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PREVIEW

SALVE REGINA UNIVERSITY

DOSTOEVSKY'S SONYA AND MARTHA: FICTION AND REALITY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

EULALIE ELIZABETH SCOLL

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

1996

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SALVE REGINA UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

The dissertation of Eulalie Elizabeth Scoll entitled "Dostoevsky's Sonya and Martha: Fiction and Reality" submitted to the Ph.D. Department in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of Salve Regina University has been read and approved by the Committee:

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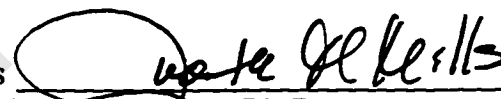
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ABSTRACT

Literary scholars have traditionally sought to discover hidden details from authors' lives that, seen against the background of the times, can illuminate their imaginative writings. Dostoevsky's complicated life continues to offer such possibilities, and this study examines the possible source for the key character of Sonya in Crime and Punishment.

The dissertation has two focal points. The first deals with a few early years of the technological age in Russia (1860-1866), the rock upon which the indomitable twentieth-century Russian industrialization was built. The second, more pertinent to this study, is how Dostoevsky portrays the dark side of the urban poverty resulting from this emerging technology. In Crime and Punishment he vividly captures the social, psychological, and behavioral impact on his leading characters, particularly the unfortunate Sonya. The winds of technological change similarly affect Sonya's likely prototype, Martha Panina Brown, in her unhappy life.

Dostoevsky scholars have been both fascinated and baffled by Martha Brown. Leonid Grossman, for example, argues that Martha's letters are the most important documents in the Dostoevsky Intimate Archives. However, for a variety of reasons, such as lack of archival access and ignorance of Martha's full identity, scholars could not adequately trace Martha's life, and consequently they have not fully appreciated the portrait of Sonya in Crime and Punishment.

This dissertation proposes a more authentic comparison, both literary and analytical, of Sonya Marmeladova, the sainted-prostitute in Crime and Punishment, with Martha Brown, her likely inspiration.

PREVIEW

PREFACE

The Salve Regina University doctoral program in the humanities is primarily concerned with the effects of technology on humanity. The University's doctoral curriculum stresses the importance of the role that technology has played historically on the elucidation of the human condition, through the insight of the following academic disciplines: art, ethics, human resource management, literature, philosophy, religion, and social-anthropology. This unique doctoral agenda intensifies one's personal perception of the world, providing a deep insight into the human condition as affected by technology, an admirable or worthy justification in itself. Times change, technology advances, but human nature remains constant.

The sustained concern of the Salve Regina University doctoral program, the effects of the technological impetus on humanity, is precisely the focus Fyodor Dostoevsky presents as the underlying theme of Crime and Punishment. In this major novel, Dostoevsky depicts the effects of the dark side of the technological impact on his principal characters. In this dissertation these ageless negative effects of technology are examined or investigated, as is the necessity of the human spirit to transcend alienating dehumanization, as exemplified by the character of Sonya Marmeladova and her prototype Martha Panina Brown.

This study is the result of a long process of intuition,

perseverance, and research, beginning with scraps of information, even a word, a place, or a name. While all were investigated, many led to dead ends. This research could not have been conducted without the benefits of technology: telephone, fax, express air mail, xerox, computer, laser printer, and twentieth century transportation.

Many persons deserve appreciation or gratitude for their assistance and encouragement, including Sister Lucille McKillop, Dr. William Burrell, Brother Eugene Lappin, and Father Patrick Bascio for the inception and accreditation of this unique doctoral program in the humanities. I thank also my dissertation committee for their enthusiasm, scholarly critique, and suggestions: my mentor, Dr. Lubomir Gleiman; my two readers, Dr. Joan David, Chair of the English Department; and Dr. Elena Kirilyuk Wilcox, who also did some translations; Brother Antony O'Connor for his careful editing. I would also acknowledge the support and encouragement of Dr. Judith Mills, Vice President for Academic Affairs. I thank too U.S. District Court Judge, Francis Boyle, for recommending the graphologist.

Concerning access to and translation of crucial documents in Russian, I wish to thank Vladimir Maliavin, Doctor of Science and leading research member at the Russian Academy of Science in Moscow, and his assistant for opening locked doors. Both researchers kindly pursued every lead and scrap of information I thought pertinent to my project. I am also very grateful to my four Russian translators: Dr. Vladimir Maliavin, Academy of

Science; Julia Belova, Moscow University; Igor Freyman; and Dr. Elena Kirilyuk Wilcox, Candidate of Science in Russian Philology, Moscow and Newport, R.I.

