II

THE RISE OF NEW SCHILLERIAN THEMES: *NOTES FROM UNDERGROUND* AND *THE IDIOT*

And yet, despite the "big step" forward represented by *An Unpleasant Predicament*, neither this story nor *The Insulted and the Injured* is an impressive achievement. The latter is too imitative, the former belongs to a "low," facile genre, burlesque satire. With *Notes from Underground*, on the other hand, Dostoevskij produced something distinctive. It may not be a great story — if it is one at all — and there is little character interest apart from the main figure; but it does have a compelling and passionately argued theme. As in the previous two works, the theme is anti-Schillerian; in some ways the underground man is a new, more sympathetic version of Prince Valkovskij. Or he may be considered as an embodiment of Valkovskij's view of the Schillerian,[1] a view which entails the paradoxical mingling of good and evil, of the idealistic and the base. Thus, taking Schiller as his point of departure, Dostoevskij has projected an original concept of man.

Granted, Schillerism is not the only object of attack in this work; needless to say, it is combined with scientism, utilitarianism, and utopianism. But it is a major strain. A leitmotif is the phrase the "sublime and the beautiful" [*prekrasnoe i vysokoe*], which occurs at least fifteen times. By its insistent presence, this phrase — which perhaps a bit too neatly sums up Schiller's aesthetic idealism[2] — does not allow the reader to forget the ultimate target of Dostoevskij's satire.

[1] The "spiteful man" of the *Notes from Underground* (IV, 133) has a definite kinship with the "Schilleresque people" derided by Prince Valkovskij. The virtue of these people, according to the Prince, is frequently only an "ecstasy of spite" (III, 280).

[2] The coupling of these two concepts is not, of course, unique to Schiller. Edmund Burke's essay on the subject is well known, and Kant wrote a treatise entitled, in Russian translation, *O vysokom i prekrasnom*. The editors of the latest edition of Dostoevskij's works attribute the phrase as used in *Notes from Underground* to Kant, adding that in the 1830's and '40's the expression was a popular one in critical circles (*Sobranie sočinenij* IV, 598). Since, however, Dostoevskij's

The style of *Notes from Underground* is largely determined by the gap between ideal and reality, which in this work reaches grotesque proportions. Whereas in *The Insulted and the Injured* and *An Unpleasant Predicament* idealism figures as an aesthetic and an ethical norm respectively, in *Notes from the Underground* it appears largely in the guise of reverie. And it is analogous to a disease, manifesting itself in "attacks" [*prilivy*] (IV, 180). The narrator exclaims:

> But how much love, good Lord, how much love I used to experience in those dreams of mine, in those escapes to the sublime and the beautiful. Though this love was fantastic and though, in reality, it was never applied to anything human, there was so much of it ... that one did not feel any need of applying it in practice afterwards; that would have been superfluous luxury. Generally, everything always ended satisfactorily with an indolent and entrancing transition to art, that is, to the beautiful forms of existence, all ready-made, lifted forcibly from the poets and novelists and adapted to every possible use and need (IV, 180–81). [3]

Notably, the ideal supposed to comprehend the highest human values has completely lost touch with humanity; the attempt to embody it — which is made despite its stated gratuitousness — is grotesquely bathetic, even more so than in *An Unpleasant Predicament.* After three months of dreaming the underground man simply must "plunge into

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knowledge of Kant was at first largely indirect, derived from his wide reading in Schiller, it would seem farfetched to father upon Kant two terms which are constantly joined together in the aesthetic essays of Schiller. In fact, the distinction between these two kinds of beauty is central to Schiller's aesthetics. Suffice it to cite one sentence from *On the Sublime,* an essay in which Schiller consistently compares and contrasts these two aesthetic qualities: "The sublime ... provides an escape from the world of the senses, in which the beautiful always tends to hold us captive" (V, 222). For a Dostoevskian passage which indirectly associates the "sublime and the beautiful" with Schiller, see the article "Idealists-Cynics" in the *Diary of a Writer,* which discusses T. N. Granovskij's approach to politics. Granovskij, whom A. S. Dolinin calls a Schillerian "prekrasnaja duša" (Dostoevskij, *Pis'ma* II, 469), was held to be, in Dostoevskij's words, a " 'patented' preacher of 'the sublime and the beautiful' " (*Polnoe sobranie* ... XI, 342). A direct attribution of the concept to Schiller occurs in *The Brothers Karamazov* (X, 299).

[3] The maudlin self-indulgence of these dreams is grotesquely suggested by one of the more eccentric notions of the narrator. The occupation of his imagined *alter ego* would be "to drink to the health of all the sublime and the beautiful. I should have seized upon every chance to drop a tear in my glass and then drain it to all that was sublime and beautiful" (IV, 147-148). The idea of dropping a tear in the glass and drinking a toast is so extraordinary that here it can be said with all but complete certainty that Dostoevskij is parodying a Schillerian passage. Franz Moor, observing his incognito brother together with Amalia, soliloquizes: "Didn't I see how she let fall a couple of stealthy tears into the wine, which he downed so hurriedly behind my back that it was as though he wanted to devour the glass also!" (*The Robbers,* Act IV, sc. 2).

society," that is, visit Anton Antonovič, the head of his department and his "only permanent acquaintance." This visit took place, says the narrator, only after "my dreams had reached such a pinnacle of bliss that I must absolutely, and without delay, embrace my fellows and all humanity; but for that one had to have at least one man who actually existed. However, it was only on Tuesdays — his at-home day — that one could call on Anton Antonovič, and consequently it was necessary to whip up my need to embrace all mankind on that day" (IV, 182). The incongruity between idea and realization grows progressively wider; the situation is broadly comic. Anton Antonovič is the most prosaic of men, conversing with visitors about "excise duties, about business in the Senate, salaries, promotions, His Excellency, the best way to please him, etc., etc." The high-minded lover of humanity "became stupefied, kept breaking out in a sweat, and felt as if a stroke was imminent." But, he says, that was "good and useful to me. On returning home I would defer for some time my desire to embrace all mankind" (IV, 182).

This particular incident reads like a travesty of Marquis Posa's relationship with Don Carlos. When in Act I, Scene 2 his royal friend gives him a highly emotional reception, the Marquis upbraids him by pointing out his symbolic role:

> . . . I do not stand here now as Roderick,
> As the playmate of the boy Carlos.
> I embrace you as a deputy of all mankind.
> It is the Flemish provinces that weep on your neck
> And solemnly besiege you for salvation.

And Don Carlos, he later confesses to the Queen, used to hold a similar symbolic meaning for him:

> I loved the son of a prince; my heart,
> Dedicated to a single person, embraced
> The whole world! In the soul of my Carlos
> I created a paradise for millions.
> (Act IV, sc. 21.)

This kind of relationship is in Schiller, as in Dostoevskij, associated with the cult of the "beautiful." In his letters on "aesthetic education" Schiller states that the pleasures of sensuality we enjoy only as individuals, the pleasures of knowledge [*Erkenntnis*] as a species; the beautiful, however, we enjoy both as individuals and as a species (V, 406-407). Thus, in Schiller is united what Dostoevskij in *Notes from*

Underground emphatically and comically separates: the individual and humanity.

