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**Traumatic Experiences and Imaginary
Parricide in *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844) &
Brothers Karamazov (1879) by Dickens &
Dostoevsky**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree of master in Literature and Civilisation

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Dedication

I dedicate this research work to my parents who have always encouraged me to pursue my dreams and believed me to be their “little intellect”. I would also like to dedicate this humble research to my sister and brother, and all of my family and friends who have supported me on this journey. I could not have done it without them.

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Abstract

This research work attempt to tackle the complex subject of parricide, which is a rare and often brutal form of homicide. Parricide has a high emotional impact on people's opinion and on our collective imagination. This research is about the very analysis as well as the contrast of two of the most major fictional productions in *World Literature*; Dickens, the very icon of the great and popular author for the masses; and one of Russia's greatest writers, one whose works are read and discussed all over the world Fyodor Dostoevsky. Dickens had a lifelong fascination with the workings of the human psyche. Likewise, Dostoevsky's writing is steeped in deep psychology along with the exploration of human frailty. It also, nonetheless, accurately depicts the Russian reality of his times. The fundamental scope and interest of this research is to shed light on the theme of "Imaginary Parricide" and the way it was interpreted by Dickens and Dostoevsky through *Martin Chuzzlewit*(1844) and *Brother Karamazov* (1879). A psychoanalytic study is made to learn whether their traumatic experiences affected their writing or not.

Keywords: Trauma, Imaginary Parricide, Charles Dickens, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Spiritual guilt.

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General Introduction

The majority of humanity would agree that there is much suffering in the world, we see it all around us, and we experience different types of pain in our daily lives. It is probably correct that suffering could be perceived as a means through which one could build their character, nevertheless, we would, in any case, rather avoid it than cope with it.

Trauma, or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, as it has been called since its 1980 inclusion in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, has been characterized as a response, generally delayed, to an overwhelming event or events, that takes the form of repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, thoughts, or behaviours stemming from the event, alongside numbing that may have begun during or after the experience, and probably also increased arousal to stimuli recalling the event. Trauma, in this sense, although evidently pathological, is also an aspect of healthy emotional and spiritual development.

While technically referring to the killing of a close relative, the term parricide has become synonymous with the slaying of one or both parents by a biological child. Parricide might be defined as the murder of one's father or near relative. Whilst the texts '*Martin Chuzzlewit*' by Dickens, '*Brothers Karamazov*' by Dostoevsky all focus on the murder of the father. Freud explained parricide in terms of psychoanalysis and specifically in terms of the Oedipus complex. In psychoanalytic theory, the term Oedipus complex denotes the emotions and ideas that the mind keeps repressed in the unconscious. These repressed thoughts concentrate upon a boy's desire to sexually possess his mother, and kill his father.

The aim of this study is to propose a psychoanalytic examination of '*Martin Chuzzlewit*' by Dickens, and '*Brothers Karamazov*' by Dostoevsky. It intends to show how both authors wrote

complicated plots to talk about parricide. In order to achieve these ends, the study raises the following questions: Are there any similarities between the selected works and the author's lives? How do Dickens and Dostoevsky treat the theme of parricide? How does he use characters to portray this socio pathological phenomenon?

As an attempt to answer these questions, via the character Jonas in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and Ivan in *Brothers Karamazov* as parricide culprits, we can notice that the characters hold the perspective and the writers' intention and willingness to commit the crime.

The present study is divided into three chapters. The first one deals with Trauma and its effects on individuals. It introduces the psychological state and relates it to literature. The second chapter tackles a psychoanalytic study of '*Martin Chuzzlewit*' by Dickens and the character's imaginary parricide. The last chapter includes summaries and analysis of Dostoevsky's works '*Brothers Karamazov*' through the theme of parricide.

CHAPTER ONE:
An Overview of Trauma

1.1. Introduction

This chapter is devoted to explore the psychology of trauma and how it is depicted in literary works. To study psychological trauma is to come face to face with human vulnerability in the actual world and with the capability for evil in human nature. To study psychological trauma means that demonstrating horrifying events. However, if the traumatic events are of human made, people who bear witness are caught within the conflict between the victim and the culprit.

The topic of trauma is a wide phenomenon; we will highlight the main points concerning this subject. First, the different definitions of trauma will be explored, and also, we will introduce some types of trauma and its lifelong effects on individuals. Then we will move to Trauma theory and literature and how it was presented by different scholars.

1.2. The Psychological Study of Trauma

Psychological, or emotional trauma, is damage or injury to the psyche after living through an extremely frightening or distressing event and may result in challenges in functioning or coping normally after the event. Each person who experiences a traumatic event will react differently.

1.2.1. What Is Trauma?

The Greek trauma or wound was originally referring to an injury on the body. However, in later usage, especially in the medical and psychiatric studies, literature and Freud's texts, the term trauma is known as a wound however upon the mind. Sigmund Freud urged that it is not available to consciousness until it imposes itself once more, repeatedly, in nightmare and repetitive action of the survivors (Caruth, 1995, p6). Trauma is described as any unavoidable event that your consciousness accepts “trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being” (SAMHSA, 2012, p. 2). For Freud, traumatic experiences still abide on the unconscious like "foreign bodies" within the psyche that threaten to be unleashed any time. Also, he saw that the patient fixated upon some very definite part of their past, are unable to free themselves and have, therefore, come to be fully alienated both from the present and also the future (Freud,1920). Yet, Freud's studies of hysteria were on those explicitly bear in mind childhood sexual abuse, experienced fear, anxieties, intrusive thoughts or disturbing images that replicate implicit memory for the trauma (Mollon, 2003, p. 9).

