

The Absence of Historical Time in Dostoevsky's *Besy*

DAWN SECKLER
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Но деятельность Степана Трофимовича
окончилась почти в ту же минуту, как и
началась,—так сказать, от “вихря сошедшихся
обстоятельств”. И что же? Не только “вихря”, но
даже и “обстоятельств” совсем потом не оказалось,
по крайней мере в этом случае. (7-8)¹

This passage from Dostoevsky's *Besy* may be taken as emblematic of the novel's peculiar logic of “non-happening” and the conception of time this logic mandates. The “whirlwind of circumstances,” which the narrator's ironic voice deflates to a naught, may serve as an emblem of the novel's narrated world: a chaotic and tumultuous series of events that, paradoxically, arrest action. Many of the events discussed in *Besy*, in fact, never take place. For example, Lizaveta Nikolaevna Tushina's aspiration to publish a book, which would consolidate documents of sundry events, is spoken about at length but never taken up as an actual project. Likewise, the proposed marriage of Stepan Trofimovich and Dar'ia Pavlovna—an occasion for much debate, distress, and, finally, scandal—in the end does not come to pass. Perhaps most significantly, the prospects of a revolution, which propel much of the narrative action in *Besy* and underlie the novel's most dramatic moments, prove to be self-annihilating.

To suggest, however, that the novel's chaotic events—fires, parties that go awry, webs of rumor, conspiracies, etc.—have, *in themselves*, an arresting effect on narrative action, would be inaccurate. Much of this effect is due to the character of Dostoevsky's narrator. In the above-quoted passage, for example, the narrator initially explains that the sudden halt of Stepan Trofimovich's activity is caused by a series of “concurrent circumstances”; then he immediately contradicts himself by announcing that, in fact, no such circumstances have ever existed. The narrator's failure to provide positive information explaining the end of Stepan Trofimovich's pursuits is symptomatic of his tendency to withhold information; such comments as, “Но об этих любопытных событиях скажу после” (42), “Но . . . я

потом объяснюсь” (58), and “о чем ниже” (334)² punctuate his chronicle. The result of such a systematic deferral of explanation is a narrative deficient in causative connections. Typically, a progressive series of events in a story functions to mark a temporal progression. Conversely, *Besy* is characterized by unsettled sequential relations and a corollary crisis of linear-historical time.

The most political of Dostoevsky’s novels and the one most dependent on a particular historical context, *Besy* functions more meaningfully outside of historical time. W. J. Leatherbarrow correctly writes that “*Superficially* at least, *The Devils* is more deeply embedded than the other novels in the world of mid-nineteenth-century Russian ideological clashes” (56-57; emphasis added). Indeed, the historical context serves an auxiliary function in *Besy* by providing a convenient backdrop for the work’s more significant philosophical questions. The historically specific ideologies represented in the novel—the liberalism of the older generation and the radical socialism-anarchism of the younger generation—are both rejected, and the belief in Russia’s unique status as the single “God-bearing” nation (*bogonosets*) takes precedence. Shatov, who more than any other character in the novel articulates Dostoevsky’s own messianic point of view, in an impassioned conversation with Stavrogin shouts, “Но истина одна, а стало быть, только единый из народов и может иметь Бога истинного, хотя бы остальные народы и имели своих особых и великих богов. Единый народ—‘богоносец’—это русский народ” (158).³

If Peter the Great’s reign is most noted for the attempts to bring Russia closer to the European West, the reign of Nicholas I (1825-55), in Michael Holquist’s estimation, is a period of “Official Nationalism” (7). Holquist demonstrates how the movement to distinguish Russia’s unique national identity is linked to the resurrection of the theme of Russia’s holy status:

Before 1825 there was little attempt to locate this holiness in what we would now recognize as history. Explanations for Russia’s status as a chosen people were as mythical as was the concept itself cloudy and unspecific. But with the new sense of history that develops under Nicholas, attempts were made to ground Russia’s peculiarly God-bearing role not in legend, but in actual events and institutions. (10)

If Holquist’s distinction is valid, it would seem that *Besy* highlights a pre-1825 view of Russia’s chosen status. Dostoevsky’s marked unwill-

ingness to ground the novel's messianistic forays in a determinate understanding of Russia's history goes hand in hand with his rejection of Western rationalism. Shatov is, once again, a spokesman for the novel's ideological stance when he explains to Stavrogin: "Никогда разум не в силах был определить зло и добро или даже отделить зло от добра, хотя приблизительно; напротив, всегда позорно и жалко смешивал; наука же давала разрешения кулачные" (157).⁴ The view Shatov expresses transcends the thematic level of the text and becomes a factor on the level of form. Here the rejection of Western instrumental reason is manifest in the dearth of causative explanations and the corollary loosening of the narrative's sequential logic.