As the preceding discussion has shown, Schillerism as a negative influence is pervasive in *Notes from Underground.* Less immediately apparent is, perhaps, Schiller's positive contribution to ideas and attitudes here developed that are considered to be distinctively Dostoevskian. The most important of these are the concepts of moral-psychological ambiguity and individual moral freedom. I will try to show that there is considerable evidence for the notion of moral ambiguity in Schiller and that this notion may have helped Dostoevskij to deepen his understanding of man. As for moral freedom, which is central to Dostoevskij's major works, it is a paramount theme in Schiller's writings.

The idea of a deep disharmony in human nature is fundamental to Schiller's thought and appears both in his philosophical and his imaginative writings. Karl Moor in *The Robbers* refers to it in the moment of contemplating suicide. Why, he asks, should there be such a "dissonance" in man, when there is such a "divine harmony in inanimate nature?" (Act IV, sc. 5). The "dissonance" has its root in the dualism of mind and body; while the mind, according to Schiller, is independent of natural necessity, the body is not. On the moral plane, there is a permanent opposition between the traits of man's animality, determined by natural law, and those traits which flow from the "autonomous [*selbsttätige*] mind" (V, 198). Since only a perfect man would be able to work out the right mutual relations between these contrary forces (V, 352), most men are torn by conflict. By implication, traits of diametrically opposed moral tendencies often dwell together in the same inner environment. Statements to this effect are frequent in Schiller's writings. Already in *Theosophy of Julius* (1781?) the thought appears that "even the villain is often seized by a high zeal for excellence, [and] that even the weakling is occasionally fired by enthusiasm for sublime Herculean greatness" (V, 16). And in the preface to his story *Criminal from Lost Honor* Schiller says that the man who studies the thoughts which precede the execution of a criminal act will not be surprised to see "wholesome plants" flourishing side by side with the "poisonous hemlock," to find "wisdom and folly, vice and virtue together in *one* cradle" (III, 495). This thought is elaborated into an aesthetic principle in the essay *Thoughts on the Use of the Vulgar and the Base in Art* (V, 304-310).

This conception of man is found not only in Schiller's theoretical

writings, but also in his drama and fiction. The noble criminal, like Karl Moor and Fiesko, plays an ambiguous role, in which "crime and the glamor of crime, infamy and honor, force and ethical principle are closely intertwined."[4] Summarizing the characteristics of Schiller's plays, Benno von Wiese states:

> Schiller's characters lead and seduce at the same time. In his moralism there is always a hidden immoralism, which pursues the great resolution, the great adventure, or also the great defeat. However, the moralist always seeks the highest values, capable of ennobling our earthly existence. Nowhere is this so clear as in the youthful dramas, which have not yet been influenced by Kantian philosophy. But later as well, crime and heroism are closely related in Schiller.[5]

The same applies to *Criminal from Lost Honor,* where Schiller shows not only the double moral quality of character, but also of inner experience. The opposing forces of good and evil are manifest in one and the same psychological moment: "At the furthest point of his deterioration he [Christian Wolf] was perhaps nearer to the good than he had been before his first moral lapse" (III, 509).

Of particular relevance to Dostoevskij is a specific context of moral ambiguity in Schiller's works: murder under cover of friendship. In *Cabal and Love* Wurm reminds the President "with what sincerity" the latter had persuaded his predecessor to a game of piquet, and how he had caroused half the night with him on a "friendly burgundy"; "and yet, that was the very same night when the big mine was to explode and blow up the good man . . ." (Act III, sc. 1). In the more memorable form of dramatic action, the same situation appears at the end of *Fiesko.* Verrina, at a moment when he is resolved to kill Fiesko, addresses him as follows: "(. . . *with sadness*). 'But *embrace* me still once more, Fiesko! For no one is here who can see Verrina *weep* and touch a prince.' (*He hugs him warmly.*) 'Surely, never did two greater hearts beat together, for we loved one another so warmly, like brothers —' (*Weeping vehemently on Fiesko's neck.*) 'Fiesko! Fiesko! You will leave an empty place in my breast which mankind, tripled, could never fill' " (Act V, sc. 16). A moment later he causes Fiesko to be drowned.

Dostoevskij's works contain indications that Schiller's use of psychological ambiguity may have influenced his thinking considerably. One bit of evidence is a chapter in the *Diary of a Writer* entitled "Idealists-

[4] Benno von Wiese, *Schiller: Einführung in Leben und Werk* (Stuttgart, 1959), 25-26.

[5] *Ibid.,* 29.

Cynics," in which the author explores the "psychological significance" of a political article by the "Schillerian" T. N. Granovskij. The article was noteworthy for its "realistic" approach to politics, despite the writer's admittedly idealistic philosophy. Dostoevskij's explanation is that a Russian idealist "without fail will be ashamed of his idealism."[6] Held merely for a " 'patented' preacher of 'the sublime and the beautiful'," he will, when asked to express his opinion on a practical matter, suddenly turn, "by some sort of miracle," not only into a "downright realist and prosaist, but even into a cynic. And that is not all: the main thing is that he prides himself on this cynicism and prosiness. In giving his opinion he almost smacks his tongue: ideals — let's toss them aside; ideals are rubbish, poetry, little verses; let's have in their stead nothing but 'realistic truth.' But this realistic truth comes to nothing, since he overdoes it to the point of cynicism."[7]

In a less exuberant vein, this is a counterpart to what the underground man has to say about the Russian romantic, who never loses sight of "the useful and the practical (such as rent-free government quarters, pensions, decorations),"[8] while at the same time he is able to "preserve to his dying day an indestructible respect for 'the beautiful and the sublime' . . . Our romantic is a man of great breadth and the biggest rogue of all our rogues, I assure you — from experience" (IV, 170-171). The romantics, unlike many less patient people, seldom lose their heads. Consequently, they are quite successful socially.

> A countless number of romantics later in life rise to considerable rank in the service. Quite a remarkable versatility! And what a faculty they have for the most contradictory sensations! . . . That is why we have so many "broad natures" among us, who never lose their ideal even in the depths of degradation; and though they never lift a finger for their ideal, though they are arrant thieves and robbers, they tearfully cherish their original ideal and are extraordinarily honest at heart (IV, 171).

Judging from his own self-characterization, the underground man is himself one of those "idealist-cynics" and romantics — short of the social success they enjoy. He confesses that

[6] *Polnoe sobranie* . . . XI, 343.

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] This sounds like an unconscious memory of a passage in Schiller's *Theosophy of Julius,* where, after admitting the possibility of noble and base tendencies coexisting in the psyche, Schiller cites the case of the "admired" poet Haller, who "unmasked the nothingness of vainglory, and yet was unable to scorn the even vainer nothingness of a knight's star, which was an insult to his greatness" (V, 118-119).

just at those moments — yes, at those very moments — when I was most capable of feeling every subtlety of "all the sublime and the beautiful," ... I would, as though purposely, not only feet but do such hideous things, that — well, in short, such as everyone probably does but which, as though on purpose, occurred to me at the very time when I was most conscious that they ought not to be done.... The more conscious I was of goodness and of all that was "sublime and beautiful," the more deeply did I sink into the mire and the more capable I became of getting stuck in it altogether (IV, 137).

