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CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

FYODOR DOSTOYEVSKY

With a New Afterword by
Robin Feuer Miller

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Fyodor Dostoyevsky

Translated by Sidney Monas
With an Introduction by
Leonard J. Stanton and
James D. Hardy, Jr.,
and a New Afterword by
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Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821–81) was educated in Moscow and at the School of Military Engineers in St. Petersburg, where he spent four years. In 1844, he resigned his commission in the army to devote himself to literature. In 1846, he wrote his first novel, which won immediate critical and popular success. At the age of twenty-seven, he was arrested for belonging to a socialist group and condemned to death, but at the last moment, his sentence was commuted to prison in Siberia. In 1859, he was granted full amnesty and allowed to return to St. Petersburg. In the fourteen years before his death, Dostoyevsky produced his greatest works, including *Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot*, and *The Possessed*.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

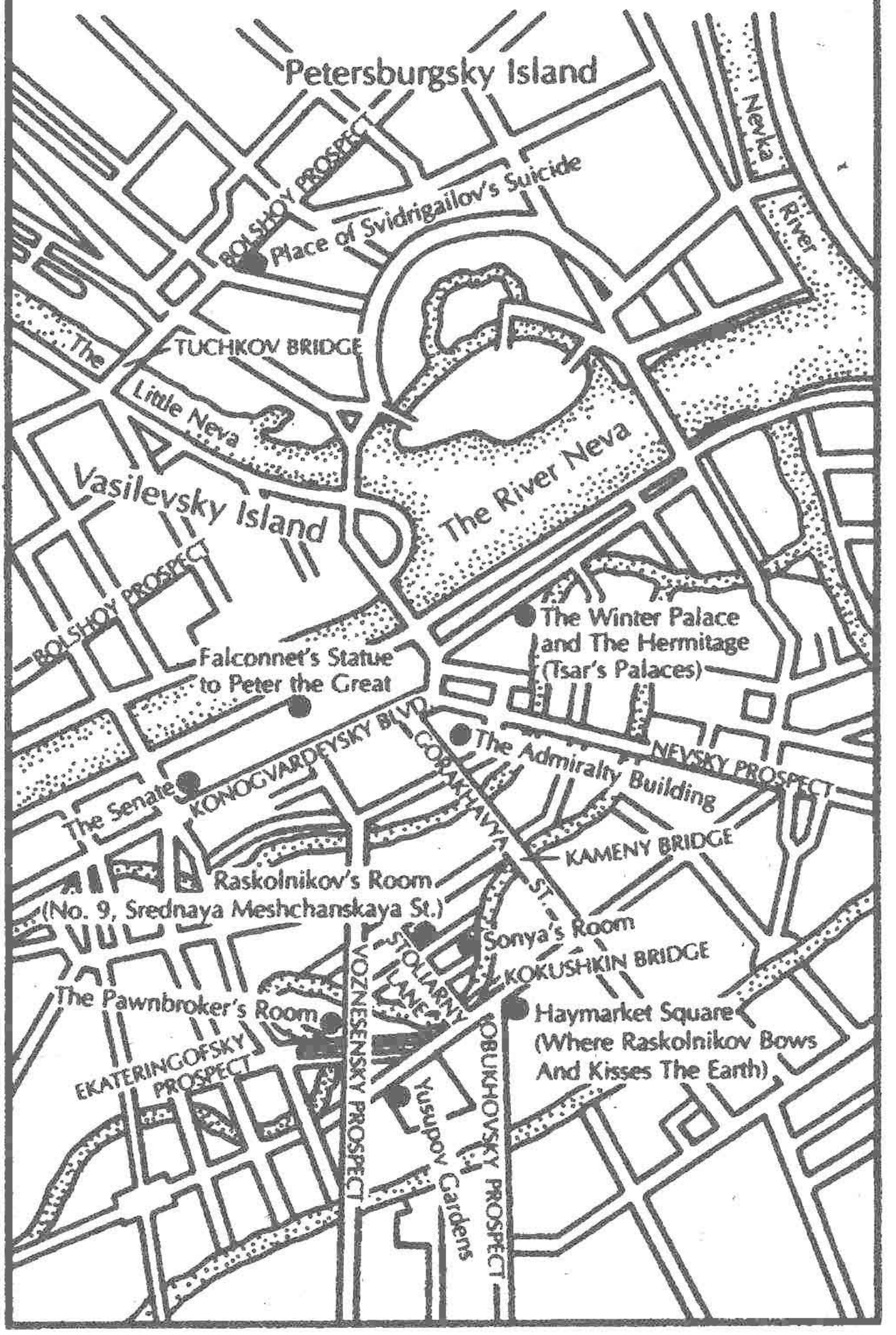
It has become the fashion in translating Russian novels to drop the use of patronymics, nicknames, and diminutives, but I have decided to keep them as much as possible, even though the American or English reader may find them a little odd and awkward. When Raskolnikov is addressed as Rodion Romanovich (or Rodion Romanych) it is, in terms of formality, about halfway between being called Rodion and Mr. Raskolnikov. It seems to me a healthy reminder to the reader that he is, after all, supposed to be in Russia, not America or England; and not too taxing on his memory, really. In some cases, at least, Dostoyevsky probably attached some allegorical shade of meaning to the patronymic, as he obviously did in almost all cases to the family names. Diminutives and nicknames, as terms of intimacy or endearment, convey a special feeling, and, unless they seemed genuinely awkward, I have retained them. Here is a list of the most commonly rung changes on first names:

Rodion—Rodia—Rodenka
Dmitry—Mitia—Mitry—Mitka
Nikolay—Mikolay—Nikolka—Mikolka—
Nikolashka—Kolia
Nastasia—Nastenka—Nastia
Avdotia—Dunia—Dunechka
Polia—Polenka—Polechka
Sofia—Sonia—Sonechka
Praskovia—Pashenka
Phillip—Fil'ka
Lida—Lidochka

Lida, the Marmeladov girl, her father's favorite, turns into Lenia at the end—normally a boy's name, but clearly in this instance still a girl's.

Dostoyevsky wrote in a hurry and for serial publication, and so left some inconsistencies. At the beginning, the police station is on the fourth floor; at the end, on the third. Escap-

ST. PETERSBURG
AT THE TIME OF
CRIME AND PUNISHMENT



ing after the murder, Raskolnikov goes down three flights of stairs where clearly two are meant. I have corrected the latter error, but allowed the former to remain.

Streets and bridges are, for the most part, not named in the original text, but given merely with their first initial. Their names are fairly obvious; and after some thought I concluded that retaining only the initial served no purpose, while using the name might help the reader who so desired to plot the novel on a map (see opposite page). The novel is easy to locate geographically, and Dostoyevsky himself used to live in a house roughly seven hundred and thirty-two steps from the house of the old pawnbroker woman. One discovers, too, that the place of Svidrigailov's suicide is not far from the bush where Raskolnikov had the dream of the horse, and *"that very bush"* under which Svidrigailov first intended to kill himself might well have been *that very bush*!

Dostoyevsky is an obsessive user of certain words, and it is a characteristic of his style to repeat key words over-and over again. "Suddenly" is one of the most frequently used words in *Crime and Punishment.* I have occasionally substituted "all of a sudden," but not because I think the repetition in itself is an accident or a defect of style. Just as Dostoyevsky's repeated "perhaps" is a constant calling into question, his repeated "suddenly" emphasizes the discontinuity, the unexpected and seemingly unreasonable welling up of the unconscious. "Suddenly" is the adverb of revelation.

The horse in Raskolnikov's dream, an important image in the novel, is, in Russian, *kliacha,* a worn-out old mare, a jade. I have preferred to translate her with the more familiar American "nag," which I use consistently throughout, or try to, though there is some problem of unwanted connotation when Katherine Ivanovna refers to herself as "an old nag."

Each character is in some way or other associated with words that come up like a leitmotif in opera when he appears. For Sonia the word "together" has great importance. The translator is often faced with the choice of losing the effect of repetition or of losing a certain dimension of meaning, a connotation that a single word, or even a single phrase, cannot convey in English. For instance, I decided to retain the word "disgust" in connection with Raskolnikov, though in some places "revulsion" might be more apt. In connection with Porfiry Petrovich, there is a certain play of

words that have *kon-* ("end," "finish") for a root. Porfiry refers to himself, though he is only thirty-five, as a man who is "used up" *(zakonchenny)* or "finished" *(nakonchenny)*—the echo of the Russian is inevitably lost.

Razumikhin uses quite frequently, and at one point even launches into a little lecture on the meaning of, the Russian word *vran'e* and its verbs. It has the connotation of something not true, yet not really an out-and-out lie (which would be *lozh'*), not really told with the intent to deceive. It means laying it on thick, twisting things a bit, getting carried away, talking nonsense. I have tried to be as repetitive as I could and still convey some sense of what Razumikhin is saying. Again, there is an important play on *prestuplenie* ("crime," as in the title) and *perestupit',* to transgress, to overstep, to step over, to stride across.