There exists nowadays both a wide approval among theorists in a certain definition of trauma, and a strong and sometimes violent debate concerning specific aspects of trauma, notably as regarded to its relevance memory. The word trauma is used to describe experiences or situations that are emotionally painful and distressing, which overwhelm people's ability to cope, leaving them weak. In other words, Trauma means a severe shock or a very displeasing experience which causes psychological damage. According to Judith Woody Herman, the

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traumatic event overwhelms the ordinary human adaptation of life. Traumatic events usually involve threats to life and bodily integrity, or an in-depth personal encounter with violence and death, for some groups of individuals; trauma can occur frequently and become part of the common human experience. So, traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, however rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptation to life (Herman, 1992, p. 33).

Trauma can affect people of every race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender, psychosocial background. A traumatic experience is often a single event, a series of events, and/or a chronic condition (e.g., childhood neglect, domestic violence). Traumas can affect individuals, families, groups, communities, specific cultures, and generations. It often produces a sense of fear, vulnerability, and helplessness. Often, traumatic events are unexpected. Individuals may experience the traumatic event directly, witness an event, feel vulnerable, or hear about an incident that affects somebody they know. Events could also be human-made, like wars, terrorism, sexual assault, or violence.

For some people, reactions to a traumatic event are temporary, whereas others have continuous reactions that move from intense symptoms to more severe or generally enduring mental state consequences (e.g., posttraumatic stress and other anxiety disorders, mood disorders) and medical issues (e.g., arthritis, headaches, chronic pain). Others do not meet criteria for posttraumatic stress or other mental disorders however experience significant trauma-related symptoms. For that reason, although an individual does not meet the criteria for trauma-related disorders, it is necessary to acknowledge that trauma may still affect his or her life in significant ways.

1.2.2. Types of Trauma

Trauma is a deeply disturbing event that infringes upon an individual's sense of control and may reduce their capacity to integrate the situation or circumstances into their current reality. When most people think about trauma, they tend to think about those who have been exposed to war, combat, natural disasters, physical or sexual abuse, terrorism, and catastrophic accidents. There are other types of trauma :

1.2.2.1. Individual Trauma

An individual trauma refers to an event that only occurs to one person. It can be a single event (e.g., rape, physical attack) or multiple or prolonged events (e.g., a life-threatening illness, multiple sexual assaults). Some survivors of individual traumas, especially those who have kept their trauma as a secret, may not receive needed comfort and acknowledgment from others; they are less likely to talk about their experiences of traumas. They are also more likely to struggle with issues and feel isolated by the trauma, and to experience repeated trauma that makes them feel victimized.

1.2.2.2. Group Trauma

The term “group trauma” refers to traumatic experiences that affect a specific group of people. These groups usually share a common identity and history, as well as similar activities and concerns. Some examples of group trauma include crews and their families who lose members from a commercial fishing accident, a gang whose members experience multiple deaths and injuries, teams of firefighters who lose members in a roof collapse, responders who attempt

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to save flood victims, and military service members in a specific operation.

Survivors of group trauma can have different experiences and responses than survivors of individual. Survivors of group trauma, such as military service members who are likely to experience frequent trauma. They tend to keep the trauma experiences within the group, feeling that others outside the group will not understand. Members may encourage others in the group to shut down emotionally and repress their traumatic experiences. Group members may not want to seek help and may discourage others from doing so out of fear that it may shame the entire group. In this environment, members may see it as a violation of group confidentiality when a member seeks assistance outside the group, such as by going to a counsellor.

1.2.2.3. Intimate Partner Violence

Intimate partner violence (IPV), often referred to as domestic violence, is a pattern of actual or threatened physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse. Trauma associated with IPV is normally ongoing. Incidents of this form of violence are rarely isolated, and the victim may still be in contact with and confront abuse from the culprit.

Intimate partners include current and former spouses, boyfriend, and parents. The majority of all acts of violence and intimate partner homicides are committed against women. Children are the hidden casualties of IPV. They often witness the assaults or treats directly, within earshot, or by being exposed to the aftermath of the violence (e.g., seeing bruises and destruction of property, hearing the pleas for it to stop or the promises that it will never happen again).

1.3. Developmental Traumas

Developmental traumas include specific events or experiences that occur among a given developmental stage and influence later development of the physical and mental state. Often, these traumas are related to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), but they can also result from tragedies that occur outside an expected developmental or life stage (e.g., a child dying before a parent, being diagnosed with a life-threatening illness as a young adult) or from events at any point in the life cycle that create significant loss and have life-altering consequences (e.g., the death of a significant other in the later years that leads to displacement of the surviving partner).

1.3.1. Adverse Childhood Experiences

Some individuals face trauma at a young age through sexual, physical, or emotional abuse and neglect. ACEs can negatively affect a person's well-being into adulthood. Childhood abuse is highly associated with major depression, suicidal thoughts and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder PTSD symptoms. New research shows that even witnessing traumatic events can impact the physical development of a child's brain probably resulting constant health and social problems. Childhood abuse tends to have the most complications with long-term effects out of all forms of trauma because it occurs during the most sensitive and critical stages of psychological development.

1.3.2. Child Neglect

Child neglect occurs when a parent does not give a child the care he or she needs according to his or her age, even though that adult can afford to give that care. Neglect can mean not

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providing necessary nutrition, clothing, and shelter. It can mean that a parent is not providing a child with medical or mental health treatment or is not giving prescribed medicines the child needs. Neglect can also mean neglecting the child's education. Keeping a child from school or from special education can affect his mental development. Neglect also includes exposing a child to dangerous environments (e.g., exposure to domestic violence). It can mean poor supervision for a child, including putting the child in the care of someone incapable of caring for children. It can mean abandoning a child or expelling him or her from home. Lack of psychological care, including emotional support, attention, or love, is also considered neglect—and it is the most common form of abuse.

1.4. Trauma Theory and Literature

The field of trauma studies in literary criticism gained significant attention in 1996 with the publication of Cathy Caruth's *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. A theoretical trend was introduced by scholars like Caruth, who pioneered a psychoanalytic post structural approach that suggests trauma is an unsolvable problem of the unconscious that illuminates the inherent contradictions of experience and language. This approach crafts a concept of trauma as a recurring sense of absence that sunders knowledge of the extreme experience, thus preventing linguistic value other than a referential expression. The evolution of trauma theory in literary criticism might best be understood in terms of the changing psychological definitions of trauma as well as the semiotic, rhetorical, and social concerns that are part of the study of trauma in literature and society.