The double nature of many of the most original characters of Dostoevskij is suggested by way of allusions to Schiller. Svidrigajlov, for example, takes huge delight in the combination of criminality and idealism in Raskol'nikov, in whose polarized psyche he perceives a developing replica of his own. He says:

So you are preaching to me about depravity and aesthetics! You are a Schiller! You are an idealist! That's all the way it should be, of course, and it would be surprising if it were otherwise; but even so, it still seems a little odd in reality. Oh, what a pity there is so little time, because you are an absolutely fascinating subject! By the way, do you like Schiller? I like him tremendously (V, 492).

Here Schiller is, on the one hand, used to represent idealism, as in *The Insulted and the Injured* and many other works; on the other hand, Svidrigajlov hints that Schillerian idealism inevitably has an obverse of cynicism and evil. As I have shown above, there is ample evidence of the presence of this idealist-cynic syndrome in the work of Schiller himself. In the absence of positive proof, the frequent association of Schiller's name with situations and figures exhibiting moral ambiguity is by itself presumptive evidence that Schiller contributed to the formation of this cardinal Dostoevskian concept.

The coincidence of Schiller's and Dostoevskij's use of "virtuous criminals" in their work supports this evidence. *The Brothers Karamazov* contains a passage which touches both on virtue and criminality and on the more general point being discussed. The defense counsel, Fetjukovič, tries to show the plausibility of a man like Mitja, "cruel, unruly, and uncontrolled on the surface,... loving Schiller — loving 'the sublime and the beautiful'!... these natures very often thirst for tenderness, beauty, and justice as though in contrast to themselves, to their unruliness, their cruelty — they thirst for it unconsciously..." (X, 298-299). At another point Fetjukovič asks the rhetorical question, "Why should you deny the prisoner a sense of honor?" Honor, Dostoevskij suggests, is not irreconcilable with criminality; this is also an

important point in Schiller's story *Criminal from Lost Honor* and in his essay on the use of the vulgar and the base in art. The juxtaposition of moral opposites in one individual, in effect, is Dostoevskij's conception of the "broad" Karamazov nature, capable of contemplating two abysses at once (X, 286). Fundamentally, this is Dostoevskij's summing up of his view of human nature, or man's psyche; it is done through the expansion and modification of certain ideas of Schiller.[9]

After this lengthy display of parallel ideas, a few instances of the *Brüderschaft*-murder complex in Dostoevskij will bring out detailed similarities between the two authors' psychology which hardly could be the result of pure chance; significantly, in one instance Schiller is referred to by name shortly after the ambiguous incident takes place. Trusockij in *The Eternal Husband* loves, or believes he loves, Vel'čaninov, yet, subconsciously, he wants to kill him. Trying to explain the "husband's" attempt on his life, Vel'čaninov ruminates: ". . . it must have happened that I made a tremendous impression on him at T—. Tremendous and 'gratifying' is just what it was, and it is just with a Schiller like that, in the shape of a Quasimodo, that such a thing could happen! He magnified me a hundredfold because I impressed him too much in his philosophic solitude." And a little later he says: "The most monstrous monster is the monster with noble feelings" (IV, 567).

The Idiot (1868-1869), which came out only one year before *The Eternal Husband*, has a more fully elaborated relationship of love rivalry between two men. Moreover, the *Brüderschaft*-murder motif is amplified through anecdote. Just before Rogožin and Myškin exchange crosses, the latter relates an anecdote about two peasants, "middle-aged men, friends who had known each other for a long time and were not drunk," of whom one had noticed that the other was wearing a silver watch. "He took a knife and, when his friend had turned away, approached him cautiously from behind, took aim, turned his eyes heavenwards, crossed himself and, praying fervently, 'Lord, forgive me for Christ's sake!' cut his friend's throat at one stroke, like a sheep, and took his watch" (VI, 249). The religious element, which is lacking in the comparable situations in Schiller, does not alter the basic picture. The motif of *Brüderschaft*, with embrace, is obviously

[9] There exists in this regard an interesting parallel with Aleksandr Gercen, whose concept of the broad nature [*širokaja natura*], according to Malia, was a nationalized version of Schiller's "schöne Seele." The modification of Schiller's concept came about, Malia suggests, through the anarchistic, day-dreaming nature of early socialism, in which the pursuit of the ideal coexisted with the idea of fearless struggle" (op. cit., 198).

present in the situation that follows, where Myškin and Rogožin exchange crosses. The main difference between Schiller's and Dostoevskij's situations is not in the conception, but in the psychological exploration, which Dostoevskij has extended in depth. For instance, Rogožin is reluctant to embrace Myškin. "'Don't be afraid! Though I've taken your cross, I won't murder you for your watch!' he muttered indistinctly, with a sudden strange laugh." Then he embraces Myškin "heartily" (VI, 253). In the evening of the same day Rogožin attempts to murder him. These instances of enacted moral ambiguity serve to illustrate the general concept discussed as well as to lend further strength to the possibility that Dostoevskij's psychology in this particular area may have received a stimulus from Schiller.

The second complex of ideas in Dostoevskij's mature production which has one of its sources in Schiller is the dialectic of freedom and necessity. While it may seem presumptuous to trace to one particular influence a theme which is so universal, one so close to the very heart of tragedy, its profound and enduring importance to both Schiller and Dostoevskij justifies the attempt. For, with all its universality, the theme is not equally prominent in every age, or every writer. Moreover, as will be seen, Dostoevskij utilizes in this context situations and symbolic images which are traceable to Schiller.

Schiller's concepts of necessity and freedom are closely related to his aesthetic thought. Speaking in terms of the three drives [*Triebe*] which in his view determine personality, the sensual drive [*Sinntrieb*; also *Lebenstrieb:* vital impetus], the formal drive [*Formtrieb*], and the play drive [*Spieltrieb*], the poet writes:

> The sensual drive excludes from its subject all autonomy and freedom, the formal drive excludes all dependence, all suffering. While exclusion of freedom is tantamount to physical necessity, exclusion of suffering amounts to moral necessity. Thus, both drives coerce the spirit, the former through laws of nature, the latter through laws of reason. Accordingly, the play drive, in which both partake jointly, will coerce the spirit morally and physically at the same time; therefore, because it abolishes all contingency, it will abolish all coercion and set man free, both physically and morally (V, 353).

Freedom thus depends upon the dialectic of *Sinntrieb* and *Formtrieb*, and exists only where both are present. Further, since it is only at a stage where man is not yet developed — in the cultural sense — that the sensual drive is unopposed and "acts as nature and necessity," "in man himself there can exist no other power than the will" (V, 372).

Schiller repeatedly emphasizes the dialectic of the two forces and their subsumption by the superior will:

> . . . precisely because both, of necessity, strive toward contrary objectives, this double compulsion cancels itself out, and the will affirms complete freedom between both of them. Hence, the will relates to both drives as a power (as the basis of reality), while neither of the two can by itself be a power in relation to the other (V, 370).