Suppressing linear time, Dostoevsky employs religious and folkloric elements to convey the extra-temporal aspect of the world in *Бесы*. Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of "synchronized diachrony," or vertical time, provides a useful hermeneutic tool here. In *Бесы* Dostoevsky collapses all temporal aspects—past, present, and future—bringing them into synchrony as a single, "deep," moment. The novel's folkloric and religious themes are revealed most explicitly in the two chapters "Ночь" and "Ночь (продолжение)," as well as in such highly carnivalized scenes as the first meeting of the majority of the novel's characters in Varvara Petrovna's salon. These episodes illustrate the prominence of cyclical and vertical time.

In "Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel," Bakhtin contrasts historical, or horizontal, time to extra-temporal, or vertical, time. Unlike historical time, vertical time does not progress along a linear continuum; rather, it compresses sequential time onto a single moment, in which past, present and future do not occur in succession, but in simultaneity. Bakhtin writes that the use of vertical time reveals the contradictions of an epoch by providing a "synchronized diachrony" ("Forms" 157). In other words, vertical time allows for "as full as possible an exposition of all the contradictory multiplicity of the epoch" ("Forms" 156) by forcing everything to "be perceived as being within *a single time*" ("Forms" 157; emphasis in the original).⁵ This type of chronotope layers various "spaces," which, in essence, represent different temporalities. Holquist describes the structure of *Бесы* as a "temporal palimpsest," in which the present action of the novel is layered on top of and penetrated by "the past action of all the characters who comprise the cast of the novel's present" (130). Although this description is useful, Holquist's conclusion—that, in the

novel's structure, the events of the present should be seen as the "final act of dramas begun much earlier" (131)—is less so. I would argue that the purpose of this "synchronized diachrony" or "temporal palimpsest" is to undermine the "presentness" of the novel's present moment and thus suggest the prominence of the text's extra-temporal (folkloric and religious) dimension.

The famous salon scene that concludes the novel's first part offers a clear instance of vertical time. I will use the scene to clarify the way in which historical-linear time in *Besy* is "erected." Varvara Petrovna Stavrogina's estate, Skvoreshniki, and in particular its salon, is one of the novel's central locales. In addition to being, obviously, the place where Varvara Petrovna lives and where Nicholas Stavrogin, her son, grew up, Skvoreshniki is also home to Stepan Trofimovich and Dar'ia Pavlovna Shatova. The events leading up to the salon scene, as well as the simultaneous return from abroad of Nikolai Stavrogin and Petr Verkhovenskii, set the stage for a large congregation of characters so typical of Dostoevsky's fiction.

On the most literal level, the confluence of temporalities is signaled by the co-presence in the salon of different generations. Past, present, and future converge also through the characters' interpersonal relationships. (For instance, in the diegetic present Petr Verkhovenskii stands before his father as a guilt-ridden past that Stepan Trofimovich has chosen to ignore.) Perhaps the most revealing passage in this chapter is the following narratorial comment concerning Varvara Petrovna:

Прошу взять, наконец, во внимание, что настоящая минута действительно могла быть для нее из таких, в которых вдруг, как в фокусе, сосредоточивается вся сущность жизни,—всего прожитого, всего настоящего и, пожалуй, будущего. (115)⁶

All points of time—past, present, and future—are "stacked" in a single moment and exist in synchrony, rather than being stretched along a sequential line. This stacking effect is reinforced by the manner in which the scene in the salon is narrated. Although he deems himself a reliable chronicler,⁷ the narrator suffers from mnemonic lapses that prevent him from presenting the events in the order in which they happened: "я немножко забыл теперь, как это все происходило тогда по порядку, потому что вышла сумятица" (116).⁸