Trauma theory concerns the study of literature about trauma and violence. Many psychologists, critics and theorists return to literature to describe traumatic experience; Freud

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himself turned to literature. This is because, as Cathy Caruth argued, literature like psychoanalysis is interested in the complex relation. Different texts explore and speak about and through the profound story of traumatic experience. The texts engage with a central problem which emerges from the actual experience of a specific crisis (Caruth p6-8).

There are alternative approaches for analysis of trauma in literature, including trauma as intergenerational, trans-historical, unspeakable, and unpreventable. These are best represented in a specific kind of novel, known as "trauma novel". The term "trauma novel" refers to a piece of fiction that conveys profound loss or intense fear on individual or collective levels. The trauma novel conveys a diversity of drastic emotional states through an assortment of narrative innovations. Trauma in fiction is transmitted through a protagonist that functions as a representative cultural figure. The protagonist functions to represent and convey an event that was experienced by an individual or a group of people.

In literary texts, Traumatic events become unpreventable because of the incapability of the brain, understood as the carrier of coherent cognitive schema, to properly code and process the event (Michelle). This notion of trauma leads to the basic framework of the dominant literary trauma theory best articulated by Caruth in "*Unclaimed Experience*" when she says that "trauma is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual's past, but rather in the way it's very unassimilated nature--the way it was precisely not known in the first instance--returns to haunt the survivor later on" (Caruth 4).

According to Caruth, painful traumatic events cannot be grasped and cannot be consciously and systematically brought. The narrative strategy of silence may form a "gap" in time or feeling that enables the reader to imagine what could have happened to the protagonist, thereby

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broadening the meaning and effects of the experience. These methods help the author structure the narrative into a form that aims to embody the psychological "action" of traumatic memory or dissociation. For Freud, the repressed memories, when reactivated, produce a defense mechanism against remembering that can lead to disruption in language.

Responses to traumatic events in fiction usually cause the protagonist to turn inward and struggle with the past. Moreover, the traumatized protagonist may experience a doubling or self-estrangement, which differs from a shattered identity. Trauma novels indicate that traumatic experience disrupts the previous framework of reality and the protagonist must reorganize the self in relation to this new view of reality.

1.5. Conclusion

The evolution of trauma theory in literary criticism might best be understood in terms of the changing psychological definitions of trauma as well as the semiotic, rhetorical, and social concerns that are part of the study of trauma in literature and society. The phenomenon of trauma has appeared to become broad, however it has done so precisely because it brings us to the limits of our understanding. Psychoanalysis, psychiatry, sociology, and even literature should all be setting out to hear one another anew within the study of trauma.

CHAPTER TWO:

The Theoretical Background of Parricide

2.1. Introduction

Parricide has been said to be the central and primal crime both of humankind and of the individual. This chapter which is entitled “Theoretical Background of Parricide” will introduce the psychology of parricide and a selected work "Martin Chuzzlewit" by Charles Dickens. It will grant a psychoanalytical study of his work, an introductory course to the philosophy of parricide and a perception of Psychological spiritual guilt in Dickens's characters.

2.2. The Psychological Study of Parricide

Parricide is the term used to refer to the killing of one's own parents. Within parricide, 'patricide' is used to refer to the killing of one's father and, 'matricide' for the killing of one's mother. Parricide, the killing of parents by their offspring, is a crime usually viewed by society with astonishment and revulsion. It was considered to be a cultural taboo which historically occurred only in bizarre and isolated instances. Children who commit parricide are usually labeled as rebellious youth, without morals or conscience. However, teenagers who commit this act sometimes do so in response to years of first- or second-hand abuse. They were not criminally sophisticated, for them, the killings represented an act of desperation, the only way out of a family situation they could no longer endure. Many children who commit parricide do it out of angst and fear that their own death is imminent and believe that killing the abusive parent is the only way to stop the abuse and be free from a life of fear.

Teenagers become parricide offenders when conditions in their home are intolerable but their alternatives are limited. Parental neglect might also play a role in the progression and possible completion of the act of parricide (Heide, 1992). Those who commit parricide have parents who have not been available to help them. In fact, they are most often carrying adult responsibilities

in their families. Indeed, they often look exemplary on the surface, taking care of themselves and often taking care of one or both parents as well as running the entire household. Other further factors include a familial history of mental disease, domestic violence, neglect, and physical, and emotional abuse (Heide, 1992; Heide & Solomon, 2009; Millaud, Auclair, & Meunier, 1996; Myers, & Vo, 2012). the majority of kids are driven to kill a parent by severe trauma at the hands of that parent “These are kids who’ve endured years of abuse, they’ve tried to get away. They may have tried or considered suicide, and they’ve enlisted the help of others, often to no avail.” (Kathleen Heide). These children were psychologically abused by one or both parents and often suffered physical, sexual, and verbal abuse as well--and witnessed it given to others in the household. Parental psychopathology may also contribute to mistreatment, humiliation, and shame for juveniles that may lead up to the incident of parricide. The adolescent might develop a necessity for revenge following repeated occasions of humiliation. This is believed to be a failure in ethical regulation (Malmquist, 2010). Still, it should be noted that the overwhelming majority of individuals who were abused as children do not commit extreme violence including murder.

