouse his soul, only to be replaced by another indefinable something, which affects him unconsciously, but ultimately its source is her extreme softness, her gentle catlike movements. Finally, her figure suggests the Venus de Milo, but in exaggerated proportions. The portrait concludes with a reference to her affected pronunciation, which strikes Alesha as totally incompatible with her child-like simplicity and the innocent joy radiating from her face.

Although Alesha is clearly fascinated with the contradictory expressions in Grushenka's face, he is unable to determine the essence of her being. The reason is simply the complexity of her personality; she is another broad character, a lacerated soul

in need of redemption. In presenting her portrait in discord and disharmony without stability and permanency of expression, the narrator obviously wishes to indicate Grushenka's inner dichotomy. Although she is depicted as a sensually beautiful woman, many of her features lack perfection. They have either too much or too little of a certain quality such as her noiseless overly-sweet movements, her face which is too broad, the irregularities of the lower part of her face, the voluptuousness of her body in exaggerated proportions, and her affected way of speaking. Such irregularities and excesses always provide a clue in Dostoevskij's work. Perfection for him means balance, moderation and harmony, and precisely these traits Alesha finds missing in Grushenka. True, there is sensual beauty, but it too does not qualify as positive beauty, for it does not reflect spiritual beauty. Moreover, positive beauty can only emanate from permanent positive character traits, i.e., from a monological character. The "infernal beauty" of Grushenka provokes only evil and a tragic conflict among the Karamazovs.

The ensuing feud of the two heroines over Dmitrij immediately following their depiction in portrait form shows Grushenka in an even darker light. She herself admits that she is not as good as she is perceived and that she always must have her own way. Indeed, like Katerina Ivanovna, she tries to win Dmitrij out of pride and selfishness. She states outright that she fascinated Dmitrij "simply for fun." But this alarming idea, which Alesha forms of Grushenka is quickly obliterated when he visits her a day later. Now she is positively "gay and delightful." Her eyes glow and her lips display "a good-natured laugh." "The kind expression in her face" is in direct opposition to what he expected: "Her whole manner seemed changed for the better since yesterday. There was scarcely any trace of that mawkish sweetness in her speech, of that voluptuous softness in her movements. Everything was simple and good-natured, her gestures were rapid, direct and confiding. ..."197

This totally positive image reflected in Grushenka's noble facial expression may well be the basic component of her character. But one is also inclined to perceive it as just another face, perhaps as her seductive side, for at this moment she is in the process of seducing Alesha. This mischievous streak to corrupt, which has already claimed two Karamazovs, is a conscious effort and takes on various forms in her behaviour and facial expressions. The ultimate cause for Grushenka's disharmony and rapidly changing image is to be sought in her wronged heart. At the age of seventeen she was seduced and deceived by an officer whom she genuinely loved; thereafter she became a kept woman. This experience made her (by the time we meet her) an independent emancipated woman seeking revenge for the humiliation she suffered in her youth. Deep down, however, the

good qualities in Grushenka prevail. Grushenka undergoes a spiritual regeneration as she recognizes her dangerous game and is willing to suffer for her guilt. At the end Alesha finds in her "a sister and a loving soul" and Dmitrij a true love willing to share with him his exile.

Of the portraits of a great number of lesser characters--Smerdjakov, Lizaveta Smerdjachaja, Miusov, Rakitin, the Grand Inquisitor, several elders, a few Poles, the Khokhlakovs and the Snegirovs--only captain Snegirov shall receive some attention here. Though interesting in themselves, on the whole, they yield neither new devices nor any innovative technique in the use of the physical phenomena as a mode of characterization. In fact, with this multitude of characters an element of sameness becomes apparent, particularly in the colour of the faces and in the female dress.