The chaotic scene in Varvara Petrovna's salon culminates

when Shatov unexpectedly slaps Nikolai Vsevolodovich across the face and when Liza Nikolaevna falls to the floor in a swoon. Both of these acts, like virtually everything else that occurs in the salon, are highly carnivalized. Bakhtin, in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, writes of the events in this scene: “Here everything is unexpected, out of place, incompatible and impermissible if judged by life’s ordinary, ‘normal’ course. . . . This is no grand drawing room, it is the public square with all the specific logic of carnivalized public-square life” (146). Carnival, defined in part by its capacity to bring people of various economic and social classes together in a space of familiar contact, breaks down hierarchical barriers imposed by a class-based society (*Problems* 123). The leveling of class distinctions within the carnivalized space of the public square, Bakhtin argues, recalls the pre-class structures of folkloric time (“Forms” 159). As I indicated earlier, folkloric time is essential to the understanding of *Besy*, inasmuch as the novel “is characterized by this subjective playing with time, this violation of elementary temporal relationships and perspectives” (“Forms” 155).

The two chapters that best illustrate the workings of folkloric time in *Besy* and the carnivalistic wedding of the sacred with the profane are “Ночь” and “Ночь (продолжение)” [“Night” and “Night (Continued)”]. Omnipresent darkness cloaks the series of scenes that trace Stavrogin’s trek from his home to Kirillov’s, then to Shatov’s, along Bogoiavlenskaia Street, and to the Lebiadkins’. This darkness functions as a static background, which participates in the creation of a certain timeless quality—a hell of sorts. Although Stavrogin has arranged to set off from Skvoreshniki at a specific hour, and has even provided Aleksei Egorych with the anticipated time of his return, the chapters mark time with references to the darkness and continued rain, thus suggesting a non-elapsing time. At Stavrogin’s departure, for example, Aleksei Egorych warns, “По чрезвычайному дождью грязь по здешним улицам нестерпимая” (144).⁹ Later, as Stavrogin departs from Shatov’s, the narrator states, “Темнь и дождь продолжались по-прежнему” (160).¹⁰ And, finally, the chapter “Ночь (продолжение)” concludes with the remark that one could hear the cries of Fed’ka the convict in the dark (“в темноте” [175]). Not the clock, but darkness marks temporality.

That there are three, and not two or four, references to the dark and the rainy weather is significant. Dostoevsky trebles elements of both description and action: just as references to the conditions outside are made three times in these two chapters, Stavrogin comes

into contact with Fed'ka the convict three times. The first, figurative, “meeting” occurs when Petr Verkhovenskii mentions Fed'ka's presence in town to Stavrogin. The second and third meetings are literal: Stavrogin meets Fed'ka along Bogoiavlenskaia Street on his way to and from the Lebiadkins'. Given the peculiar nature of time, it is not surprising that Stavrogin, after leaving the Lebiadkins', meets Fed'ka in exactly the same spot where they previously had parted. Like the rain and the darkness, Fed'ka's presence is sustained in timelessness while Stavrogin engages in other business. When, after each of his three visits, Stavrogin re-enters the darkness outside, he also re-enters a world in which nothing has changed.

In *Besy*, cyclical or folkloric time—which is especially dominant in this section of the novel—underscores the absence of linear or historical time. Cyclical time in *Besy* “recycles” the novel's characters back to the point of initiation, thus eliminating the opportunity for progression. The novel's treatment of life, death, and resurrection continually suggests that these moments, which should engender change, are in fact inert; the world of the novel is unchanging. Two instances in particular demonstrate the static quality of the town, which, I repeat, stands metonymically for Russia: Stepan Trofimovich's spiritual rebirth and Shatov's metamorphosis into a loving family man.

Stepan Trofimovich's final journey or, rather, pilgrimage, allows for his spiritual rebirth, mediated by the itinerant bible-seller Sofia Matveevna. Diane Oenning Thompson points out that the chapter “Последнее странствование Степана Трофимовича, [“The Last Peregrination of Stepan Trofimovich”], which describes the process of his metamorphosis into a devout religious believer, “is divided into three parts, forming a triptych which represents his ascending comprehension of the Word concomitant with his shedding the false layers of his self” (77). Though both men experience a type of resurrection and, therefore, shift positions within the “cycle of life,” their transformations prove to be immaterial. Bakhtin suggests that the metamorphosis of an individual is “completely independent of the world” (119); in *Besy* these newly formed men are totally incompatible with the world, which cannot change to accommodate them. Their environment, after all, is not progressive; rather, it is static and eternal. The resulting disjuncture between the ostensibly “saved” men and their surroundings creates a most inhospitable situation—a situation of crisis, necessitating each man's almost instantaneous death.