Other scholars merit appreciation for their advice and assistance: Dr. Victor Terras, Dostoevskian expert and Professor Emeritus, Brown University, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and Department of Comparative Literature; Nikolay Skatov, Head of the Institute of Russian Literature in St. Petersburg and a renowned authority on Dostoevsky; Baron Joast Wrangel of Stuttgart, Germany, for research in the Wrangel family archives, especially his grandfather's papers pertaining to Dostoevsky's friendship with Martha Brown; Mr. Michael O'Flaherty, Isle of Guernsey, for searching the archives of the church and the courthouses there for records of Martha's marriage to Brown; archivists at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., at the Naval Archives in Baltimore, Maryland, and at the War College in Newport, R.I., for their kindness and time. Last, but not least, I wish to thank Dr. Michael Katz, University of Texas at Austin, for granting me permission to use his works.

NOTES ON TEXTS, TRANSLATIONS AND TRANSLITERATION

The Russian letters or passages have been translated into English; in cases where precise knowledge of the original wording seemed desirable, Russian words, phrases or sentences have been included along with the translation.

All documents have been translated into English with the intent of capturing as closely as possible the flavor of the original nineteenth century Russian. This includes sentence structure, paragraphing, punctuation and vocabulary.

The eight original Martha Panina Brown letters to Dostoevsky and Gorsky were translated by Julia Belova, University of Moscow, Russia.

The documents from the Penza Archives were translated by Vladimir V. Maliavin, Head Researcher, Russian Academy of Science, Moscow, Russia.

The new letters and documents of Martha Panina Brown and Peter Gorsky were translated by Igor Freyman.

Translations were confirmed by Elena Kirilyuk Wilcox, my Russian reader.

Translations of specific nineteenth-century Russian words (for example, "plet," "mir," "izba") were found in Vladimir Dal, Russian Dictionary in Four Volumes, 2nd ed. (St. Petersburg-Moscow: M.O. Volf, 1882).

Page numbers of references to Fyodor M. Dostoevsky's work Crime and Punishment are given in parentheses after the citations

in Chapter Five. References are to Fyodor Dostoevsky, Crime and Punishment, translated and annotated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (New York, New York: Vintage, 1993).

Wherever possible, the full names of the authors have been provided in order to refrain from the use of initials. However, there are some instances where the full name of the author has not been available.

For translations into English, where precise knowledge of the original Russian wording seemed desirable, words, phrases or sentences have been included either with the translation or in the Appendices. The Library of Congress Transliteration System has been used, although the names of characters have been rendered in the English forms generally accepted in translations of Dostoevsky's works. The names of real people have been transliterated according to this system except for the final -ii and -yi, which have been changed to -y in the text. (In the footnotes and bibliography, these names have been transliterated according to this system.)¹

1. Dostoevsky is spelled according to various authors in five different ways: Dostoevsky, Dostoievsky, Dostoyevsky, Dostoevski, and Dostoyefsky. In this text, the spelling Dostoevsky will be used.
2. Sonya, the female protagonist in Crime and Punishment,

¹See : Columbia University dissertation, Knapp, Liza Atkinson Dostoevsky and the Annihilation of Inertia: The Metaphysics of Physics in His Works (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1985), iii.

is spelled and/or referred to according to various authors in five different ways: Sonya, Sonia, Sonechka, Sofya and Sophia. In this text, the spelling Sonya will be used.

3. Peter Gorsky's name is spelled according to various authors in three different ways: Peter Gorsky, Petr Gorskii and Petr Nikitich. In this text, Peter Gorsky will be used.
4. Martha Panina Brown's given name, Elizaveta Andreevna Khlebnikova, is spelled according to various authors in numerous ways. Except for the use of this name inside quoted material, Elizaveta Andreevna Khlebnikova will be used.
5. The name Chernyshevsky is spelled according to various authors in numerous ways. Except for the use of this name inside quoted material, Chernyshevsky will be used.
6. The name of the General Count Andrei Nikolaevich Murav'iev is spelled according to various authors in numerous ways. Except for the use of this name inside quoted material, Andrei Nikolaevich Murav'iev will be used.
7. The name Raskólnikov is spelled according to various authors in numerous ways. Except for the use of this name inside quoted material, Raskólnikov will be used.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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ABSTRACT	iii
PREFACE	v
NOTES ON TEXTS, TRANSLATIONS AND TRANSLITERATIONS	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xi
INTRODUCTION	1
Technology and <u>Crime and Punishment</u>	1
Statement of the Thesis	10
Research Methodology	11
Outline	12
CHAPTER ONE: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY	16
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE MOST PERTINENT LITERATURE .	31
CHAPTER THREE: THE IMPACT OF EARLY RUSSIAN INDUSTRIALIZATION: THE SOCIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND IN DOSTOEVSKY'S <u>CRIME AND PUNISHMENT</u>	48
Introduction	48
Emancipation of the Serfs	49
"Original Nihilism"	54
"Woman Question"	72
Syphilis and Prostitution	84
Petit Bourgeois	88
Military Wives and Daughters	90
Peasantry	92