It is the condition of indeterminacy which results from the mutual cancellation of the two drives that Schiller calls the aesthetic condition (V, 373).

According to Schiller, therefore, the beginning of humanity in man is not signalized by the emergence of reason (V, 387), but by "delight [*Freude*] in *appearance*, the inclination towards *adornment* and play" (V, 395). Interest in appearance testifies to the presence of both outward and inward freedom: first, it is only when the natural needs are fulfilled that man develops imagination; second, in using the imagination he shows independence of "the reality of things," which is the work of nature, and delights in what he creates, not in what he receives (V, 395). However, not all art is equally apt for the demonstration of freedom. A central distinction in the essay *On Grace and Dignity* [*Über Anmut und Würde* (1793)] is relevant in this connection. Grace, the author says, consists in the freedom of voluntary movements, whereas dignity consists in the control of involuntary ones (V, 274). The latter, needed chiefly in meeting suffering and death, is the more important in the present context.

For if, even in one single instance, man must do what he does not will, he cannot be defined as the being that wills; then "his boasted freedom is absolutely nothing . . ." (V, 215). Therefore, death must be overcome, and this can be done only through the sublime. Though the beautiful, too, is an expression of freedom, it cannot generate that freedom which "elevates us above the power of nature and frees us from bodily influence, but . . . [only] that which we enjoy as men within nature" (V, 218). The sublime appeals to man as a free spirit: "We feel free in the presence of beauty because the physical drives are in accord with the law of reason; we feel free in the presence of the sublime because the physical drives have no influence upon the legislation of reason, because the mind here acts as if it were subject to no other laws but its own" (V, 218). Therefore, though we willingly subject our "prosperity" and our "existence" to physical necessity, this very subjection reminds us that our principles are not thus subject:

"man is in . . . [necessity's] hand, but man's will is in his own" (V, 220). The freedom so realized Schiller calls a "high demonic freedom" (V, 223); for while the beautiful benefits man only, the sublime activates "the pure spirit [*Dämon*] in him" (V, 229). Hence, the sublime is necessary in order to complete man's aesthetic education.

Freedom, in its various facets, is a permanent theme in Schiller's plays down to the unfinished "Demetrius," which he was working on when he died. *The Robbers* (1781) deals with the freedom of the exceptional man as against the cringing conventionalism of the average, *Fiesko* (1784) with the problem of political liberty and autocratic ambition, *Don Carlos* (1787) with the clash between autocracy and the desire for "freedom of thought" (Act III, sc. 10); while rich in thematic material, *Wallenstein's Death* (1799) has as a central idea the relation between necessity, or fate, and freedom of choice, as do also *Maria Stuart* (1800) and *The Bride of Messina* (1803); and *William Tell* (1804) is a celebration of political independence. Naturally, these themes could not all have affected Dostoevskij equally. One particular expression of moral freedom enacted or alluded to in a number of plays, namely suicide, is noteworthy. As an instance of the sublime, this particular manifestation of freedom may have had a powerful impact upon Dostoevskij's work.

In his aesthetic writings Schiller does not say much about suicide as a means of dramatic dénouement. In the essay *The Stage Considered as a Moral Institution* (1784), he cites one particular play where suicide is not contrary to the moral sense (V, 97-98). More importantly, in a later work, *About the Basis of Our Enjoyment of Tragic Objects* (1791), he claims that the suicide of a criminal hero may be more satisfying to the moral sense than the voluntary self-sacrifice of a virtuous one (V, 138-139). Curiously, in only one of Schiller's plays does expiatory suicide actually occur, namely, that of Don Cesar in *The Bride of Messina.* In the last two lines of the play, after Don Cesar has stabbed himself and is dying, the theme of expiation is accentuated by the Chorus: "Life is *not* the highest good, / Guilt, however, is the greatest evil."

Significantly, the *freedom* of the act is stressed, as when Don Cesar says: "Dying, I dissolve the old curse upon the house, / Only death chosen freely [*der freie Tod*] breaks the chain of fate" (Act IV, sc. 8). These lines, like Schiller's treatment of the sublime, express the transcendence of natural necessity in a free act, an idea that appears throughout Schiller's dramatic production. Though Karl Moor in *The*

Robbers ends by giving himself up, just before he decides to do so he says: "'. . . this freedom you cannot take away from me.' (*He loads his pistol. . . .*)" (Act IV, sc. 5). In *Wallenstein's Death* Countess Terzky in the last scene announces to Octavio Piccolomini:

> . . . we think royally
> And regard a free, courageous death
> As more seemly than a dishonored life.
> — I have poison —

Mortimer in *Maria Stuart*, whom Dostoevskij mentions as one of his youthful idols,[10] directs the following words to the officer of the guard who wants to arrest him:

> What do you want, you venal slave of tyranny?
> I defy you, I am free! *(Pulling a dagger.)*
> . . .
> And in the last moment my heart, free,
> shall open up, my tongue shall speak
> (Act IV sc. 4.)

Finally, the prospectus for the third act of "Demetrius" reveals that Schiller intended Boris Godunov to take poison. Once more the suicide is treated as an act of heroism (II, 799-801).

Suicide as an assertion of moral freedom is related to another Schillerian theme, that of the "higher man," to be discussed in detail in connection with *The Brothers Karamazov*. This theme is particularly important in *The Robbers*, where it is embodied in Karl Moor and, by way of caricature, in Franz Moor. The views of the two brothers differ little on the surface, the main difference hinging on Karl's realization that absolute freedom presupposes nobility of character. Franz crudely expresses the point of view that might makes right: "The right belongs to the conqueror, and the limit of our strength is our law" (Act I, sc. 1). In his first naive admiration of greatness, Karl too speaks slightingly of the law, while extolling its opposite. However, after his experience with crime he assumes a more reserved attitude towards the morality of absolute freedom. This is how he warns Kosinsky when the latter wants to join the band: "Here, as it were, you step outside the sphere of humanity — either you must be a higher man, or you are a devil" (Act III, sc. 2). Ultimately, Karl Moor renounces the privileges of the "higher man," choosing to give himself up rather than commit

[10] Dostoevskij, *Pis'ma* I, 57.

suicide.[11] The predicament of Raskol'nikov in *Crime and Punishment* immediately comes to mind.

To sum up, the concept of freedom has been shown to be at the center of Schiller's thought. His essay *On the Sublime* (1801) contains a striking statement of his position, one which must have had a powerful appeal to the future author of "The Grand Inquisitor": "To noble minds freedom with all its moral contradictions and physical evils is an infinitely more interesting spectacle than prosperity and order without freedom, where the sheep patiently follow the shepherd and the autonomous [*selbstherrschende*] will degrades itself to a subservient part of a clockwork" (V, 225). It is only the concept of freedom which bestows sublimity upon the course of history: "As a historical object the world is fundamentally nothing but the conflict of natural forces among themselves and with man's freedom, and history relates to us the outcome of this struggle" (V, 226). Similarly, it has been shown in the preceding that the entire aesthetic philosophy of Schiller is grounded in the idea of freedom.