2.3. Dickens and Imaginary Parricide

2.3.1. Charles Dickens and John Dickens

The second of eight kids, Charles John Huffam Dickens was born in February 1812 to John Dickens, a clerk for the Royal Navy, and his spouse Elizabeth. Scenes of family harmony and cozy firesides in many of Dickens' stories seem in stark contrast to his own family life. Growing up, the family situation was often precarious due to his father's trouble with debt, he was extravagant and irresponsible with money and consequently life was difficult for the large Dickens family. In 1822 they moved to a poor suburb of London, where Charles's father hoped

to find better opportunities when Charles was just twelve years old, Dickens was sent to work at a boot-blackening manufactory when his father was jailed in Marshalsea debtors' prison. Dickens' mother went to live with her husband inside the jail, taking their youngest children with her. She left Dickens and possibly the eldest sister, Fanny to fend for themselves. Dickens later took a room close to the Marshalsea in order to have meals with them. Dickens was haunted all his life by the shame of his father's sentence, and the menial work he had to do, and told little about it.

After his release from prison, John returned to the Navy Pay Office, retired, and later worked as a reporter. His financial issues continued and when Charles gained fame as a writer, he often embarrassed his son by seeking loans from Charles' friends and publishers behind his back. Charles retained a warm affection for his father while deploring his inability to manage money. Memories of this traumatic period inspired much of his later writing; John was the source of Charles' character Mr. Micawber in the autobiographical novel, *David Copperfield*, which is studded with unhappy personal relationships, with bad marriages and inadequate fathers.

2.3.2 A Psychoanalytic study of “Martin Chuzzlewit”

Dickens had a lifelong fascination with workings of the human psyche and mind. Martin Chuzzlewit manifests Dickens's domestic, Financial and professional anxieties at the time of its composition. There is no evidence that Dickens planned the systematic representation of family relations in his novel. There is, however, substantial evidence to suggest that during this period he became creatively receptive to his own mental states and began Self-consciously to exploit them in his fiction. By the end of March 1844, Dickens wrote to his friend, T. J. Thompson, that: “the greater part of my observation of parents and children has shown selfishness in the first, almost invariably” (Letters IV: 89). It is hard to ignore the personal element in the comment

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which carries echoes of the author's lasting resentment at his childhood deprivations caused by his father's financial irresponsibility.

The central theme of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, is selfishness in different aspects. Old Martin is rich and unable to believe others, even his beloved grandson young Martin, and the novel begins after their serious quarrel about Martin's choice of a wife. Their family quarrel over Old Martin's property plays an important role in this novel. Jonas Chuzzlewit is a murderer who failed to commit parricide. He embodies Dickens's hidden or unconscious intention. Jonas is suspected of being a murderer. However, about his father's death, readers and the murderer himself wonder for a long time whether it is parricide or not. Hoping to kill his father, Jonas gave his father poison. Jonas tries to commit parricide even if his attempt ends in failure. Anthony is Old Martin's younger brother and Jonas's father; he is rich himself, and selfish and greedy like his brother. They embody the soul of the Chuzzlewits, which causes family quarrels and a tragedy. In their first appearance, Anthony and Jonas together attended the family conference so as not to miss their chance to get Old Martin's huge property. Nevertheless, Jonas shows his brutality gradually. His selfishness and greed are ascribable both to heredity and to education, as Dickens mentioned in a preface. Dickens's strategy of suggesting his brutality and criminality reveals his true character in the early part of the novel. He never hides his hatred of his father. He learned a lot from his father and then he longed for his father's death. Tired of waiting, of cursing the old man's 'tardy progress on that dismal road' (*Martin Chuzzlewit*, XXIV, 386) or of drinking toasts to his 'quicker journey' with his creditors (*Martin Chuzzlewit*, XLVIII, 738), Jonas eventually takes it upon himself to shorten the days of his testator and tries to poison him. The father certainly dies, but he turns out to have died his natural death, which makes the murderous attempt superfluous in the term of narrative sequence. But the son remains more the less guilty

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and commits suicide. His father, Anthony, thinks of Jonas as a dangerous fellow. Indeed, Anthony knew the brutality of his son well. When Anthony fell from his chair in a fit, the biggest question occurred. Readers are not taught the cause of Anthony's death in detail, so it is natural to wonder whether he was murdered or not. Jonas was afraid of being suspected of killing his father. Dickens lets us know everything near the end of the novel; at that time readers can know what happened exactly that night. After all, Dickens strictly gave him a death penalty by suicide with the same poison he uses in his attempt. He shows that Jonas would be guilty of attempting his father's murder even if he had not committed Montague's murder. Dickens intends to heighten tension by not explaining enough and then reveals all of the things clearly in the end. Jonas does not repent his deed but is only frightened. As a result, although Jonas did not kill his father, still he was guilty. Dickens never forgives him.

Dickens's vengeful response to paternalistic strangle hold on his career is clearly manifest in the grim characterization of Jonas Chuzzlewit. Not only has Jonas been raised by his father, he seems to have been spontaneously generated by him, for the novel makes no mention of his mother. Anthony's own indoctrination in the Chuzzlewit evil has turned him into a monster of paternity who deliberately wraps the morality of his only son: "I taught him. I trained him. This the heir of my bringing-up. Sly, cunning, and covetous, he will not squander my money. I worked for this; I hoped for this; it has been the great end and aim of my life" (Martin Chuzzlewit, 11/156-7)

In the acquisitive society of nineteenth-century England that Dickens depicts, some fathers even breed and educate their own murders. Under Anthony's tutelage, Jonas becomes a 'greedy expectant' (Martin Chuzzlewit, XXIV, 385) who, "from his early habit of considering everything as a question of property; ... Had gradually come to look, with impatience, on his parent as a

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certain amount of personal estate, which had no right whatever to be going at large, but ought be secured in that particular description of iron safe which is commonly called a coffin, and banked in the grave" (Martin Chuzzlewit, VIII, 121). This attitude encapsulates the way in which patricide and money coalesce in the novel.