	Courtesans	103
	Gentry and Noble Women	108
	Prepubescent Male and Female Prostitutes	112
	Centers of Prostitution	112
CHAPTER FOUR:	THE LIFE OF MARTHA PANINA BROWN	117
CHAPTER FIVE:	THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN SONYA MARMELADOVA AND MARTHA PANINA BROWN	169
CHAPTER SIX:	CONCLUSIONS	189
APPENDICES:		
APPENDIX I:	RUSSIAN NIHILISM OF THE 1860'S	194
APPENDIX II:	ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF SEVEN LETTERS OF MARTHA BROWN TO FYODOR M. DOSTOEVSKY, AND ONE TO PETER GORSKY	197
	RUSSIAN COUNTERPART OF SAME	209
APPENDIX III:	ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF LETTER TO COUNT MURAV'IEV FROM PETER GORSKY, AUGUST 8, 1866	224
	RUSSIAN COUNTERPART OF SAME	227
APPENDIX IV:	ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTATION SHOWING MARTHA BROWN'S GIVEN NAME	231
	RUSSIAN COUNTERPART OF SAME	232
APPENDIX V:	ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF MARTHA BROWN AND PETER GORSKY'S MARRIAGE REGISTRATION	233
	ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF MARTHA BROWN'S REQUEST TO AUTHORITIES FOR PERMISSION TO MARRY PETER GORSKY	234

	FRENCH/RUSSIAN COUNTERPART OF SAME . .	235
	GRAPHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF HANDWRITING . .	236
APPENDIX VI:	LOCATIONS OF LETTERS, NOTES AND NEW	
	DOCUMENTATION	237
	ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF MARTHA BROWN'S	
	ADDITIONAL EIGHT NOTES AND LETTERS TO HIGH	
	OFFICIALS AND ONE LETTER TO PETER GORSKY	240
	RUSSIAN COUNTERPART OF SAME	254
APPENDIX VII:	GLOSSARY	265
BIBLIOGRAPHY	269

INTRODUCTION

Dostoevsky and Russia's Road Towards Technology

The purpose of the Salve Regina University doctoral program, as stated in the preface, is to explore or examine the humanization of technological man. This investigation emphasizes "practical purposes," that is, substantial rather than instrumental rationality. It exemplifies technology's effects on the human condition, rather than technological means and devices to achieve the designed objectives. The ultimate goal of the program, therefore, is to ameliorate the human condition.

Through special historical convergence, technology, technological society, and technological culture are conceived as being of Western origin. They are located in the historical and geographical continuum known as Latin Christendom, primarily focused in the Western European and North American regions.

The expansion of the technology's foundations from centers of these regions in the last four centuries accounts for the emergence of a full blown technological age in the twentieth century. This development largely accounted for the present engulfment of the globe by technology. In this expansion, the problems of technology were transferred to developing societies and the impact of technology on local cultures became essentially

a dialectical conflict of global proportion. Thoughtful critiques exposed the very nature and structure of technology, as well as its impacts on human reality.

One of the most significant and evident areas of conflict took place in nineteenth-century Russia. The Westernization of Russia, as the antecedent of the technological age, occurred as a result of broad industrialization, a rise of interest in science, and mass education. In opposition stood the defensive posture of traditional patriarchal Orthodox society, with its leaning towards mysticism and attachment to the land.

In many respects, continuous debate between the Westernizers and what were later called the "Slavophiles" or "Populists" elucidates the political, social and cultural issues at stake. This debate, especially as captured in the penetrating novels of such great Russian writers as Chernyshevsky, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Turgenev, throws important light on the complex nature of the rising technological society.