The family names are allegorically significant; I think some of the first names and patronymics are, too. The following list may be of some help to the reader:

Raskolnikov—*raskolnik*=schismatic, sectarian.

Razumikhin—*razum*=good sense, intellect; his first name, Dmitry, is the Russian masculine form of Demeter, and suggests the earth.

Marmeladov—*marmelad*=marmelade, jam. Katherine Ivanovna may suggest the Empress Catherine who copied much from Beccaria in her *Nakaz,* or Instruction, of 1767, which was never really implemented with concrete and effective legislation as may or may not have been intended. The suggestion comes up mainly because Katherine Ivanovna's prevailing passion is for justice, and because she labors under the delusion that somehow this world, while it may not be the theater of happiness, must surely be the theater of justice. Her patronymic is also the same as that claimed by Frau Lippewechsel, her German landlady, whom Marmeladov endows with a different patronymic, however, at the beginning of the book. *Sonia* is a diminutive for Sofia, which means wisdom, and in the Orthodox Church is associated with St. Sophia, or heavenly wisdom, as opposed to the worldly kind.

Luzhin—*luzha*=puddle, pond, pool; or might be derived from *luzhionny,* canned; that is, not fresh.

Lebeziatnikov—*lebezit'*=to fawn on somebody, to cringe; also suggests *lebed',* a swan.

Porfiry Petrovich—he alone among the major characters

has no family name. At one point he is supposed to have kidded Razumikhin and his associates by telling them he was going to join a monastery; but there is in fact something monkish about him. *Porfiry* is the royal purple of Byzantium; whereas his patronymic means "the son of Peter" and may suggest Peter the Great, implying that he is also a civil servant on the Western model, combining traditional Byzantine with Western virtues. Technically, he is a *sudebny sledovatel'*—a "court investigator." This was a position created by the law reforms of 1864 (new at the time Dostoyevsky wrote), and means that he was not a police inspector of the American kind, or a district attorney. He was *supposed* to be impartial—neither on the side of the criminal nor on that of the police. Even for a court investigator, however, Porfiry Petrovich's behavior during his last and genuinely "paternal" visit to Raskolnikov must have been rather extraordinary.

Svidrigailov—if his family name has any symbolic significance I have not been able to discover it. His first name, however—*Arkady*=Arcadian, someone who lives in Arcadia—is another matter.

In transliterating names I have followed, with some slight variation, the system of the Library of Congress.

—Sidney Monas

INTRODUCTION
A Soul's Journey

I. PERSPECTIVES

Crime and Punishment has been read as a psychological thriller, as a case study of the criminal mind, and as a treatise on social problems. It is highly regarded as a work of philosophy, as an allegorical prose poem rich in symbolism, and as a classic tragedy. Readers of the original serialization (1866) found it rich in themes that dominated the periodical press at the time: crime and legal reform, social justice and the status of women, poverty and wealth, education, urban problems, the shape and promise of the future. This is a lot to ask from one book, but it is what readers in Dostoyevsky's Russia expected to find in a novel. Moreover, Dostoyevsky was looked upon in his own time as a kind of seer. Today, more than a century after his death, no aspect of his work remains fresher or more vital than its contemplative vision.

As a heroic type, Rodion Raskolnikov has many cousins. He has the compassion of the Buddha and the anger of Achilles. But Raskolnikov's closest literary ancestors are to be found in the Lives of the Saints. He is the notorious sinner destined to repent and ultimately to achieve great holiness. In his poverty, Raskolnikov resembles a hungry desért ascetic. And in his delirium and madness, there is even something of the "holy fool"—a rude and ragged freak sitting in the dusty heat of a public square—a figure venerated throughout the Christian East as a vessel of spiritual knowledge beyond the ken of science or conventional logic.

In terms of literary form, the novel's closest antecedents are confessional. In the West, Rousseau and Pascal had worked in a related vein. But after Dante (d. 1321), the West's literature of introspection undertook new avenues, exploring psychology and ethics in increasingly narrower ways. The Russian religious mind remained robustly medieval well into the nineteenth century; it perceived the cosmos as a great chain of being in which angels and men,

plants and animals, and even the demons in hell are brought together under the loving rule of divine justice. Though Raskolnikov's problem is contemporary—How can I find my way back to God in the modern city?—still, the way he is destined to travel is perennial. None described that way better than St. Augustine in his *Confessions*, and it is to him we will turn for a model of Dostoyevsky's spiritual imagination in *Crime and Punishment*.

