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*Landmarks of world literature*

**Fyodor Dostoyevsky**

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FYODOR DOSTOYEVSKY:

# The Brothers Karamazov

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## Note on the text

*The Brothers Karamazov* consists of twelve books and an epilogue, each of which is subdivided into chapters. References to passages quoted or mentioned are to book and chapter rather than to a particular edition. All translations from the novel are my own. No footnotes are given, but reference is made, where essential, to critical studies listed in the guide to further reading. This in turn does not pretend to bibliographical completeness: it is confined to a list of titles cited or consulted in the preparation of this volume and to works of particular value for the student or general reader. Where extracts from Dostoyevsky's other works, articles or letters are given, reference is made by volume and page number (e.g. XV, 200) to the thirty-volume *Nauka* edition of his complete works, *Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy v tridsati tomakh*. Where the Nauka publishers have split a volume in two, separately bound parts, an additional number appears after the volume number (e.g. XXX/1). Publication of this fine edition commenced in 1972 and it now approaches completion.

Finally, I should like to express my gratitude to Twayne Publishers, a division of G.K. Hall & Co., Boston, Mass., USA, for permission to use material originally published in chapter seven of my study, *Fedor Dostoevsky* (1981).

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## Chronology

### *Dostoyevsky's life and works*

1821 Born in Moscow at the Mariinsky hospital for the poor, where his father worked as a doctor.

1823–31

1825

1828

1830

1831

Sees production of Schiller's *The Robbers* which affects him deeply.

At school in Moscow.

1833–7

1834

1835

1836

1837

Death of mother. Enters St Petersburg Academy of Military Engineering.

Death of father in mysterious circumstances.

Attempts to write plays.

1840

1841

1842

1843

Graduates from Military Academy.

### *Major literary and historical events*

Pushkin: *Eugene Onegin*.

Decembrist Revolt and accession of Nicholas I.

Birth of Tolstoy.

Stendhal: *Le Rouge et le Noir*.

Pushkin: *The Queen of Spades*.

Balzac: *Le Père Goriot*.

Gogol: *The Government Inspector*.

Death of Pushkin. Dickens: *Pickwick Papers*.

Stendhal: *The Charterhouse of Parma*.

Lermontov: *A Hero of Our Time*.

Death of Lermontov.

Gogol: *Dead Souls* and 'The Overcoat'.



- |        |  |  |
|--------|--|--|
| 1844   | Resigns commission in order to devote himself to literature. First published work: a translation of Balzac's <i>Eugénie Grandet</i> .  | Emigration of Herzen.  |
| 1845   | Finishes <i>Poor Folk</i> . Meets Belinsky.  | Revolutions in Europe. Death of Belinsky.  |
| 1846   | <i>Poor Folk</i> published to widespread acclaim. A more subdued reception given to <i>The Double</i> . Epilepsy diagnosed.  | Thackeray: <i>Vanity Fair</i> .  |
| 1847   | 'The Landlady'. Starts to attend meetings of the Petrashevsky circle.  | Russia invades Hungary.  |
| 1848   | 'A Faint Heart' and 'White Nights'.  |  |
| 1849   | <i>Netochka Nezvanova</i> . Becomes involved with more radical section of the Petrashevsky circle. April 23: arrested and imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress, where he writes <i>A Little Hero</i> . November: Commission of Inquiry reports and sentences Dostoyevsky to death. December: mock execution. Death sentence commuted to Siberian hard labour and exile. |  |
| 1850   | Arrives at Omsk prison settlement.   | Dickens: <i>David Copperfield</i> .  |
| 1851   |  | World Exhibition at Crystal Palace, London.  |
| 1852   |  | Death of Gogol. Tolstoy: <i>Childhood</i> . Turgenyev: <i>A Sportsman's Sketches</i> . |
| 1853–6 |  | Crimean War.   |
| 1854   | Hard labour ends. Posted to Semipalatinsk as a common soldier.   |  |