Dostoevskij's portrait of the complex personality of retired captain Snegirov is unique in its condensation and economy. Though he lives in poverty with his family, he is intensely proud and refuses to accept any help. In his latter years he behaves like a buffoon and being conscious of it, he begins to demean himself and seek debasement. When Alesha visits him in connection with the captain's injured honour, which was precipitated by his brother Dmitrij, he observes a man of about forty with a slight, small and weakly built. His reddish hair and "scanty light-coloured beard resemble a wisp of tow [*rastrepannuju mochalku*]." His shabby looking dark cotton coat is patched and spotted and his light-coloured checked trousers are long out of fashion. Moreover, they are short on him and look as though he has outgrown them. This denigrating picture of his appearance provokes Alesha to closer scrutiny:

Alesha looked attentively at him. It was the first time he had seen him. There was something angular, flurried and irritable about him. Though he had obviously just been drinking, he was not drunk. There was a kind of extraordinary impudence in his expression, and yet, strange to say, at the same time there was an obvious fear. He looked like a man who had long been kept in subjection and had submitted to it, and now had suddenly turned and was trying to assert himself. Or better still, like a man who wants dreadfully to hit you but is horribly afraid you will hit him. In his words and in the intonation of his shrill voice there was a kind of crazy humour [*jurodlivyj jumor*], at times spiteful and at times cringing, and continually shifting from one tone to another.¹⁹⁸

What Alesha discovers in Snegirov's facial expression is the glaring dichotomy of a personality whose contradictory character traits are not revealed in successive stages, but simultaneously. As if skipping over the detailed facial features and presenting only the result of a physiognomic analysis, he relates first his irritability and then the contrasting

expressions--extreme impudence and at the same time cowardice, subjugation and submission, as well as an attempt at self-assertion. The same fluctuation is noticeable in the shifting tone of his voice. Snegirov's tragedy lies in his full awareness of what he is and what he wants to be, but most of all in his recognition that he is unable to change.

Conclusion

Dostoevskij's use of literary portraiture as a mode of characterization was largely determined by his concept of man and more specifically by his perception of human character. Experience quite early taught him that man is much more complex than he was traditionally depicted, especially in the novelistic form. The main character in his early short story *Polsunkov* (1848) already manifested a complex and contradictory personality. When describing his portrait the narrator expressed surprise that on such a small space as his face one could encounter diverse character traits, such as shame and insolence, anger and timidity, regret and forgiveness and a consciousness of his own nothingness. Although Dostoevskij continued to depict monological personalities with one predominant character trait, the majority of his main protagonists were polyvalent, complex characters with many faces. In his conviction that literature ought to take its subject matter from contemporary times, he was bound to depict the man of the time who had been imbued with various new social, political and religious ideas which affected his behaviour. In order to survive in this new situation, people had to adjust and adopt different faces to be able to play different roles. This complexity of modern man, which is most apparent in the main characters of the great novels, is formulated by Prince Myshkin when he asserts that during the epoch of Peter the Great, people were of almost a different race. They were of one tonality, of one thought, "of one idea, but now they are more nervous, more enlightened, more sensitive and have two or three ideas at once, as it were. The man of today is broader, and I am convinced this hinders him from being of the monological type of those epochs." Herein we also find the Dostoevskijan concept of the broad Russian character (*shirokaja natura*).

It is this concept of human character, then, and the ensuing difficulty of presenting the same in artistic form that shaped Dostoevskij's literary portraits. Though a firm believer in the organic unity of man and that the outer may reflect the inner, but also convinced that man does not always resemble himself and that a true depiction would require several portraits, Dostoevskij nonetheless proceeded with the delineation of character through the literary portrait. This barrier did not exist when he was depicting a monological character where there is complete harmony between the physical properties and that of a character's psychological disposition. But even in a complex character, Dostoevskij concentrates on one or two major character traits reflected most often in the facial expression; the eyes and mouth are essential sources in disclosing, if not specific details, then at least indications of inner disharmony and contradictions. In short,

Dostoevskij endeavoured in portraying his characters to capture that moment when they most resemble themselves.