Russia's prominence in European affairs grew following Emperor Alexander I's defeat of Napoleon in 1815, and so did the size, acumen, and seriousness of the Russian reading public. Russia possessed a mighty army, but its laws, administration, and economic and political institutions were inefficient and desperately antiquated. Its social and religious structures were lumbering, patriarchal, even cruel. Historians, then poets stepped to the forefront of the debate over the "accursed questions"—Where is Russia going? and What is to be done about Russia?—a land so poor and yet so rich, so promising and yet so abject, so holy and yet so wicked.

Behind this verbal wrangling lay yet another question: Who will speak for Russia? That prerogative had traditionally belonged to the crown, and every Russian ruler up to 1917 spoke in the imperial "We." Challenges to imperial authority were not taken lightly. Dostoyevsky had been condemned to death in 1849 for having given a private reading of a letter by the literary critic Vissarion Belinsky to the novelist Nikolai Gogol. It was a brilliantly acerbic attack on serfdom, on the Orthodox Church's abnegation of responsibility for society, and on the overall malaise affecting Russia from top to bottom. Emperor Nicholas I personally commuted the sentence to four years of hard labor in Siberia and service as a soldier in the ranks, but only after the prisoner had been dressed and shriven for execution and was standing at the scaffold.

With the death of Nicholas in 1855, the iron grip of autocracy was loosed. Censorship was relaxed. By the time of Dostoyevsky's return to St. Petersburg in 1859, novelists and essayists (like the fictional Raskolnikov) led public debate. Emperor Alexander II's Great Reforms of the 1860s brought the power and prestige of the crown to bear in addressing the nation's problems. But the emperor could no longer claim sole right to speak for Russia. From below, in thick monthly journals such as the *Russian Messenger*, where

Crime and Punishment appeared, a babel of competing voices clamored for the nation's ear. Dostoyevsky himself was a Native-Soil Conservative (*Póchvennik*), a moderate sort of Slavophile—one of those groups on the edge of the political map that only a few dreary professors bother to think about today. In this intellectual fray, novelists enjoyed extraordinary prestige. They were looked upon—and looked upon themselves—as social critics, prophets, and visionaries.

The most important of the Great Reforms were the Emancipation of the serfs in 1861 and a comprehensive reform of the judiciary begun in 1864. The liberation of the peasants from the bonds of serfdom shook foundations of Russian society that extended back to the Middle Ages and earlier. The masters were no longer masters, and they now had to establish a new economic relationship with their peasants. Traditionally, all law had been thought to derive from the person of the emperor, God's anointed vicar in affairs of state. Now other sources of law were being proposed, with bases in reason and individual conscience. What was one to think of these changes? If the old ways had indeed come to an end, whose word would have authority now? Was every man suddenly a Napoleon, free to usurp the throne, a law unto himself?

Freedom is a test as well as a gift. Without it a man is but a cog in a machine, an ant in an anthill. Exercised to an extreme, one man's freedom is the instrument of another's enslavement or even death. Reason doesn't mitigate the tragedy of freedom. The hero of Dostoyevsky's *Notes from Underground* decries rationalism's exaltation of that one-twentieth part of man's being as if it were the *summum bonum* of human existence. Equally abhorrent to Dostoyevsky was the notion, seriously floated since the European Enlightenment, that history may soon witness the evolution of a new species of man, mentally, physically, and *morally* improved over his forebears.

If the old ethics were founded on the commandment to love God and one's neighbor, then the new code would center on love-of-self tarted up as "rational self-interest." And what of the injunction "Thou shalt not kill"? Dostoyevsky repeatedly pairs tyrant with victim to dramatize every ramification of the new law; again and again, the novel gives us nightmare images of the violent inheriting the earth, of the merciful obtaining scorn.

The Russian word for crime, *prestuplénie*, means "step-

ping over." Can murder be the means whereby Raskolnikov will enter the ranks of extraordinary men? By acting the tyrant, Raskolnikov seems to destroy his compassionate side, that part which appears to him in a dream as a suffering horse with meek, beautiful eyes. Having crossed the line, can Raskolnikov ever return?