It is with *Notes from Underground* that the dialectic of freedom and necessity on the ideological plane enters into Dostoevskij's production. Previously, compulsion is social rather than moral, practical rather than theoretical; and except for Prince Valkovskij there is little assertion of individuality. In *Notes from Underground* the narrator stages a veritable revolt both against natural and formal necessity, for him incarnate in the laws of natural science and mathematics: ". . . what do I care," he exclaims, "for the laws of nature and arithmetic if for some reason or other I don't like those laws of twice-two?" (IV, 142). However, despite the close kinship between Dostoevskij's and Schiller's thought in this area, an influence can hardly be asserted unless tangible similarities of detail are present. Such similarities do exist. To epitomize the view of those who believe that human behavior will ultimately, as a result of scientific advances, become entirely rational, the narrator uses the symbolic image of the "piano key or organ stop" (IV, 152). That is all man would be under the circumstances. "A man desiring by rule . . . will at once be transformed from a human being into an organ stop, or something of the sort; for what is a man without desires, with-

[11] This idea of the "higher man" inevitably calls to mind the superman philosophy developed by Nietzsche, who in so many respects has been compared to Dostoevskij. Similarities have been found between the views of Schiller and Nietzsche in other respects as well; in fact, the entire range of their thought exhibits striking resemblances. See Udo Gaede, *Schiller und Nietzsche als Verkünder der tragischen Kultur* (Berlin, 1908).

out free will, and without choice but a stop in an organ pipe?" (IV, 154). This symbol becomes so charged with meaning that it imperils man's very existence, and the "whole work of man seems really to consist in nothing but man proving to himself every moment that he is a man and not an organ stop!" (IV, 158).

Very likely, the piano-key symbol is Dostoevskij's elaboration of a reminiscence from *The Robbers*, reinforced by a similar image in *Don Carlos*. Shortly before his suicide, Franz Moor is engaged in refuting all possible evidences of immortality. In his talk with Pastor Moser he says, among other things: "Sensation is the vibration of a few strings, and the shattered piano sounds no more. When I . . . break this Venus to bits, it *used* to be symmetry and beauty. Look, that is your immortal soul!" (Act V, sc. 1). The metaphor is the same, and the context is one of scientific materialism in both authors. The principal difference is that, while Franz is concerned with disproving the existence of a spiritual dimension in order to destroy the possibility of immortality, the narrator in Dostoevskij's story feels compelled to postulate such a dimension in order to establish the possibiilty of freedom. Interestingly, a scene in Schiller's play *Don Carlos* contains a similar metaphor within a context of freedom versus tyranny. In his audience with King Philip, Marquis Posa asks:

> Since you humiliated man [*herunterstürzten*]
> To be your instrument [*Saitenspiel*],
> Who shares harmony with you?
> . . .
> [What] if freedom,
> Which you destroyed, were the only thing
> That can bring your wishes to fruition?
> (Act III, sc. 10.)

Mixail Dostoevskij's translation of these lines contains the more specific musical term "piano key," used extensively in *Notes from Underground*. The lines run:

> You yourself turned man
> Into a mere piano key —
> Who will share harmony with you?
> [Čeloveka sami
> Vy sdelali liš' klaviš'j svoeju —
> Komu ž sozvuč'em s vami podelit'sja?][12]

[12] "Don Karlos," *Biblioteka dlja čtenija* 87, 2 (1848), 27.–It is only fair to mention that Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, which more than any single literary work has set its mark on *Notes from Underground*, contains a scene in which a musical instrument

Rebellion against the idea of necessity is also implicit in a series of animal images which from this time on become fairly common in Dostoevskij's work.[13] The plays, poems, and prose writings of Schiller make extensive use of such images, with specific social and philosophical meanings. The most common image, *Wurm*, is variously applied — as an epithet for a pitiful or contemptible person, as a symbol of man's animality, or as a metaphor of evil and corruption. The word *Wurm* comprehends all these meanings because it can denote "vermin," "serpent," and also "worm"; back of Schiller's usage in regard to this word lies both Scriptural and theological usage. In the sense of "vermin," *Wurm* is applied derogatively not only to individuals — such as Franz Moor in *The Robbers* (Act III, sc. 1) — but also to man as a species.[14] With a sense of pathos the word appears in the same sense in *Cabal and Love*, particularly in the scene between Lady Milford and Luise. Here Luise, the socially inferior of the two rivals, speaks sympathetically of "vermin" — meaning, usually, noxious, parasitic animals and insects — as being "injured" and provided with a sting in self-defense.[15] In her last appeal, where *Wurm* is a metaphor of her own oppression by a tyrannical authority, Luise even invokes God's justice for the "vermin": "Lady! The last spasm of the squashed vermin, too, cries into the ear of the All-knowing One . . ." (Act IV, sc. 7). In this scene Luise also uses *Insekt* in the same sympathetic sense. While in both instances the usage of the musician's daughter is heavily ironic — she sees herself neither as "vermin" nor as "insect" — the word *Wurm* as employed in this play is surrounded with an unmistakable aura of injury and undeserved suffering.

Because of its connection with man's Fall, *Wurm* in the sense of

is a metaphor of man. Guildenstern and Rosencrantz, who are hired by the King to disclose Hamlet's secret plans, are put to shame when Hamlet compares himself fancifully to a recorder as the players and musicians enter. After Guildenstern has admitted that he does not know how to play the recorder, Hamlet retorts: "Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me, you would seem to know my stops, you would pluck out the heart of my mystery, you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet you cannot make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me" (Act III, sc. 2).

[13] For a survey of such images, see Ralph E. Matlaw, "Recurrent Imagery in Dostoevsky," *Harvard Slavic Studies* 3 (1957), 201-225.

[14] See *The Robbers* Act V, sc. 1 and 2; *Fiesko* Act I, sc. 9; *Cabal and Love* Act II, sc. 5; and "Hymn to the Infinite One" (III, 68). In the poem the phrase "rational worm" is used as an epithet for man.

[15] For the same idea, see *Wallenstein's Death* Act II, sc. 6.

"serpent" might seem a natural choice if one wanted a symbol of lust, voluptuousness, and pleasure of the senses in general. Curiously, Schiller uses the word sparingly in this sense, except in set phrases like "Wurm des Paradieses" (*Fiesko*, Act V, sc. 16). A particular phrasing in the poem *The Artists* suggests that, to symbolize animal pleasure, he preferred the lowly "earthworm" to the wily "serpent." In that poem Schiller speaks of man as being "buried in the worm's appetite, / Wrapped in sensual pleasure" (III, 146). Most likely, the earthworm is also intended in the much quoted lines from *To Joy*: "To the worm was given sensual pleasure, / And the cherub stands before God" (III, 116).[16] The "worm" as a symbol of sensuality [*Sinnlichkeit*] appears in Schiller's prose as well (V, 195).