Dostoevskij's narrator is, on the whole, a great observer and a good judge of human character, and every portrait is drawn only after close scrutiny of the physical appearance. The same is also true when a protagonist is portrayed through the prism of another character, even though the latter may possess some extraordinary intuitive feeling for the human psyche. The result of such observation and analysis is simply the delineation of character traits through the physical appearance of a particular figure, which in essence is the application of both physiognomy and pathognomy. While pathognomy, mimic and gesture and facial expression are employed systematically for the sake of rendering a temporary psychological state, the use of physiognomy varies considerably and with it also the nature of the literary portrait. The systematic, strict physiognomic portrayal is only possible when a character is of the monological type, when the inner and the outer is in complete harmony. But the same application is impossible with a complex character and would not allow the character to evolve in all its variables. Least of all can one speak of a specific pattern in Dostoevskij's portraits. In like manner he rejected current psychological theory and pseudo-sciences which claim ready made formulas for the analysis of human character, although he selected and used from them whatever suited his needs at a given time.

Although he never referred to his sources or teachers, it is obvious that he was well versed in all modes of characterization, if not from reading theoretical works then at least from masters who employed them, like Dickens, Balzac and Gogol. This is certainly the case with physiognomy. Although Lavater is never mentioned by Dostoevskij, we find, however, several references to physiognomists. Here is one example from his last novel. In describing the complexity of Smerdjakov's character, the narrator notes that there were moments, when it was impossible to tell from looking at him, "what he was interested in," and "what was on his mind" and adds: "A physiognomist studying his face would have said that there was no thought in it, no reflection, but only a sort of contemplation."¹⁹⁹

Although Dostoevskij does not always endeavour to give a minute and striking description of appearance, but concentrates more on the essential facial expression of his characters, his portraits perform the traditional function, i.e., they indicate character traits and put his characters visibly before the reader. This direct characterization via the portrait is a conscious effort to shape and suggest the sketch of a person. But because of his indirect depiction, Dostoevskij's profound ability to discern in succession the various

psychological states of his heroes, the portrait is frequently neglected. It is foolhardy, however, to fancy that the exterior properties of a character are of no account in establishing verisimilitude and individualizing a personality, not to mention the aesthetic merit of the external traits. It suffices to recall the gallery of portraits with their diverse descriptions of facial features and facial expressions to dispell the notion that Dostoevskij's description of his characters' physical appearance was merely perfunctory.

Notes

- ¹ K. Mochulsky, *Dostoevskij: His Life and Works*, transl. with introd. by M.A. Miinihan (Princeton, 1967), 115-53.
- ² A.S. Dolinin, *V tvorcheskoi laboratorii Dostoevskogo* (Moscow, 1947), 93.
- ³ Mochulsky, xix.
- ⁴ Compare Dostoevskij's refutation of Dobroljubov's concept of utilitarian art in F.M. Dostoevskij, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenij*, 30 vols. (Leningrad, 1972 -), XVIII, 102.
- ⁵ Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XXX, 102, 121-22.
- ⁶ Mochulsky, xix.
- ⁷ Dostoevskij's relationship to these writers have never been fully examined in exhaustive studies. Yet the reading of these writers only could have added to Dostoevskij's understanding of man. In many of them the theme of deep inner disharmony, moral ambiguity and freedom are paramount in their writings. Already in Schiller's *The Robbers* Dostoevskij could have discovered that the glamour of crime, infamy and honour, satanical forces and moral principles can be closely intertwined in a human character. Thus one could only welcome such detailed studies as produced by: D. Ciževskij, "Schiller und die Brüder Karamazov," *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie*, 6 (1929), 1-42; B.G. Reizov, "K istorii zamysla Brat'ev Karamazovykh," *Zven'ja* (1936), 545-73; A.S. Dolinin, *V tvorcheskoi laboratorii Dostoevskogo* (Moscow, 1947); see also *F.M. Dostoevskij ob iskusstve*, ed. by Bogdanov (Moscow, 1973), 484-518; and Ch. Passage, *Dostoevskij the Adapter: A Study in Dostoevskij's Use of the Tales of Hoffman* (Chapel Hill, 1954). D. Fanger, *Dostoevsky and Romantic Realism: A Study of Dostoevsky in Relation to Balzac, Dickens and Gogol'* (Chicago, 1974); A. Lyngstad, *Dostoevskij and Schiller* (The Hague, 1975). Extremely valuable are also the extensive commentaries to various works in the academy edition of Dostoevskij's works in thirty volumes which started publication in 1972.
- ⁸ *F.M. Dostoevskij v vospominanijakh sovremennikov*, comp. and ed. by A. Dolinin, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1964), I. 250.
- ⁹ For details see: S.S. Smith and A. Isotoff, "The Abnormal from Within: Dostoevsky," *The Psychoanalytical Review*, XXII, 4 (1935), 361-91; J. Lavrin, *Dostoevskij and his Creation* (London, 1920); G. Gibian, "C.G. Carus' Psyche and Dostoevskij," *American Slavic and East European Review*, 14 (1955), 371-82; V.M. Bekhterev, "Dostoevskij i khudozhestvennaja psikhopatologija," *Russkaja literatura*, 4 (1962), 135-41.
- ¹⁰ L. Grossman, *Tvorcestvo F.M. Dostoevskogo* (Moscow, 1959), 341-42.
- ¹¹ For details on Dostoevskij's polyphony see M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics*, transl. by R.W. Rotsel (Ann Arbor, 1973), 3-37; S.M. Solov'ev,