The novel's landscape reverberates with these questions. This almost kinetic stage, as well as incredible propinquities of kinship, place of residence, and chance meetings endow Dostoyevsky's Petersburg with an atmosphere that can seem more mythic and symbolic than realistic. In every door, every bridge and waterway, every street and dusty square, and every window staring back toward the eyes of the beholder—we feel a struggle of spirit with matter, of faith with reason, of good with evil.

II. THE UNFOLDING OF RASKOLNIKOV'S SOUL

As the novel unfolds, event by event, interview by interview, dream by dream, character by character, the personality and attitudes of Raskolnikov emerge with it. Dostoyevsky does not establish his personality all at once, and then follow him as a fixed character through assorted adventures. That is the technique of a whodunit, and *Crime and Punishment* is emphatically not a detective story. Dostoyevsky's leisurely narration of Raskolnikov's encounters—with himself as well as with his surroundings—is also an equally leisurely exploration of the contents, contradictions, and ambiguities of Raskolnikov's character. The reader sees Raskolnikov through events, through time within the novel; and Raskolnikov understands himself the same way. Not until the second Epilogue can the reader understand the ultimate direction of the novel, and only then does Raskolnikov begin to fathom the true direction and meaning of life. Only at the very last does Dostoyevsky reveal the crucial element in Raskolnikov's soul—hitherto inadequately developed, though instinctually present, hidden both from the readers and from Raskolnikov himself. That element is love.

The progressive unfolding of Raskolnikov's character through illustration, encounter and meditation, as if in the opening of a rose, holds the key to understanding the essential meaning of the events themselves and of the novel as a whole. The reader necessarily searches for clues that can illuminate the meaning of the novel. And there are many

clues. They are not, of course, about the transgression itself; that has been established in the first pages when a confused Raskolnikov wonders "Can I do *that*, really?" Along the trail of clues concerning the novel as a whole, Dostoyevsky comments on divers topics, ranging from the cultural, such as the idea of progress or the growing role of foreign attitudes and values in Russia, to the social, including drunkenness, urban class structure, poverty, the role of women and the geography of St. Petersburg. But these, we maintain, are fustian. The meaning of the novel as a whole unfolds in the soul of Raskolnikov.

Dostoyevsky reveals the soul of Raskolnikov in three ways: through his dreams, emotions and meditations; through his instinctive revulsion toward Svidrigailov as the embodiment of evil; and through his encounters with Porfiry Petrovich and Sonia. Here, and particularly, we suggest, in the encounters with Porfiry Petrovich and Sonia, are the best vantage points from which to see the rose unfold.

In part 3, chapter 5, Raskolnikov has his first interview with Porfiry Petrovich, the court investigator. Much of the interview is taken up with discussing Raskolnikov's article "Concerning Crime," written in support of the exceptional man who would speak the "new word" and bring about the New Jerusalem. Porfiry asks directly:

> "So you still believe in the New Jerusalem?"
> "I believe," Raskolnikov answered firmly.

Porfiry Petrovich presses further. Was Raskolnikov himself an exceptional man, and hadn't it been just such a man who murdered the pawnbroker? Raskolnikov is invited to a second "little talk," which produces the court investigator's confident assertion that the murderer will not flee but will instead provide his own proof of guilt. A third interview, at Raskolnikov's lodgings, might have been the climactic scene in the novel were *Crime and Punishment* a story of deduction and detection with Porfiry Petrovich the Russian Sherlock Holmes. When Raskolnikov asks who killed the pawnbroker and her sister, Porfiry Petrovich almost whispers:

> "What do you mean, who killed?" he asked as though he could not believe his own ears. "Why, Rodion Romanych, *you* killed! You committed the murders, yes."

But the reader knows, as Rodion Romanych does not yet know, that murder is only an incident on a long journey, that the heart of the novel is elsewhere.

The place to look, we suggest, is with Sonia, in particular the scene in part 4, chapter 4, when Raskolnikov comes "straight to the house on the canal embankment where Sonia lived." Surprised to see Raskolnikov, Sonia is as ill at ease as he is, but discomfiture does not stifle her almost "insatiable compassion." Raskolnikov prostrates himself before Sonia, in honor of her suffering, of all suffering, and at his request she reads the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead (John 11: 1–44). In reply Raskolnikov expresses to Sonia his sense of disbelief, along with a homily from his new word:

> Freedom and power, but the main thing is power! Over all trembling flesh and over the whole ant heap! . . . That's the goal!

But Sonia only replies with terror. And terror is appropriate. Raskolnikov is the one who is dead. Sonia—the embodiment of Hagia Sophia, holy wisdom—will be the instrument of his rebirth.