The historical origins of technology are well documented and studied in the works of Capra, Ellul, Rubenstein, and Galbraith, and others (see bibliography). Most agree on the crucial significance of the impact of science, capital, and knowledge on the rise of the technological age. Many also express reservations about any uncontrolled development of technological trends, precisely because of their potentially dehumanizing effects. In his age Dostoevsky viewed the new applied science, as represented by England's Crystal Palace, as dehumanizing

humans by taking away their free will.¹

As Richard Critchton explains, at one point Dostoevsky depicted a human tragedy, in the words of Kant as a "concretum universale" that happens during a period of transition. Dostoevsky portrays the transformation of an old established society into a new industrial one. A significant aspect of this uprooting process is the forced movement of country people to the cities, a movement which is peaking today.²

Benefiting from the insights of two centuries of examination, we see technology today as the organization and institutionalization of knowledge through capital for practical purposes.³ As such, the age of technology has produced incredible benefits, frightening results, and unprecedented social upheavals. The threat of dehumanization remains staggering, both in the developed and developing countries, particularly in terms of "superfluous people" (Ellul⁴).

Among even highly sensitive individuals, few could and few did anticipate the constant and underlying human tragedies of the

¹Joseph Frank, Dostoevsky: The Miraculous Years, 1860-1865 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 120.

²Richard Critchton, The Villages: Changed Values, Altered Lives, The Closing of the Urban--Rural Gap (New York: Anchor Double Day, 1994), 434-435, where the insights and "uncanny" anticipations of Dostoevsky are especially treated.

³Lubomir Gleiman, "Philosophical Perspectives on the Information Age," Syllabus for Humanities 600 (Newport, RI: Salve Regina University), 1992.

⁴Jacques Ellul, The Technological Society (New York: Vintage, 1964), 287-301.

incipient challenge of the "technology transfer." Among those who did was Dostoevsky. His insight and genius captured the essence of these fate-driven tragedies through his representative and symbolic art, which reveals his characters as examples of the "concrete universal." One such masterpiece is his character Sonya Marmeladova in Crime and Punishment.

The Industrial Revolution's dynamics in the Russian nineteenth century were the catalyst for the technological giant that Russia became in the twentieth century. Although Czar Peter the Great promoted Western industrialization a century before, the Industrial Revolution in Russia can be said to have begun in 1836, almost a century after England. By 1861, it was still in its infancy, and Russia trailed far behind the industrialization of Western Europe.

Although the need for rapid industrialization was foremost on the government's agenda, the country was bankrupt. Because of wars, in particular the Crimean War in which Russia sustained great financial and territorial losses, the government had to borrow immense sums of foreign capital to advance industrialization. However, capital alone could not solve Russia's lagging technological advancement.

Russia's problem had two focal points. First, she had little infra-structure. She was isolated, vast in size (twice the size of the United States), and without good means of transportation or communication. In 1855, when Alexander II started his reign, as Rambaud tells us, only three hundred and

fifty kilometers of railroad existed throughout Russia. As late as 1874, there were only sixteen thousand versts (about twenty-two thousand miles) of railroad.⁵ This shortage in itself prohibited the exploitation of her rich natural resources that lay beyond the Ural mountains. The Trans-Siberian railroad was only in the planning phase during the writing of Crime and Punishment. Communication was slow, unreliable and backward compared to the Western European countries.

Second, Russia had a human labor problem. Ninety percent of Russia's population was unskilled, illiterate, superstitious, and unprepared for industrial work. Many were alcoholics. Psychologically, neither the peasants nor the landlords were prepared for industrialization, nor were they interested in abandoning the familiar horizons of an agrarian economy. The peasants continued to work, as they had for centuries, in forestry, fishing and farming. They did not want to leave the land, their villages or their families to engage in factory work, which they abhorred and found alien to the "Russian soul." Similarly, the gentry were reluctant to see the peasants migrate to the cities in search of industrial work. They realized that without the peasants working the land their estates could no longer be economically productive.

Despite the obstacles against converting an agrarian nation into a technological one, the incipient technology of Peter the

⁵Alfred Rambaud, Popular History of Russia From the Earliest Times To 1882, trans. L.B. Lang (Boston: Lauriat, 1882), 251.