Izobrazitel'nye sredstva v tvorcestve Dostoevskogo (Moscow, 1974), 9-16.

- 12 B.F. Odinokov, *Tipologija obrazov v khudozhestvennoj sisteme F.M. Dostoevskogo* (Novosibirsk, 1981).
- 13 Solov'ev, 247-248.
- 14 Bakhtin, 8; Solov'ev, 248.
- 15 A.P. Belik, *Khudozhestvennye obrazy F.M. Dostoevskogo* (Moscow, 1974), 6.
- 16 *Dostoevskij ob iskusstve*, 442-43.
- 17 *Dostoevskij ob iskusstve*, 427.
- 18 *Dostoevskij ob iskusstve*, 600.
- 19 Dolinin, *V tvorcheskoj ...*, 134-41.
- 20 *Dostoevskij ob iskusstve*, 400; compare also G. Chulkov, *Kak rabotal Dostoevskij* (Moscow, 1939), 257-58.
- 21 Chulkov, 220-28.
- 22 *Dostoevskij ob iskusstve*, 450-51; "F.M. Dostoevskij v rabote nad romanom *Podrostok*", *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, 77 (Moscow, 1965), 342-43.
- 23 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XXX, 64.
- 24 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XXIX, 19.
- 25 Compare L. Grossman, *Poetika Dostoevskogo*, (Leningrad, 1924), 176; Bakhtin, 232.
- 26 For details and classification of the various types of Dostoevskij's characters see: B.F. Odinokov, 3-40; N.V. Kashina, *Estetika F.M. Dostoevskogo* (Moscow, 1975), 122-38; and for types in Russian literature of the 1860's see L.M. Lotman, *Realizm russkoj literatury 60-kh godov XIX veka* (Leningrad, 1974).
- 27 *Dostoevskij ob iskusstve*, 418-19.
- 28 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XXV, 201.
- 29 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XXVIII, 329.

30. *Dostoevskij ob iskusstve*, 465.
31. Bakhtin, 50.
32. See L. Grossman, *Biblioteka Dostoevskogo* (Odessa, 1919).
33. Smith and Isotoff, 390.
34. Cited after Smith and Isotoff, 363; Compare also Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, V, 114.
35. Bakhtin, 234.
36. *Dostoevskij v vospominanijakh ...*, I, 163.
37. Compare K. Leont'ev, *Vospominanie o F.I. Inozemtseve i drugikh moskovskikh doktorakh 50-kh godov, Sobranie sochinenij* (St. Petersburg, 1913), IX, 57-69.
38. *Dostoevskij v vospominanijakh ...*, I, 5.
39. *Dostoevskij v vospominanijakh ...*, II, 81.
40. F.M. Dostoevskij, *The Diary of a Writer*, trans. and annot. by B. Brasol (New York, 1949), I, 83.
41. Solov'ev, 59-65.
42. Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VI, 6.
43. *Dostoevskij ob iskusstve*, 132-33.
44. V. Kirpotin, *F.M. Dostoevskij* (Moscow, 1947), 63-64; Bakhtin, 31-32.
45. Chulkov, 96.
46. Dostoevskij, *The Diary of a Writer*, I, 125.
47. Bakhtin, 5.
48. The only two works dealing specifically with literary portraiture in Dostoevskij's work are: A. Borisov, "The Function of Dostoevskij's Portraiture" (M.A. Thesis. U. of Waterloo, 1979) and I.M. Solov'ev, *Izobrazitel'nye sredstva v tvorcestve F.M. Dostoevskogo* (1979).
49. Chulkov, 327-28.
50. Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, II, 16.