III. THE AUGUSTINIAN JOURNEY

In the first paragraph of his *Confessions*, Augustine tells the reader what the book means, what students ought to take with them from this autobiography of spiritual journey. Addressing God, Augustine states that "You made us for Yourself" and that "our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee." Such a thing could be known only through personal experience of a journey not completed but nonetheless illuminated. The image of a journey became the standard metaphor within Western Christianity for a person's life. Dante adopted it for the *Commedia* and Milton for *Paradise Lost*, and it received equivocal acceptance by Chaucer. So standard was this metaphor that it acquired purely secular connotations, as in a people's common historical journey toward national identification, or in the nineteenth-century fondness for the *Bildungsroman*, the novel of personal development. By Dostoyevsky's time, journey had become the common metaphor for character development.

As Augustine defined the human journey in *The Confessions*, the secular theme of personal development was not

only incidental, it was downright insignificant. The Augustinian journey was a lifetime of spiritual formation. Through God's grace, given out of love, the journey led away from the things of the world to salvation and the heart's "rest in Thee."

The journey consists of three stages. It begins in a condition of *aversio*, a turning away from God and toward things of the world, the flesh, and the devil. In such a state of bewilderment and restlessness—a perfect description for Raskolnikov until the second Epilogue—one loves the lesser things of this world more than the God who created them. Such love is misdirected and disordered, according to Dante, or idolatrous, according to Augustine and Milton, and utterly hollow for Raskolnikov. In a condition of *aversio*, one is given not only to sin but also to misunderstanding the nature of life, to supposing that there could even exist a "new word" or that some extraordinary person could speak it. But *aversio*, Augustine explains, is the common condition of all humanity. For the truly lost, it persists an entire lifetime; for those who obtain grace, it is the first stage on the journey to salvation.

Grace is always seeking the repentant heart, that a person "may turn from his wickedness and live." For those in whom the restlessness becomes intolerable, a *retorqueo*—a movement of turning from the idols of the imaginary "new word" to the love of God—reorients life in the direction of grace and love rightly ordered. This turning came for Augustine as a single tearful and ecstatic moment, the result of reading Paul's letter to the Romans. For Raskolnikov, the explosion of tears and love occurs in the second Epilogue:

> Love resurrected them; the heart of one contained infinite sources of life for the heart of the other.

Raskolnikov has been converted. As was the case with Augustine before him, his past now seems unreal:

> Everything—even his crime, even sentence and exile—seemed to him now, in his first outburst of feeling, strange and superficial, as though it had not actually happened to him.

Like Augustine, Raskolnikov reaches for the New Testament. Life, of course, would remain the same for the exile and prisoner. But he himself was new. And that was appropriate.

Everything had to change now, did it not?

Both Augustine and Dostoyevsky end their accounts of the spiritual journey to renewal in the immediate aftermath of the salvific moment. For Raskolnikov, life after the *conversio*, the conversion to a right understanding of love and God, is described only in generalities, and was to be "the subject of a new tale." Entirely proper—the turning from the idolatry of *aversio* to the love of *conversio* is so overwhelming that all before seems unreal, just as everything afterward seems illuminated by grace.

Conversio can not come without premonitory hints as to the right path. One of the preliminary moments for Raskolnikov came at the Haymarket, in part 6, chapter 8. At Sonia's urging, Raskolnikov had gone there to kiss the earth, to confess his crime, to accept and acknowledge responsibility. He pushed into the square and—disgusted by the jostling drunken crowd—wondered if this was the right thing to do. As he knelt and kissed the ground, "Everything seemed to melt inside him, and tears flowed." True repentance had begun. A confession to the police followed, but it was anticlimactic. Indeed, Porfiry Petrovich—the exemplum of wisdom in the *civitas terrena*, the earthly city—was absent. His work was done. But Sophia was there. And she sensed his conversion in his embrace and the wordless torrent of tears.

> She jumped up and looked at him and shivered. But at the same time, at that very moment, she understood everything. A boundless joy illuminated her eyes. She understood. For her there was no longer any doubt he loved her. He loved her infinitely. At long last the moment had come. . . .

The mark of his conversion is that he has regained the ability to love.

IV. THE "NEW LIFE" AND THE NEW TALE OF *CONVERSIO*

Only at the very end, the last two paragraphs of the second Epilogue, did Dostoyevsky confirm that *Crime and Punishment* expressed an Augustinian journey. Sonia and Raskolnikov were then "at the beginning of their happiness," though