Great (1672-1725) had begun to gather, by the 1860s, an impetus of its own that could not and would not be stopped. With the increasing industrialization of Russia came the universal effects of dehumanization. Whether of monism or holism, as Jacques Ellul argues,

the technical phenomenon presents, everywhere and essentially, the same characteristics. It is useless to look for differentiations. . . . Its parts are ontologically tied together; in it, use is inseparable from being.⁶

In Russia the dehumanizing effects of industry and technology on the human condition have not changed from the Industrial Revolution to the sophisticated technology of today. A clear example, comparable to the present displacement of human beings by advanced technological equipment, instruments, and communications, took place in mid-nineteenth century Russia.

For centuries the "singing burlaki" (Volga boatmen) wearily plodded the footpaths beside the rivers, pulling the rafts and vessels by hand with the ropes attached to the hulls. These men, famous for their songs, earned their livelihood by towing rafts and vessels from Astrakhan to Rybinsk, a distance of more than three thousand five hundred kilometers.⁷ With the appearance of the steam boat in the late mid-nineteenth century, the Volga boatmen were replaced by technology. As Rambaud points out, the positive side of steam navigation was the technological impetus that brought about the telegraph and postal service. This rapid

⁶Ellul, 94-95.

⁷Rambaud, 251.

service became less expensive and allowed the Empire to be in regular communication with the whole world by 1878.

In other words the positive and negative within technology form a certain balance. The question remains, whether or not the detrimental effects of technology on the human condition are worth their benefits. This dichotomy has its parallel in Dostoevsky's writings, particularly his great novels. Against the background of the industrial revolution and its evolving technological imperative the life and suffering of Martha, the prototype of Sonya, can be witnessed. This portrait of the destruction of Sonya in Crime and Punishment brings together the two major focuses of this dissertation. Nor was philosophical thought missing from the picture.

The concept of nihilism was coined and first defined by Turgenev in Fathers and Sons.⁸ There Pavel Petrovitch Kirsanov, demonstrating a world view rooted in the 1840's, asks Bazarov, "But did not Arkady Nikolayevich tell us just now that you recognize no authorities? Don't you believe in them?" Bazarov answers, "But why should I accept them? And what is there to

⁸"Turgenev, the novelist who will certainly live in his writings for many generations, has rendered himself immortal by a single word. It was he who invented 'Nihilism.' At first the word was used in a contemptuous sense, but afterwards was accepted from party pride by those against whom it was employed, as so frequently has occurred in history." Sergi Stepniak, formerly editor of Zemlia i Volia (Land and Liberty) Underground Russia: Revolutionary Profiles and Sketches from Life (New York: Scribner's and Sons, 1883), 3.

believe in?"⁹ This first definition of nihilism portrayed it as denying all authority. This meaning became the generally accepted definition of a nihilist.¹⁰

Sergei Stepniak interpreted "nihilism" differently, calling it "original nihilism." Stepniak's understanding differed from Turgenev's, in that these "original" male and female nihilists were fighting for beliefs and doctrines of faith. This understanding of nihilism was a Russian phenomenon totally unlike Turgenev's conception, or the one that emerged in the seventies, which was militant. Tomas Garrigue Masaryk states:

To me the true significance of the matter, the signum temporis for Russia and for Europe as well, is indeed found in the youth of the spokesmen of nihilism. In Fathers and Children, Turgenev, though half unwittingly, hit the mark. The children demanded an account from their fathers; the children wished to learn from their fathers what they themselves were to do; the children drew the logical conclusions from the parental premises. So accurate, so logical, often enough were these deductions, that the parents were apt to become alarmed. Herzen, with sacrilegious hand, overturns the altars of the old gods, and Pisarev thereupon asks him, "Are not all things now lawful?"

The Russian "children" of the sixties attempted to upbuild a new and complete philosophy of life upon the foundations that had been laid by their fathers in the forties; in all seriousness these "children" wished to become new men, desired to begin the new life. Such was the sense in which Dostoevsky conceived nihilism, looking upon it as the leading problem of the day, returning again and again to its criticisms and attempting to refute it. . . . Since the sixties, nihilism has been the question of questions for thoughtful Russians and for thoughtful Europeans.¹¹

⁹Ivan Turgenev, Fathers and Sons, trans. and ed. Ralph E. Matlaw (New York: N. W. Norton and Company, 1966), 19.

¹⁰Stepniak, 3.

¹¹Tomas Garrigue Masaryk, The Spirit of Russia: Studies in History, Literature and Philosophy, Volume II, translated from the German original by Eden and Cedar Paul (New York: Macmillan, 1955),