Finally, *Wurm* in the sense of "worm" may be a symbol of evil. In his eloquent defense of intellectual freedom before King Philip in *Don Carlos*, Marquis Posa makes an elaborate application of this symbol. The Marquis draws an analogy between King Philip's state and God's creation:

> He, the great creator, throws the worm
> Into a drop of dew and, more,
> Lets sheer caprice [*Willkür*] run riot
> In the dead expanses of putrefaction —
> *Your* creation, how poor and narrow!
> . . .
> *He* — so as not to upset
> The enchanting thing called freedom —
> Prefers to let the dreadful army of evil
> Rage in his universe. . . .
> (Act III, sc. 10.)[17]

Here the worm, agent of physical corruption, is a symbol of the evil which has to be accepted as the price of freedom.

Dostoevskij rarely uses the insect or the worm as epithets or symbols before *Notes from Underground*.[18] The first instance in which the term

[16] Tjutčev's translation of "Wurm" as *nasekomoe* [insect] in these lines could be the reason why insects and their sub-species by far outnumber similar animal images in Dostoevskij's work.

It may be noted that Čiževskij mistakenly attributes the translation of *To Joy* to Žukovskij ("Schiller und die 'Brüder Karamazov'." 21, note). The most recent edition of Dostoevskij's works makes the correct attribution (*Sobranie sočinenij* X, 495). For the translation, see F. I. Tjutčev, *Polnoe sobranie stixotvorenij* (Leningrad, 1957), 71-74.

[17] See also *Cabal and Love* Act III, sc. 1. Appropriately, the character by the name of Wurm in this play is an incarnation of evil.

[18] See *Uncle's Dream* and *The Village of Stepančikovo* (II, 385 and 478) for a

is more than a gesture of contempt occurs in *The Insulted and the Injured*, where it vividly suggests the diabolism of Prince Valkovskij.[19] Vanja says that "he produced upon me the impression of some sort of reptile, some huge spider, which I felt an intense desire to crush. He was reveling in his taunts at me" (III, 267). But this is an isolated example compared to the swarms of flies and other insects that invade *Notes from Underground* and most of the later novels. Incidentally, Tjutčev's free rendering of *Wurm* as *nasekomoe* [insect] in a just quoted line from Schiller's *To Joy* may have had something to do with transforming the crawling worm into one with wings.

As Dostoevskij uses these animal images, they stand for fairly specific qualities. "Fly" is usually an epithet of contempt and commiseration. Oddly, far from implying lack of consciousness, it suggests an excess of it, along with impotence. Walking on the street in his shabby outfit, the underground man says he suffered a "regular martyrdom, an incessant, unbearable humiliation at the thought... that I was a fly in the eyes of this whole world, a nasty, obscene fly — more intelligent, more highly developed, more noble than any of them... but a fly that was continually making way for everyone, insulted and injured by everyone" (IV, 176). Sensuality is symbolized by the word "insect," implying a definite lack of human consciousness and moral values. The use of the word in this particular sense is probably due to its association with "sensual lust" in the above-mentioned translation, which is also the basis of a frequently used abstract noun in Dostoevskij's work, *nasekomost'*.[20] Finally, "spider," as in *The Insulted and the Injured*, connotes vice, corruption, and evil. The underground man confesses that he "suddenly realized vividly how absurd, loathsome as a spider, was the idea of vice which, without love, grossly and shamelessly begins directly with that in which true love finds its consummation" (IV, 207).

Whatever the shade of meaning conveyed by these metaphorical or symbolic words, it invariably implies subjection or submission to, even diabolical acceptance of, a necessity or weakness of nature, what Schiller called *Sinnlichkeit*, the realm of the physical. This is one of the forces against which the underground man rebels, though he attains

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few examples. The images here used (cockroach, beetle, fly) are mere epithets of contempt. For a more extended list, see Matlaw, 202.

[19] One may note that the Prince comprises the roles of both President von Walter and his secretary, whose name is Wurm.

[20] Čiževskij, "Schiller und die 'Brüder Karamazov'," 20-21.

no true freedom, but remains in subjection to his own "insect" nature. As previously noted, reason poses a second threat to freedom in the story. Just as Schiller thinks of both reason and sensuality as excluding freedom, so Dostoevskij in *Notes from Underground* shows not only man's slavery to the physical, but also the danger that reason, through science, may turn man into a robot. In terms very similar to those used by Schiller in his treatise *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* (1795), the underground man celebrates will rather than reason as the central human function or faculty. Both reason and sensuality are partial expressions of life, "while will is a manifestation of all life, that is, of all human life, including reason. . . . I, for example, quite naturally want to live in order to satisfy all my capacity for living and not simply my reasoning faculty, that is, only a twentieth part of my capacity for living" (IV, 155). As an ideal this may seem quite acceptable; however, the prime example of the assertion of will in the story is a grotesque parody of it. The young man's abject condition when he comes across Liza, the prostitute, gives him an irresistible appetite for power: "I had been humiliated, so I too wanted to humiliate; I had been treated like a rag, so I too wanted to show my power. . . . Power, power was what I wanted then . . ." (IV, 236). Only through mastering the life of someone else does the underground man achieve a sense of identity and an illusion of freedom.[21]

In later novels of Dostoevskij, necessity and freedom are given even more extreme embodiments. Most striking in its dialectic is the Ippolit section of *The Idiot,* which Meier-Graefe has called a "Schillerian intermezzo"; according to this critic, Ippolit would like to "turn into a reptile from rage."[22] An analysis of this "intermezzo" will reveal specific evidence of Schillerian echoes, which serve to amplify and intensify the themes of freedom and necessity.

Ippolit's "Explanation" contains reminiscences from two of Schiller's essays, namely, *Philosophical Letters* (1786) and the just cited treatise on "aesthetic education." Between the former essay and Ippolit's statement there are external as well as ideological similarities. Both are the expression, at times anguished, at times ecstatic, of the thought of a young man pondering the last things. Like Julius, Ippolit has written

[21] A good example of a similar situation appears in Schiller's story *Criminal from Lost Honor.* When the young man comes out of prison for the third time and finds that the girl he had been intimate with has become a camp follower and has caught venereal disease, he is greatly pleased. "It pleased me that there was still *one* creature *beneath* me in the scale of the living" (III, 500).

[22] Meier-Graefe 239.

his "Explanation" for one man in particular, Prince Myškin, though he reads it to a gathering of friends and acquaintances. The final attitudes may differ, but many ideas are nearly identical. Most important, perhaps, is the conception of unselfish love as the highest expression of humanity. In both cases, this love lacks a religious motivation. It does not flow from obedience to conscience or commandment, nor from the prospect of being rewarded in the life to come. It acquires meaning through the concept of a developing humanity, which to the n-th generation may benefit from a good deed that love has initiated.