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- 1855 Chernyshevsky joins *The Contemporary*. Death of Nicholas I and accession of Alexander II amidst hopes of social and political reform.
- 1856 Turgenev: *Rudin*.
- 1857 Flaubert: *Madame Bovary*. Baudelaire: *Les Fleurs du Mal*.  
Turgenev: *A Nest of Gentlefolk*. Goncharov: *Oblomov*. Tolstoy: *Family Happiness*. Darwin: *The Origin of Species*.
- 1859 Marries Maria Dmitriyevna Isayeva.  
*The Village of Stepanchikovo* and 'Uncle's Dream'. December: returns to St Petersburg.
- 1860 Starts publication of *The House of the Dead*.
- 1861 Starts publication of moderate periodical *Time*. *The Insulted and Injured*.
- 1862 Travels in Europe. Affair with Polina Suslova.  
*Winter Notes on Summer Impressions*. Closure of *Time*. Further travels in Europe with Suslova.  
Launches *The Epoch*. *Notes from Underground*. Deaths of wife and brother Mikhail.
- 1863 Financial collapse of *The Epoch*. Severe financial difficulties. Starts work on *Crime and Punishment*.
- 1865 Publishes *Crime and Punishment*. Writes *The Gambler* in twenty-six days with help of stenographer Anna Grigoryevna Snitkina.
- 1865–9 Tolstoy: *War and Peace*.  
Attempted assassination of Alexander II by Dmitry Karakozov.
- 1866 Chernyshevsky: *What is to be Done?*  
The First International. Student unrest in Kazan. Legal reforms in Russia, including introduction of trial by jury. Dickens: *Our Mutual Friend*.

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|---------|---|---|
| 1867    | Marries Anna Grigoryevna. Flees abroad to escape creditors. Meets Turgenev in Baden. Visits Dresden and Geneva. | Turgenev: <i>Smoke</i> .  |
| 1868    | Still abroad. Death of infant daughter. <i>The Idiot</i> .  |   |
| 1869    | Returns to Dresden and plans 'The Life of a Great Sinner'.  | Murder of student Ivanov in Moscow by Nechayev's political circle.  |
| 1870    | <i>The Eternal Husband</i> .  | Defeat of France in Franco-Prussian War. Death of Herzen. Birth of V. I. Ulyanov (Lenin).<br>Defeat of Paris Commune. |
| 1871    | Returns to St Petersburg.   |   |
| 1871–2  | <i>The Devils</i> .   |   |
| 1872    | Becomes editor of <i>The Citizen</i> .  | Trial of Nechayev. Leskov: <i>Cathedral Folk</i> . Marx's <i>Das Kapital</i> published in Russia.                     |
| 1873    | Begins <i>The Diary of a Writer</i> .   |   |
| 1874    | Resigns from <i>The Citizen</i> . Visits Bad Ems for treatment for emphysema.                                   | Attempts by thousands of Russian students to provoke revolutionary unrest amongst peasantry.                          |
| 1875    | <i>A Raw Youth</i> .  | Political strikes in Odessa.  |
| 1875–8  |   | Tolstoy: <i>Anna Karenina</i> .   |
| 1877    |   | Russia declares war on Turkey. Turgenev: <i>Virgin Soil</i> .   |
| 1878    | Death of son Alexey. Visit to Optina Monastery with Solovyov.   | Death of Nekrasov. Arrest and trial of Vera Zasulich.   |
| 1879–80 | <i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> (completed November 1880).  | Tolstoy's religious crisis, during which he writes <i>A Confession</i> .  |
| 1880    | Delivers the Pushkin Speech.  |   |
| 1880–1  | Final issues of <i>The Diary of a Writer</i> .  |   |

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|------|---|--|
| 1881 | January 28: dies in St Petersburg. February 1: funeral in Alexander Nevsky Monastery attended by over thirty thousand people. | Assassination of Alexander II.   |
| 1883 |   | Death of Turgenev. Nietzsche: <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> .              |
| 1889 |   | Death of Chernyshevsky.  |
| 1904 |   | Death of Chekhov.  |
| 1910 |   | Death of Tolstoy.  |
| 1912 |   | Constance Garnett's English translation of <i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> . |