- 51 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, I, 92.
- 52 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, I, 266.
- 53 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, I, 267-68.
- 54 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, I, 268.
- 55 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, I, 290.
- 56 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, II, 224-25.
- 57 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, II, 229; compare also C. Garnett's translation of *Netochka Nezvanova* in F.M. Dostoevskij, *The Friend of the Family* (London, Toronto, 1951), 306, 308, 312-13.
- 58 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, II, 502.
- 59 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 423-24.
- 60 Closely related to *Netochka Nezvanova* is the short story *The Little Hero* which Dostoevskij had completed by 1849, but it was published only in 1857. Here too the little hero, only nine years old, is the narrator and like in *Netochka ...* we encounter the same romantic depictions of various characters.
- 61 Mochulskij, 170-80.
- 62 *Dostoevskij ob iskusstve*, 388.
- 63 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 5; *A Friend of the Family*, 1.
- 64 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 13; *A Friend of the Family*, 11.
- 65 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 504.
- 66 A.P. Belik, *Khudozhestvennyye obrazy F.M. Dostoevskogo* (Moscow, 1974), 90.
- 67 Belik, 41-46.
- 68 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 13-14.
- 69 For details on the parody of Gogol see Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 502-03.
- 70 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 65; *The Friend of the Family*, 76-77.
- 71 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 41.

- 72 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 43-44.
- 73 L. Grossman, *Dostoevskij: A Biography*, trans. by M. Mackler (Indianapolis, New York, 1975), 249.
- 74 V. Terras, *The Young Dostoevskij (1846-1849). A Critical Study* (The Hague, 1969), 280.
- 75 Dostoevskij, *Ob iskusstve*, 182; for additional critical comments on *The Insulted and Injured* see Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 528-31.
- 76 E.N. Kuprejanova, *Molodoj Tolstoj* (Tula, 1956), 25; Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 523.
- 77 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 262-64.
- 78 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 170-71; *The Insulted and the Injured*, transl. by C. Garnett (London, 1956), 2-3.
- 79 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 201, 253-54, 344.
- 80 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 530.
- 81 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 244-45; *The Insulted ...*, 92-93.
- 82 For details of Dostoevskij's concept of beauty see Kashina, 168-70; Belik, 21-40.
- 83 Solov'ev, 29.
- 84 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 356-68.
- 85 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, III, 358; Compare also R.E. Matlaw, "Recurrent Imagery in Dostoevskij," *Harvard Slavic Studies* (Cambridge, 1957), III, 206.
- 86 Grossman, *Biblioteka Dostoevskogo*, 78-79.
- 87 Dostoevskij, *Ob iskusstve*, 390-91.
- 88 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, IV, 9; Compare also Borisov, 18.
- 89 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, IV, 63.
- 90 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, IV, 40-41.
- 91 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, IV, 41.