Dickens goes to some lengths to defend his characterization of Jonas in the preface to the 1850 edition of Chuzzlewit:

I conceive that the sordid coarseness and brutality of Jonas would be unnatural, if there had been nothing in his early education, and in the precept and example always before him, to engender and develop the vices that make him odious. But so, born and so bred; admired for that which made him hateful, and justified from his cradle in cunning, treachery, and avarice; I claim him as the legitimate issue of the father upon whom those vices are seen to recoil.
(717)

This public defence of Jonas clearly establishes the paternal responsibility for the patricidal son. There is nothing 'unnatural' in Jonas himself, only in his upbringing by an 'unnatural' father. Carey has observed that Dickens has unfailing faith in the strong arm (1973:28) and in Martin Chuzzlewit he dwells repeatedly on Jonas's, especially in the pages preceding Tigg's murder:

He paced up and down the room several times; but always with his right hand clenched, as if i held something... When he was tired of this, he threw himself into a chair, and thoughtfully turned up the sleeve of his right arm, as if he were rather musing about its strength than examining it; but even then, he kept the hand clenched. (46/610)

In Martin Chuzzlewit, Dickens concluded that Jonas was never forgiven not only because of his

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real murder, but also because of his attempted parricide. As has been pointed out, Dickens was the only great British novelist whose father had been put in jail and whose family had lived there. This childhood experience left him with a traumatic memory. He might never forget that memory however he admired his father noticeably. These conflicts made him write imperfect parricides. Jonas meant and carried out his intention to kill his father only to fail. Although Anthony died of a heart attack, Jonas is morally guilty of parricide (Welsh 34). By projecting his feeling for his father to Jonas's crime and punishment, Dickens can move on as a human being and as a novelist.

2.4. Conclusion

Dickens actually kills fathers in order to present a more glorified image of paternity; he only disinherits sons for a trial period, in order to turn what is a due into a reward. Such is the rule; fathers must die that their sons shall live. By sacrificing the heroes' fathers, Dickens fortunately protects them from the violence of their sons and bloodshed is avoided.

CHAPTER THREE:
Imaginary Parricide in *Brothers*
Karamazov

3.1. Introduction

Dostoevsky's fiction has contributed to fathom the ambiguous human mind and its unsettlingly dark nature. Sigmund Freud, Albert Camus, Jean -Paul Sartre, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Einstein, among others, have utterly admitted that the works of Dostoevsky had a certain impact on psychology. Indeed, Dostoevsky frequently employed different psychological cases and themes in his works to give a clear depiction of each issue through his multi-layered characters. This chapter tackles precisely the theme of imaginary parricide and it is substantiated in a detailed analysis of Dostoevsky's work "Brothers Karamazov".

3.2. Dostoevsky as a Writer

Dostoevsky is best known for his novella *Notes from the Underground* and for four long novels, *Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot*, *The Possessed* (also and more accurately known as *The Demons and The Devils*), and *The Brothers Karamazov*. Each of these works is famous for its psychological profundity, and, indeed, Dostoevsky is commonly regarded as one of the greatest psychologists in the history of literature. He specialized in the analysis of pathological states of mind that cause insanity, murder, and suicide and in the exploration of the emotions of humiliation, self-destruction, tyrannical domination, and murderous rage. These major works also are noted as great "novels of ideas" that treat timeless and timely issues in philosophy and politics. Fyodor Dostoevsky was a Russian novelist, short story writer, essayist, journalist and philosopher. Dostoevsky's literary works explore human psychological science in the troubled political, social, and spiritual atmosphere of 19th-century Russia, and merge with a variety of philosophical and spiritual themes.

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Dostoevsky himself suffered from epilepsy, neuroticism and gambling addiction and his fictional characterization often reflected his personality. In *Dostoevsky: The Author as psychoanalyst*, Breger approaches Fyodor Dostoyevsky psychoanalytically, not as a "patient" to be analyzed, however as a psychoanalyst, an individual whose life and fiction are twisted in the process of literary self-exploration. In other words, his writings were influenced by his personal experiences and that is why they are quite successful in emphasizing the inexplicable nature of the human condition.

Mikhail Bakhtin claimed that "Narration in Fyodor Dostoyevsky is usually a narration without perspective" (225). It is no wonder that Bakhtin claimed so, Dostoevsky's narrative was always considered to be complicated to be understood or analysed but one thing is sure: it was always valued. Dostoevsky depicts in his fiction unconscious actions and their influence on man's behaviour more diversely and that is why Dostoevsky's characters are "complex". They are full of ambivalent feelings, contradictory thoughts, and are even torn in rational and irrational lines thus; they bring to surface the depths of man's soul through an unsteady, passionate and tense voice:

Bakhtin argued that Dostoevsky, unlike previous novelists, does not appear to aim for a 'single vision' and goes beyond simply describing situations from various angles. Instead, according to Bakhtin, Dostoevsky aimed for fully dramatic novels of ideas in which conflicting views and characters are left to develop unevenly. (Bakhtin, 55)

Dostoevsky tries to mirror the confusion within his characters using different voices and perspectives. Bakhtin argues in his book that:

Dostoevsky's world may seem a chaos, and the construction of his novels some sort of conglomerate of disparate materials and incompatible principles for shaping them. But only in the light of Dostoevsky's

fundamental artistic task, one can begin to understand the profound organic cohesion, consistency and wholeness of Dostoevsky's poetics. (08)

In *The Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*; Bakhtin states that Dostoevsky created a brand new style that he calls “polyphony”. It consists of independent voices that embody the characters. Dostoevsky portrays these characters as individual subjects and stripped from the ideology of the author and this is, in Bakhtin’s words, what makes Dostoevsky the “realist in the highest sense” (11). He also represents each reflection as the position of an identity and that’s what makes Dostoevsky’s world profoundly individualized. Open endedness is also a common approach in all of Dostoevsky’s polyphonic works. As a realist, he makes no resolution, the truth is never declared, yet it is embodied in conflicting thoughts. This uniqueness of Dostoevsky’s narrative style has contributed to look at the human soul from distinct, dark, but artistic angle. His polyphonic talent extended several visions in understanding the human’s nature definitely makes his works valuable, not only psychologically but also aesthetically as well.