Fundamentally, Schiller conceives of love as "based on a momentary exchange of personality, an interfusion of beings.... when I love, I become that much richer for my love" (V, 120). In another passage Julius asks Raphael to imagine "a truth ... which will benefit all mankind up to remote future centuries," but which requires for its proof that the originator die for it; then he asks him to picture that man, with the "sun-bright glance of genius," foreseeing the consequences of his discovery. "Let the complete ideal of that great result rise in your soul, let all those that he will make happy pass by him in dim anticipation, let the present and the future come together in his mind — and then answer yourself whether this man needs a voucher for another life" (V, 123). Ippolit, who uses the word "charity" for the same kind of love (VI, 458), asks:

> How can you tell ... what significance such an association of one personality with another may have on the destiny of those associated? ... You know it is a matter of a whole lifetime and of an infinite number of ramifications hidden from us.... In scattering the seed, scattering your "charity," your kind deeds, ... *you are giving away part of your personality, and taking into yourself part of another;* you are in mutual communion with one another.... all your thoughts, all the seeds scattered by you and perhaps already forgotten by you, will take form and grow up; he who has received them from you will hand them on to another. *And how can you tell what part you may have in the future determination of the destinies of mankind?* (VI, 459; my italics).[23]

These ideas of Ippolit's can be considered as a less sentimental version

[23] Columbus' discovery of America constitutes another echo from *Philosophical Letters,* though the similarity may seem rather external. Julius uses it to illustrate the possibility that faith, even when lacking a tangible guarantee, is by itself an intimation of spiritual reality (V, 127-128). As used by Ippolit, it illustrates the point that man finds happiness in the ceaseless process of striving rather than in the ultimate result. The principal common feature in the two applications is the uncertainty it denotes. With Julius this uncertainty is the inevitable condition of religious faith, with Ippolit an opportunity for high spiritual adventure.

of Dostoevskij's early "Schillerism," with its emphasis on love of humanity.

Philosophical Letters also contains ideas which must have given rise to thoughts of a quite different tenor. Two statements are significant: "God and nature are two magnitudes which are perfectly equivalent to one another" (V, 124), and ". . . God is banished to a world of worms" (V, 113). In the same passage where the last of these statements appears, the mortal body to which the spirit is bound is compared to a "rigid unchanging clockwork." However the connection may have been made, it is quite possible that the scattered pessimistic reflections on nature in the *Philosophical Letters* became associated in Dostoevskij's mind with a far more optimistic paragraph in the essay on "aesthetic education," in which Schiller shows the beginning of *Spiel*, and thus freedom, already in nature. The examples include lion, insect, singing-bird, and tree. Curiously, all but one of these occur as images and symbols in Ippolit's explanation; there is no lion, but an unspecified "beast" is of central importance. In one sentence the similarity is particularly striking. As Myškin walks in the park after Ippolit's talk, he hears a bird singing in a tree; "suddenly the bird darted out of the tree, and in the same moment he recalled for some reason the 'fly' in the 'hot sunbeam,' of which Ippolit had written that 'it knew its place and was a participant in the general chorus . . .' " (VI, 480). Schiller's sentence runs: "The insect swarms, full of joyous life, in the sunbeam; also, it is surely not the cry of appetite which we hear in the melodious song of the warbler" (V, 402). The use of "fly" instead of "insect" is a minor variation, not sufficiently different to affect the argument. It is true that one crucial term is absent from Schiller's passage: that of the "endless festival" in nature from which both Ippolit and Myškin feel excluded (VI, 469). But while the term is absent from Schiller's description, the reality is very much present. The lion enjoys its "exuberant strength" for its own sake, the insect revels in its "joyous life," and all of nature displays a "luxury of energies" which could be called "play" (V, 402). Moreover, the idea of a "festival of nature," including man, is not a stranger to Schiller; indeed, it is at the very center of a poem which, judging from its use in *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevskij knew thoroughly: *To Joy*.

Yet, as Dostoevskij uses Schiller's images and concepts, their implications are exactly the reverse of what they signify in their original context. Schiller describes various forms of natural life to demonstrate that even at the vegetable and animal level the highest human value —

freedom — is incipient. In *The Idiot* the "lowest" becomes, in a way, the "highest," insofar as both Myškin and Ippolit in their yearning to be part of the natural harmony envy the "tiny fly." Ippolit says: "What is there for me in all this beauty when, every moment, every second I am obliged, forced, to recognize that even the tiny fly buzzing in the sunbeam beside me fully takes part in the festival and the chorus, knows its place, loves it and is happy; and I alone am an outcast . . ." (VI, 469). And Myškin, recalling an experience he had in Switzerland, thinks to himself:

> What was this festival? What was this great, eternal celebration to which there was no end and to which he had always, from his earliest childhood, been drawn and which he could never join? Every morning the same bright sun rises; every morning the rainbow in the waterfall; every evening that highest snow-covered mountain glows with a flush of purple against the distant horizon; every "little fly that buzzes about him in the hot sunbeam participates fully in the chorus: it knows its place, loves it and is happy." . . . now it seemed to him that he had said all this then also, those very words, and that the thing about the "fly" Ippolit had taken from him, from his words then and his tears. He felt sure of it, and somehow the thought set his heart beating (VI, 481).

And yet the exclusion from this "festival" is a minor misery when compared to that of seeing it from below, in "worm perspective," so to speak. The despair of a Karl Moor, who also feels an outcast, excluded from the joys of nature through loss of innocence, is at least tempered by the idea of God — though God, he thinks, is no longer his father (Act III, sc. 2). Dostoevskij, in Ippolit's "Explanation," has discarded God, at any rate as a reality worthy of man's love. Expounding the predicament of consciousness as the basis of the self, a consciousness that, "kindled by the will of a higher power," is doomed to "annihilation by that power," Ippolit asks why he cannot be "devoured" without being expected to "praise" what devours him (VI, 470). The world here envisaged is one without transcendence; God, in Schiller's phrase, has been "banished to a world of worms." There remains only a closed system of natural events, Schiller's "rigid unchanging clockwork," to which man is subject with iron necessity. Within this system there is no graduated scale of being or value; there is complete uniformity, everything existing on the level of matter and brute force. It is as if Dostoevskij, contemplating these two lines from *To Joy* — "To the worm was given sensual pleasure, / And the cherub stands before God" — imagined a world from which the superior part of the polarity has been removed. Alternatively, this vision could be traced back to a

deromantization of pantheism, a philosophy articulated in the already cited statement from the *Philosophical Letters* that "God and nature are two magnitudes which are perfectly equivalent to one another" (V, 124).

The climax to the horror of Ippolit's world is presented in his nightmarish dream, in which he has seen "a horrible animal, a sort of monster. It was like a scorpion, but was not a scorpion, it was more repulsive and much more horrible. . . ." Ippolit's description gives it the appearance of a phallic symbol: "it was . . . a crawling reptile about seven inches long, two fingers thick at the head and tapering off towards the tail, so that the point of the tail was no more than a sixth of an inch thick." The triangularity characteristic of the male sexual symbol is also unmistakably present: its two legs, set "at an angle of forty-five degrees," gave it the appearance of a "trident, if viewed from above" (VI, 441). And when the venomous monster is bitten in two by Ippolit's dog, it emits "from its half-crushed body, onto the dog's tongue, a quantity of white fluid similar to that of a squashed blackbeetle" (VI, 443). Subsequently, the sinister reality symbolized by the reptile becomes all of nature. Reflecting on the painting of the dead Christ in Rogožin's house, Ippolit says it shows nature as "an enormous merciless, dumb beast or, rather, . . . a huge machine of the most modern construction which, dull and insensible, has senselessly seized, crushed and devoured a great priceless being, a being that was worth all of nature and its laws, the whole earth, which was created, perhaps, solely for the advent of that being" (VI, 464). Then, in a hallucinatory moment, the sinister reality takes the form of "a huge and loathsome spider," which, he was assured, was "that same dark, dull and almighty" power (VI, 464). The horror of Ippolit's universe is due to the fact that God has been dethroned or, rather, has become an immanent diabolical force in nature of which all individual living creatures are the victims. His vision is that of a pantheistic Inferno.[24]