- 92 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, IV, 51-52.
- 93 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, V, 280-83.
- 94 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, V, 297.
- 95 Mochulskij, 256.
- 96 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, V, 124-25.
- 97 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, V, 151.
- 98 See also the detailed analysis of the underground man in Borisov, 31-45.
- 99 It has to be noted that although Dostoevskij's monological depiction is primarily a feature before the 1860's, one encounters the same in later work. The concept of man as a complex being with various and often contradictory character traits, although a manifestation of his later works, must have preoccupied Dostoevskij already in 1848 when he created his short story *Polsunkov* with a hero displaying diverse and contradictory character traits: "I could not believe how on such a wrinkled face one could encounter simultaneously so many diverse character traits. Here was everything--shame and insolence ... anger and timidity, and a consciousness of his own nothingness. ... All this passed over his face like a thunder." This diversity harmonized fully with the psychological experiences of *Polsunkov*. Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, II, 5-6; Solov'ev, 22-23.
- 100 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, IV, 35, 112.
- 101 Grossman, *Dostoevsky: A Biography*, 366-67.
- 102 Matlaw, 209.
- 103 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VI, 8.
- 104 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VI, 103.
- 105 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VI, 12.
- 106 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VI, 488.
- 107 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VI, 357-58.
- 108 Solov'ev, 39.
- 109 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VI, 378.
- 110 Compare E. Wasiolek's introduction to Dostoevskij, *The Gambler*, trans. by V. Terras (Chicago, 1972), ix-xxxvii.

- 111 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, V, 221-22.
- 112 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, V, 252-53.
- 113 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, V, 251-52.
- 114 Grossman, *Dostoevskij*, 301.
- 115 Dolinin, *Poslednie romany Dostoevskogo* (Moscow and Leningrad, 1936), 135; Compare also the various critical views on the novel in Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 410-20.
- 116 M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenij* (Leningrad, 1934), IX, 411-13.
- 117 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 383.
- 118 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 384.
- 119 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 21.
- 120 Dostoevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, I, 135; Compare also Solov'ev, 84-87.
- 121 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 5.
- 122 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 5.
- 123 Grossman, *Dostoevsky*, 448.
- 124 Mochulskij, 360-62; Compare also Solov'ev, 27-28.
- 125 A. Yarmolinsky, *Dostoevsky. His Life and Art* (London, 1957), 255-56.
- 126 In a letter to N.D. Fonvizina, 20 February 1854, Dostoevskij stated that he is "a child of his era, a child of disbelief and doubt," but added that "God grants him moments when he is completely at peace; in these moments I love and I feel that I am being loved, then I have a clear symbol of my faith ... and believe that there is nothing more beautiful, more profound, more sympathetic, more rational, more manly and more perfect than Christ. ..." Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XXVIII, 176.
- 127 Invariably the question arises whether Myshkin is not an answer to Schiller who postulated the beautiful soul as an ideal, which he had expounded in his treatises *Grace and Dignity* (1794) and *The Aesthetic Education of Man* (1798). Here the beautiful soul is in full harmony, none of man's faculties are dominating, but are in perfect interplay. However remote and unattainable, man should nonetheless strive for this ideal. Like Schiller, Dostoevskij conceived the highest form of beauty in the harmony of reason and feelings and like him he conceived beauty in art as capable of

creating this harmony and thus ennobling man and ultimately restoring true humanity. Compare also I. Lapshin, *Estetika Dostoevskogo* (Berlin, 1923), 33-37; Kashina, 168-73.

- 128 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 6.
- 129 Yarmolinsky, 256.
- 130 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 186-89.
- 131 Dostoevskij in any case implies that he is a kind of seer like the Russian holy fool (*jurodivyj*). Compare also F. Hernandez, "Dostoevskij's Prince Myshkin as a Jurodivyj," *Bulletin of the Rocky-Mountain Modern Language Association*, 26 (1972), 16-21.
- 132 Kirpotin, 63-64; Compare also Borisov, 87-88.
- 133 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 65.
- 134 Compare the above deliberation of Dostoevskij's sceptical attitude towards any scientific approach or label which claimed to have found the answer to character analysis.
- 135 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 27.
- 136 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 31-32.
- 137 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 68.
- 138 Z. Malenko and J.J. Gebhard, "The Artistic Use of Portraits in Dostoevskij's *Idiot*," *Slavic and East European Journal*, 5 (1961), 244.
- 139 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, VIII, 112.
- 140 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XI, 5-6.
- 141 Heier, *The Religious Schism in the Russian Aristocracy 1860-1900: Radstockism and Pashkovism* (The Hague, 1970), 1.
- 142 D.S. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature*, (New York, 1958), 289.
- 143 Heier, *The Religious Schism ...*, 16-20.
- 144 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, X, 18.
- 145 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, X, 19.
- 146 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, X, 223.