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3.3. Dostoevsky's Father

Dostoevsky’s parents had stunningly different personalities, his father was austere and hard handed while his mother was gentle and nurturing. Dostoevsky’s father was named Mikhail Andreevich Dostoevsky and was born into a family “legally classified as nobility according to the table of ranks established by Peter the Great” (Frank 4). However,

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because this was a civil service ranking, the family did not benefit from the social status commonly bestowed upon those affiliated, as described by Frank: “He was legally, but not socially, equal to the scions of the gentry...” (4). Despite some prestige garnered from his mother’s bourgeois family, they were not viewed as socially elevated in Russian society. Mikhail had been born into a family belonging to provincial clergy and was naturally expected to become a clergyman as well but decided to take a different path. He graduated from the seminary at the age of 15 but had quite different goals for himself. He promptly took off for Moscow where he registered in the Imperial Medical Surgical Academy.

Later he became Dr. Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky, a military surgeon and struggled through the tragedy of unsuccessful operations that were inevitably grotesque in nature. His character, already naturally predisposed to despair and an unidentified disorder, afterwards cultivated a sense of resulting bitterness. Later he was appointed as staff physician in the outpatient clinic at Mariinsky hospital. It was at this same hospital that Fyodor Dostoyevsky was born.

Mikhail Dostoyevsky wasn't the foremost gentle of men and was even represented as a “lecherous and cruel man...” He was considered not only cruel however a strict husband and father as well. He was described sometimes as sullen, and a workaholic, later imposing such discipline upon his kids. His austere ways that rendered the atmosphere of the Dostoevsky home humourless and cold. His unknown nervous disorder, stress and unfavourable weather worsened his headaches and threw him into periodic fits of rage. He indulged in alcohol that worsened his moods and he sunk into a melancholic depression. Dostoyevsky’s upbringing was characterized by a sense of self-discipline and seriousness, and nowhere in his literature may a delineation of a cheerful childhood be found.

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One can also see the strained relationship in these lines Fyodor writes to his father asking for a small sum of money:

My dear kind father! Is it really possible that you, my father, believe that your son would ask you for money for mere trifles? God be my witness if I wish to cause you any hardships, either for my own personal gain or from mere necessity. How my parents toil and sweat to provide for me. Why, I have a head on my shoulders and a pair of arms. Where I at liberty, where I free to live my life as my own, I would not ask for so much as a kopeck from you. I would learn to live within the iron laws of necessity. It would have been shameful for me in that case so much as to hint at money... But now, on the other hand, my dear, kind papa, remember that I am, in effect, already enrolled in government service in the full sense of the word. Whether I like it or not, I must conform to the rules and regulations of the society in which I presently move. Why should I exclude myself from it? Those who shun society are often exposed to horrible unpleasanties. You have moved about in society yourself. (1838, May 10)

The struggle Dostoyevsky feels in regarding his father is obvious in his imperative and emotional manner of writing. Mikhail was also noticeably in love with his spouse. Maria, a soft and caring mother illuminated with a religious spirit was a positive inspiration in her children's lives. After the death of his mother his father sunk into seclusion with his remaining kids and has become even more wretched in temperament. This anger was sadly expressed as abuse on his serfs that presumably led to his death. His father later was found murdered. No trial was performed and the cause of death was left open to speculation, though some imagined it was his serfs who had killed him as an act of

vengeance.

3.4. Brothers Karamazov

3.4.1 Synopsis

Brothers Karamazov is a family tragedy focused on a father and his sons. Fyodor, the eldest Karamazov, has three sons: Dmitri, Ivan, and Alyosha. Ivan and Alyosha have identical mother, but Dmitri, the oldest, has another mother. Fyodor is a greedy landowner, a bawdy lecher, and a neglectful father. Hence, the Karamazov brothers end up growing into young men under the care of various other people. But they all have returned home to visit their father, and it is the first time they all have been together for quite some time. When they gathered together in the town where Fyodor lived, the story began. Harvey Mindess associates the characters of the Karamazov's with Dostoevsky's character: Fyodor stands for Dostoevsky's passion, Ivan for intellectual brilliance and pessimism, Dmitri for the proud, declamatory lust and passion, Alyosha for devotion, kind-hearted altruism, and Smerdyakov for smugness, stupid treachery and maliciousness (451). This idea seems to be accurate and helps to think about this family. Fyodor got rid of the eldest son, Dmitri, and did not care about his child's existence at all. So, a faithful servant of the family Grigory played a role as a father for Dmitri during his stay in Fyodor's house. This fact became one of the important reasons that Dmitri thought himself guilty of parricide. Anyway, Grigory was his substitute father. And he believed that he had property his mother left him, but Fyodor deceived him about his real property. It became one cause of discord between Dmitri and Fyodor. Another cause is the fight about Grushenka. The dispute about money and jealousy made them quarrel. As Vladiv-Glover noted, "Mitya [Dmitri] is the only one of the four brothers, who is in an explicit relationship of open rivalry with the father" (19). Dmitri and Fyodor expressed their hatred for each other openly through the novel. Near the beginning, Fyodor suggests the word *parricide* because he was afraid to be killed by

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Dmitri. Fyodor knew well that Dmitri hated him and wanted to kill him. Dmitri never tried to hide his hatred for Fyodor and his parricidal intention. On knowing of his father's death, Dmitri thought wrongly that he was guilty in spite of his innocence. As the police question Dmitri, it becomes clear that the facts all support the conclusion that he did indeed murder his father, even though he did not commit the crime. He was at the scene of the crime, wielding a weapon, the night of the murder. He had said he would kill his father on several occasions. He publicly announced he was looking for 3,000 rubles and was desperate to find them, and Fyodor reportedly had an envelope with 3,000 rubles that was stolen the night of the murder. Dmitri is carried away, and very few people believe that he is innocent of Fyodor's murder. And although Dmitri did not commit parricide, he accepted punishment because of his hope for his father's death. He meant to suffer for his own sin; that is, he saw guilt not in actual behaviour but in his own spirit.