It is in this context of utter subjection to a mechanical and diabolical nature that Dostoevskij, through Ippolit, develops the idea of suicide as a means of asserting moral freedom. I have shown above how important suicide in this sense is in Schiller's drama. "If," Ippolit says, "I'd had the power not to be born, I would certainly not have accepted existence upon conditions that are such a mockery. But I still have the power to die, though the days that I give back are numbered. It is no

[24] Cf. Svidrigajlov's idea of eternity as just "one little room, something like a village bath-house, grimy and with spiders in every corner" (V, 299-300).

great power, it is no great mutiny." Clearly, the chief "temptation" is the possibility of freedom: "Nature has so limited any activity by its three weeks' sentence that perhaps suicide is the only action I still have time to begin and end by my own will. What if, perhaps, I want to avail myself of the last opportunity for *action.* A protest is sometimes no small action . . ." (VI, 471).[25]

The failure of Ippolit's suicide turns the critical light of parody on his attempt. Though this may seem to suggest that Dostoevskij rejects the entire reasoning of Ippolit, it should be kept in mind that the problem raised in the "Explanation" has a wider bearing; Rogožin, for example, is intimately related to the brute force which makes any real freedom an illusion.[26] The situation is far too complex to be treated in polar terms of acceptance or rejection. *The Idiot* is a tragic novel, and the philosophical and moral problem of Ippolit — that of necessity and freedom in a strangely and horribly exacerbated form — is central to much tragedy. Not only did the dialectic of these two forces remain a major concern of the novelist, but it continued to assume extreme forms. The same predicament is dramatized in a most bizarre manner through Kirillov in *The Devils* (1871-1872).

Kirillov unites certain qualities of Myškin and Ippolit: like the former he experiences moments of "eternal harmony" (VII, 614), like the latter he is in rebellion against the laws of nature. He even uses the

[25] There may be an echo from Schiller also in an ironical comment by Ippolit to the effect that "all that is needed is my worthless life, the life of an atom, to complete some universal harmony, for some sort of plus and minus, for the sake of some sort of contrast, and so on, just as the life of millions of creatures is needed every day as a sacrifice, since without their death the rest of the world couldn't go on . . ." (VI, 470). In his audience with King Philip, Marquis Posa asks the King with whom he shares "harmony," since he has elevated himself to godhead and debased his subjects.

> But to you
> This sacrifice does not mean a thing. And
> That makes you unique — your own genus.
> This is the price for being a God. And how
> Terrible if it were *not* so — if, for this price,
> For the shattered happiness of millions,
> You had gained nothing! (Act III, sc. 10.)

The echo is the more likely because the question at issue is freedom, which happens to be what is closest to Ippolit's heart as well.

[26] Dostoevskij has made this clear by his description of Ippolit's hallucination, in which the youth sees Rogožin enter his room. During the whole time he is there, Rogožin does not say a word. Ippolit repeatedly mentions his annoying silence. This he relates immediately after describing the "infinite power" as a "dull, dark, *dumb* force" (VI, 464; my italics).

same examples as Ippolit. Thus he calls Christ "that for which . . . [the earth] was created" and, he says, if "the laws of nature did not spare *Him*, did not even spare their own miracle . . ., the very laws of the planet are a lie and a farce of the devil" (VII, 643). Once more nature is seen as an infernal system, and suicide is the vehicle of liberation. However, there are two differences between Kirillov's and Ippolit's "suicide." Kirillov's succeeds; moreover, his suicide is not simply an assertion of the will, but the gesture of a self-appointed man-god. He has found, he says, the "attribute" of his divinity, namely, "Self-Will!" He stresses his "new terrible freedom. For it is very terrible. I am killing myself to show my defiance and my new terrible freedom" (VII, 644). Here, around an act which in Schiller's dramas is a simple assertion of moral freedom, Dostoevskij has created an entire philosophy.

It might be useful at this point to summarize the results of the discussion. Though the argument, in its winding course, has covered a wide range of topics, the central aim has been to show the development of Dostoevskij's response to and use of Schillerian ideas. His early years after the return from Siberia testify to an absorption in Schiller's abstract humanism; this phase is best typified by *The Insulted and the Injured*. But despite heavy Schillerian influence both on situation, character, and mental attitudes, Dostoevskij at the same time presents, through Prince Valkovskij, a biting satire of Schillerism in the novel. The satire continues in *An Unpleasant Predicament* and *Notes from Underground*. In the latter work, however, a new trend of Schillerian influence begins. Now we cannot speak of Schillerism any more, because Dostoevskij has largely ceased to draw upon Schiller for a *Weltanschauung*; rather, he uses and further develops ideas and images available to him in Schiller's plays, poems, and prose writings. I have suggested that Belinskij's revised view of Schiller as the great champion of personality may have been a contributing cause to Dostoevskij's different use of Schiller. Without question, the new perspective gained was one of the chief vehicles of Dostoevskij's literary breakthrough.

At this stage the outstanding theme is no longer universal love and harmony, but the dialectic of freedom and necessity. This theme is presented in forms that are far more extreme and challenging than any the German dramatist had ever attempted. Another difference is that entities which in Schiller's works are fairly simple and non-philosophical, in Dostoevskij's elaboration acquire metaphysical and theological resonance. This process of transformation is the main reason one cannot speak of a new Schillerism — one which, for example, Ippolit and

Kirillov could be said to embody and Dostoevskij to refute, as he formerly refuted the sentimental variety. At this stage Schiller simply provides materials, in the form of images, dramatic gestures and ideas, and Dostoevskij utilizes these materials to dramatize his own particular dialectic. Nor does the fact that his predominant dialectic is widely present in Schiller's writings make the Russian a direct borrower, since everything is worked out on a grand scale and in a searching and profound spirit. This defines the manner in which Dostoevskij "borrowed" from Schiller during the second principal stage of influence: the borrowings are largely in the form of suggestions; their complex elaboration inspires even deeper respect than the author would command if he had invented it all. We are reminded of Shakespeare, the master "plagiarist" of all time.

As Dostoevskij progressively assimilated Schiller's ideas, he seemingly came to feel less and less self-conscious about alluding to them directly and using quotations from his works. There is an excess of self-consciousness in *The Insulted and the Injured*, a tendency which comes to the surface in Valkovskij's parody of Schillerism. In other works of the '60's and those of the '70's Schiller is rarely mentioned, but Schillerian themes abound. Only with *The Brothers Karamazov*, apparently, did Dostoevskij feel confident enough in his independence of Schiller to draw freely upon his works for allusions, motifs and themes, while at the same time indicating their source. Strange as it may seem, it is in this work, Dostoevskij's most original and most thoroughly finished novel, that Schiller's influence culminates. Its analysis in terms of what Schiller contributed and inspired will be the main task of what follows.