- 147 For details of their portraits see Dostoevskij, X, 27-28, 37, 109-10--Shatov; 88-89--Liza Tushina; 137-38--Captain Lebjadkin; 113-14--Marja Timofeevna; 143-44--Peter Verkhovenski; 37, 145--Nikolaj Stavrogin; 70--the writer Karmazinov's satirical portrait has no resemblance whatsoever to that of Turgenev.
- 148 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, X, 37.
- 149 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, X, 38.
- 150 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, X, 43.
- 151 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, X, 145.
- 152 The reflection of inner beauty through the facial expression as encountered in the description of Liza Tushina Dostoevskij viewed as genuine beauty:
- Tall, slim, but strong and supple, she struck one by the irregularities of the lines of her face. Her eyes were set somewhat like a Kalmuck's, slanting; she was pale and thin in the face with high cheek-bones, but there was something in the face that conquered and fascinated! There was something powerful in the ardent glance of her dark eyes.
- Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, X, 88-89.
- 153 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, X, 165.
- 154 Compare also Belik, 130-32; Solov'ev, 86; Kashina, 177-78; Smith and Isotoff, 382-84; and the excellent discussion of Stavrogin's confession in Mochulsky, 459-69. For a general discussion of *The Possessed* see Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XII, 153-276.
- 155 Dolinin, *Poslednie romany ...*, 136-37.
- 156 Grossman, *Dostoevskij*, 507, 524-25.
- 157 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 24.
- 158 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 44.
- 159 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 44.
- 160 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 116-17.
- 161 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 45-46; 134-35.
- 162 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 43.

- 163 Mochulsky, 520.
- 164 For details see the extensive conversation between Arkadij and Versilov in Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 380-84.
- 165 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 83.
- 166 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 370.
- 167 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 154.
- 168 For details see Schopenhauer's discourse on physiognomy in *Essays of Arthur Schopenhauer*, transl. by B. Saunders (New York, 1910), 61-70.
- 169 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 201-03.
- 170 Compare also Belik, 40-43.
- 171 Compare Dolinin, *Poslednie romany ...*, 166; Grossman, *Dostoevsky*, 116-17.
- 172 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 118-19.
- 173 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 108-09.
- 174 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 284-85.
- 175 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 308-09.
- 176 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIII, 285-86.
- 177 Compare Grossman, *Biblioteka ...*, 159; Ch. Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (New York, 1955), 196-219.
- 178 For a detailed discussion of *The Brothers Karamazov* see the excellent and profusely documented discourse in the academy edition of Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XV, 309-523.
- 179 There is a good case to be made for an indirect portrayal and visualization of Ivan when the complements of one character are reflected in another, i.e., when the motif of the double is employed. Ivan has actually two doubles, Smerdjakov and the devil. During Ivan's hallucinations an unknown shabbily and unstylishly dressed Russian bourgeois appeared to him who turned out to be the devil. Since he was Ivan's double and alter ego, and symbolizes at least the baseness of Ivan, his vanity and false ideas, why then could one not also transfer his physical properties to Ivan? Compare the description of the stranger in Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XV, 69ff.
- 180 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 22.

- 181 For details see chapter IV, entitled "The Third Son Alesha," Dostoevskij, *Polnoe e ...*, XIV, 17-20.
- 182 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 24.
- 183 Compare Solov'ev, 17; Kashina, 170-76; Lyngstad, 99-103.
- 184 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 63.
- 185 Lapshin, 61.
- 186 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XV, 129.
- 187 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 259.
- 188 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 37.
- 189 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 149.
- 190 Compare the analysis of the sources upon which Dostoevskij based his accounts of the monastic episodes in Mochulsky, 631-36.
- 191 The stylistic features are totally lost in the translation. But compare such adjectives and nouns like: *chelovechek, sukhenkoe, morshchinkami, seden'kie voloosiki, reden'kaja, tonen'kie, bechevochki, vostren'kij, ptichki*.
- 192 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 148.
- 193 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 294.
- 194 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 134-35.
- 195 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 135.
- 196 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 136-37.
- 197 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 314-15.
- 198 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 180-81.
- 199 Dostoevskij, *Polnoe ...*, XIV, 116.