Later, Alyosha visits his brother in jail. Dmitri tells Alyosha that Ivan has concocted a plan for his escape jail. Alyosha goes to talk to Ivan, who feels strangely guilty regarding his father's death. Alyosha tells his brother that he should not feel responsible for a crime that he did not commit, but Ivan stalks off angrily. He meets Smerdyakov, who tells Ivan he thinks the Karamazov brother is guilty as an accomplice to the murder. He says that Ivan wanted his father dead and left the night of the murder to try to free himself of the responsibility of protecting his father. As far as Ivan is concerned, he asked for punishment by revealing Smerdyakov's crime and confessing his own criminal intention in Dmitri's trial. Ivan resolved to ask for suffering because of his evil wish to hope for his father's death. He found and admitted his own guilt for unconsciously consenting to Smerdyakov's murder of his father. Certainly, he hated his father and hoped for his death; at the same time, it is possible to say he had a motive to destroy his elder brother's life. In fact, Ivan would not hide his feeling for his father and elder brother. Katerina and Dmitri loved each

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other as well as hated each other. They could not be separated even if each of them began to love another person. As Ivan loved her desperately, it could be true that he hoped for Dmitri's destruction. But Ironically, Katerina, whom he loves, destroyed Dmitri's life, while Ivan hoped to save Dmitri from the guilty sentence. She tried to save Ivan and sent innocent Dmitri to jail; therefore, Ivan had to atone for his sin against Dmitri, too. After the murder occurred, Ivan was shocked not because he knew that Smerdyakov had murdered Fyodor but because he realized his repressed desire to kill his father and destroy his brother's life.

At the end of the novel, however, Ivan admitted his guilt and tried to prove Dmitri's innocence by sacrificing himself. Having failed to save Dmitri from the guilty sentence, he intended to help Dmitri escape from prison. Each of the brothers resolved to be punished so as to atone for his imaginary parricide in his own way. On the other hand, Smerdyakov, an illegitimate son and cook, wouldn't admit any guilt in spite of his crime. he might be their brother, but none of the brothers seem to notice that fact, even Alyosha. All the Karamazov brothers regard Smerdyakov as a servant, which had some effect on his mind. According to Sigmund Freud's analysis, "it is a matter of indifference who actually committed the crime; psychology is only concerned to know who desired it emotionally and who welcomed it when it was done" (189). The three brothers decided to take responsibility in various ways for wishing for their father's death.

3.4.2. Dostoevsky and Imaginary Parricide

Many studies have mentioned parricide in the Brothers Karamazov. They have revealed Dostoevsky's feelings for his murdered father and discussed it in relation to his father's death. That incident left him with a trauma. The Brothers Karamazov appears to imply the trauma lasts all his life. In fact, Dostoevsky was able to present only imaginary parricides in the novel. Dickens, like Dostoevsky, described an imaginary parricide

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emerging from a traumatic memory in his childhood. Knowing that *Note from the Underground* (1864) almost inspired and served as a literary foreground and pedestal for the development of others works as pointed out by Briggs, among which the *Brothers Karamazov* as case study- the madness and insanity intertwine with rational and skepticism with wit and conceit. As much as the writer suffered instability, the rational he got in terms of perspectives and creation of characters. Yet, he nourished and nurtured his own fiction in an idiosyncratic devilish resolution of matters; a self-nurtured, self-reflected fiction, intentional fusion with the inner psyche; the devil which lies within.

Dostoevsky desired his increasingly despotic father dead. His early milder “death-like” attacks represent an unconscious identification with the wished-for dead father. When his father was actually killed this wish was forever thwarted and the normal progress of Oedipal feelings towards a healthy resolution was blocked, resulting in episodes of hysterical non-organic epileptic fits. These fits were accompanied by subsequent acute and long-lasting feelings of criminal guilt as if Dostoevsky had in actual fact murdered his father:

Infantile reactions from the Oedipus complex ... may disappear if reality gives them no further nourishment. But the father's character remained the same, or rather, it deteriorated with the years, and thus Dostoevsky's hatred for his father and death-wish against that wicked father were maintained ... Dostoevsky's attacks now assumed an epileptic character; they still undoubtedly signalled identification with his father as a punishment, but they had become terrible, like his father's frightful death itself. (244)

This is graphically illustrated when Freud relates the story of Dostoevsky's first dramatic seizure: it is incorrectly repeated that this occurred moments after he was

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informed that his father had been murdered by his serfs. He writes, “The most probable assumption is that the attacks went way back into his childhood, that their place was taken to begin with by milder symptoms and that they did not assume an epileptic type till after the shattering experience of his eighteenth year—the murder of his father” (239). And it is unlikely that the death of Mikhail Andreevich Dostoevsky will ever be satisfactorily proven to be murder.

In “Dostoevsky and Parricide” Freud seeks to account for the most wide-ranging aspects of Dostoevsky’s personality and works using the principal tool of psychoanalysis. Specifically, he speculates as to how the twin authorities of monarchy and religion can be understood as substitutions for the symbolic father of the unresolved Oedipal complex:

We can safely say that Dostoevsky never got free from the feelings of guilt arising from his intention of murdering his father. They also determined his attitude in the two other spheres in which the father-relation is the decisive factor, his attitude towards the authority of the State and towards belief in God. In the first of these he ended up with complete submission to his Little Father, the Tsar.... Here penitence gained the upper hand. In the religious sphere he retained more freedom: according to apparently trustworthy reports he wavered, up to the last moment of his life, between faith and atheism. (245)

Dostoevsky’s traumatic memory of his father’s death may, as Freud prompts, replicate a parricidal intention. His second wife Anna gave him gentle family life in his last fifteen years. Anna gave him lots of things he had sought for throughout his life. Although Dostoevsky could not complete this parricide even in his novels, he punished those who hoped for their father’s death. That is his answer for the problem of imaginary parricide. With this, we turn back to *The Brothers Karamazov*, which, more so than any of his great

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works, presents the author's multiple viewpoints openly and readily tangible in the brothers, father Karamazov, and the epileptic, Smerdyakov. It is impossible here, nor is it Breger's point, to reject the Oedipus complex as it is so completely manifested within Dostoevsky and his characters. However, a more complete picture is given through individual analysis of Dostoevsky's association with these characters. From a psychological standpoint, the figures of Ivan and Dmitri are more significant than Alyosha. Both harbored the will to kill their father, Fyodor Karamazov, who, as Breger states, "displays much of the impulse-ridden side of Dr. Dostoevsky"(Id.,p. 88). Additionally, there appears to be a direct correlation between the real and fictitious fathers' handling of money, and it is the figure of Dmitri who embodies Dostoevsky's correspondence with his father- full of hatred, with an innate desire to kill him, but with a constant need for money which the father refused to appease. Ivan's reaction to the death of his father is ambivalent, and indeed illustrates what conflicting emotions were present in Dostoevsky with the death of his father. "It is definite that his death", Breger states, "produced a dual effect on Fyodor. On the one side, he must have felt glad: finally, justice was done, revenge taken, on the tyrant who had oppressed him ... On the other aspect, he must have felt guilty over the actualization of his own murderous wishes." Yet it is Smerdyakov, the epileptic, who murders the father. There is a question as to whether Smerdyakov was actually Fyodor Karamazov's son, thus it is ambiguous to find this as fulfilment of the Oedipus complex. Rather, it is the meaning of this disease which Dostoyevsky struggled with his entire life and addresses here through Smerdyakov's ability to pretend an attack in plotting and carrying out the murder. Breger states, "By showing how Smerdyakov uses his disease for manipulative and selfish ends, Dostoevsky confronts the same tendency in himself"(Id., p. 25).

Trauma theory has typically emphasized a memory that enters the self without

becoming part of it, a foreign, unassimilated presence (or rather, absence) within the mind. Dostoevsky's distinctive contribution to the study of trauma lies in his imagining a form of transformative trauma that underlies wounded memory. The wound, for Dostoevsky, is a preparation for, and gesture toward, the more considerable terror of encountering something within the self that can never, given its infinite immensity, be integrated into the life of consciousness. For Dostoevsky, the self finds its sustaining center in an inwardly beheld transcendent presence, but it is the violent shock and the unintegrated terror of unhealed memory that opens up the self to the possibility of this encounter. Like Freud, who read Dostoevsky and commented on his influence, Dostoevsky champions introspection as a response to the wound that cries out from within the Psyche.

3.5. Conclusion

As his last novel, *The Brothers Karamazov* serves to complete the evolution of Dostoevsky's psychological battles, on a more refined, mature, and wholly paternal level. It is impossible to neglect the unarguable Freudian themes within his characters, nor is it possible to consider these characters in isolation from events of the author's life. However, Dostoevsky clearly exhibits unconscious insight into the human mind, and thus must be considered at par, if not above the canon of psychology.

General Conclusion

Dickens and Dostoyevsky show a similarity in revealing the very fact of parricide in *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Brothers Karamazov*. Both of them left the murder secret and wrote complicated plots to make clear what happened. In each novel, one character confesses to the murder and kills himself. In *Martin Chuzzlewit*, the man who gave poison to Jonas tells all the secrets to Martin and John Westlock. The killer himself reveals all his secrets to Ivan, whom he respects in the *Brothers Karamazov*.

A man who appeared and remained at John's hand in chapter 25 played a role as a prosecutor of Jonas. This surgeon explained his own behaviour and worried about it: 'I fear he [Anthony] was made away with. Murdered!' . . . The young man, Lewsome, looked up in his face, and casting down his eyes again, replied: 'I fear, by me . . . Not by my act, but I fear by my means.' . . . 'He [Jonas] said, immediately, that he wanted me to get him some of two sorts of drugs . . . I only know that the poor old father died soon afterwards, just as he would have died from this cause. . .'" (ch.48) Lewsome had been troubled by his deed and been ill for a long time. He had sold drugs to Jonas while worrying about the effect of the drugs. Although he reported the fact, he did not know the truth about the death of Anthony. A friend of the deceased, Chuffey disclosed the secret. He said that Anthony found out his son's intention and forgave him because he loved his son. Old Martin, Young Martin, and others confirmed the truth of Anthony's death for the readers. Jonas's parricide ended as an imaginary one. Jonas, who did not succeed in committing parricide, but intended and attempted it was not able to escape and killed himself.

On the other hand, Smerdyakov, a murderer, told Ivan the reality concerning the death of Fyodor. He pulled out money that he had stolen from Fyodor in front of Ivan and said to him: "Can you really, can you really not have known till now? . . . It was only with you, with your help, sir, I killed him, and Dmitri Fyodorovich is quite innocent . . . And so

I want to prove to your face this evening that you are the only real murderer in the whole affair, and sir, and I am not the real murderer, though I did kill him . . .” (Ch. 8) Only Ivan hears this confession; he reports it, admits that he was an accomplice, and collapses with brain fever. His illness leads the court to ignore his revelations even though the reader knows they are true. In both novels, an unknowing accomplice confesses, but only in Dickens narratives is the confession widely accepted. In the conclusion of their novels, Dickens and Dostoevsky both recognized their hope for their father’s death as an imaginary parricide. They punish their characters for this psychological crime in similar ways, but Dickens simplified his characters and Dostoevsky complicated them. Dickens may never forget the humiliation in his childhood. He wrote that Jonas Chuzzlewit attempted to murder his father in order to get money as soon as possible. And Jonas believes he is guilty of killing his father in spite of the failure of his intention. Dickens ended Jonas’s life with poison. By doing so, Dickens shows his hope for his father’s death is a crime in itself. Dostoevsky also deals with parricide in *The Brothers Karamazov*. Like Jonas, Smerdyakov commits suicide in despair. He has no regret or pain as a real human being. On the other hand, Dmitri and Ivan decided to be punished as persons, who hoped for their father’s death, more accurately, who hoped to kill their fathers. Punishment is not always a legal matter.

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