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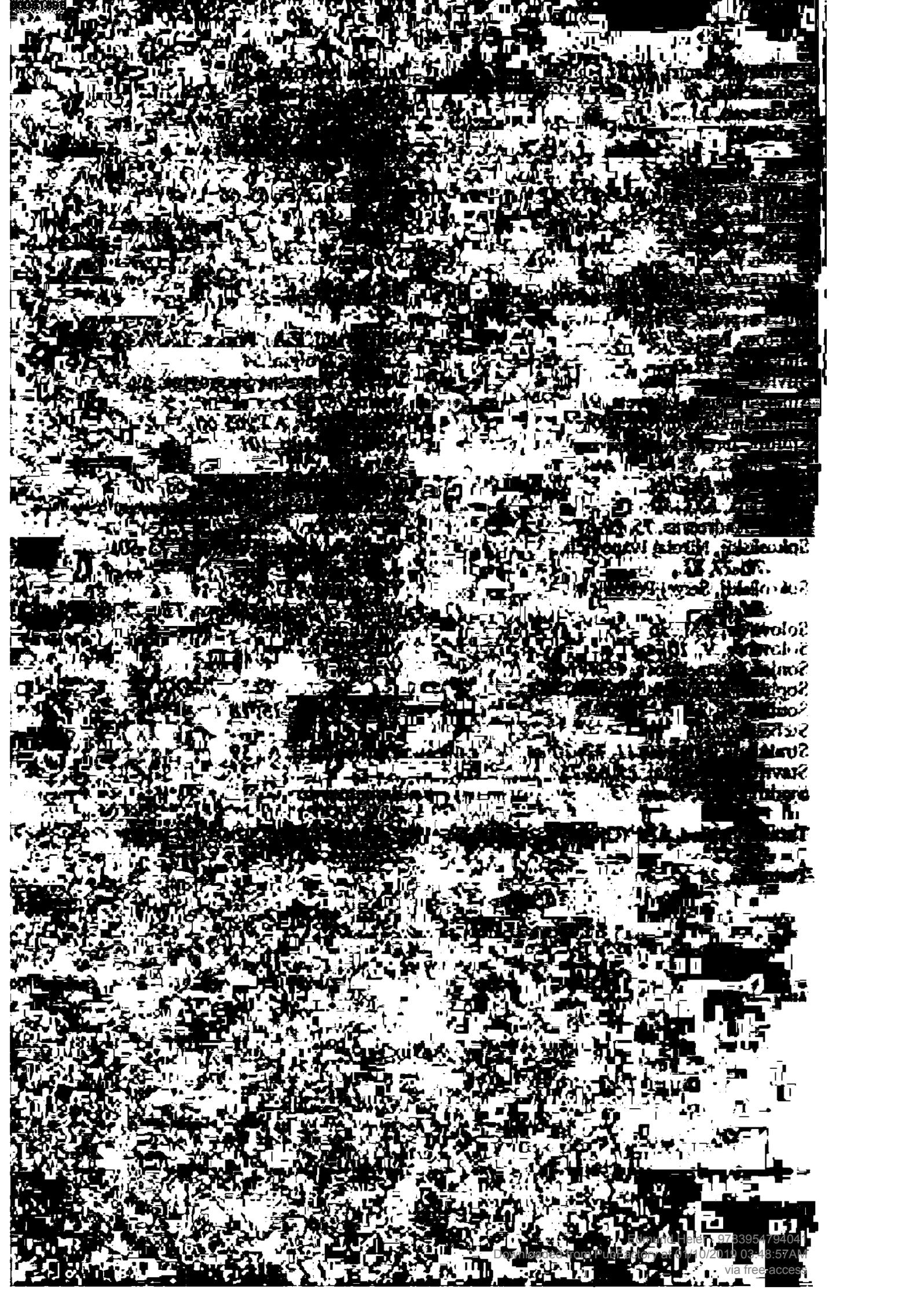
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