Mar'ia Timofeevna, more than any other character in the novel, lives this cyclical-folkloric time.¹¹ Despite being beaten by her drunken brother day after day, Mar'ia retains no memory of the thrashings, and, so, each day the same brutal acts are committed without any reference to the past. In a sense, Mar'ia Timofeevna inhabits only one temporal dimension—that of a constant present; the past is closed to her. Her perpetual memory lapses make linear time an inaccessible dimension. Shatov explains Mar'ia Timofeevna's condition in the following terms: “У ней какие-то припадки нервные, чуть не ежедневные, и ей память отбивают, так что она после них все забывает, что сейчас было, и всегда время перепутывает” (91).¹² The daily erasure of memory results in Mar'ia Timofeevna's perennial return—a cyclical backward movement—to a memory-less state. This type of non-processional, cyclical, time is “visualized” in her habitual posture: Mar'ia Timofeevna sits virtually motionless, until she is interrupted by someone else's presence (a habit she shares with Stavrogin, whose death-like stillness frightens Varvara Petrovna). Like Fed'ka's presence on the bridge, hers appears arrested in time, continually stuck in one indefinite moment.

In the figure of Mar'ia Timofeevna vertical and folkloric time come together. A true *irodivaia*, she proves capable of foreseeing the future. Her prophetic dream reveals the circumstances of her own death, thus making this future event a moment of the present. Stavrogin is the one confronted by this future-made-present: “А вы почему узнали, что я *про это* сон видела?...” (170; emphasis in the original).¹³ Although Mar'ia Timofeevna's reference to the murder in this question is vague, her premonitions are soon made explicit. In a hysterical outburst she refers directly to the knife that will kill her: “Да, нож! У тебя нож в кармане. Ты думал, я спала, а я видела: ты как вошел давеча, нож вынимал!” (173).¹⁴ The knife gives a material body to the traumatic piece of future Mar'ia Timofeevna *presents*.

While predicting the future, Mar'ia Timofeevna makes references to the distant historical past. She repeatedly addresses Stavrogin as “prince” and “Grishka Otrep'ev” (better known as “the False Dimitri,” the seventeenth-century tsar-impostor).¹⁵ The implication is clear, and will be confirmed by the subsequent unfolding of events in the novel: Stavrogin is unfit for the role in which someone like Shatov sees him—the role of the Redeemer; he is much more the Antichrist.¹⁶ With a reference to the past, Mar'ia Timofeevna reveals in the present a truth that will “come to pass” in the novel's diegetic future.

The convergence of the three temporal planes agrees perfectly with Bakhtin's notion of vertical time.

This notion is actualized also by the frequent allusions to the theme of the Apocalypse in the chapters "Ночь" and "Ночь (продолжение)". Most conspicuously, the Apocalypse serves as a subtext of Stavrogin's first conversation with Kirillov. Kirillov believes that his willful suicide will ensure his transformation into a Man-God and his transcendence to a moment of eternal presence, where time no longer exists. Having answered affirmatively Stavrogin's questions concerning his love for children and for life, Kirillov continues to explain his desire to kill himself:

—Что же? Почему вместе? Жизнь особо, а то особо. Жизнь есть, а смерти нет совсем.

—Вы стали веровать в будущую вечную жизнь?

—Нет, не в будущую вечную, а в здешнюю вечную. Есть минуты, вы доходите до минут, и время вдруг останавливается и будет вечно.

—Вы надеетесь дойти до такой минуты?

—Да. (148)¹⁷

In essence, Kirillov anticipates a revelatory moment that exists outside of time. It is a temporal instance that has neither a beginning nor an end and is both a beginning and an end—a truly apocalyptic temporality. As we know, the Apocalypse announces an end that is also a return and a new beginning—the second coming of Jesus Christ; this is the ultimate fusion of times, for, as Jesus announces in Revelation, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending" (1:8), and "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, A-men" (2:17-18). The Bible's conclusion reaches back to a beginning as Jesus declares, "Surely I come quickly" (Revelation 22:20), thus heralding the future return to paradise—the locale of the Genesis story. The Garden of Eden certainly represents a symbolic beginning, but it also foresees an ending: the end of paradise. The Apocalypse repeats this cyclical pattern, only in the opposite direction—from an end that promises a new departure.

The same kind of framing effect in regard to temporality can be discovered in *Bayu*. Early in the novel, at its "genesis," the narrator presents a failed paradise ruined by temptation. Varvara Petrovna places great hopes in her son's successes in Petersburg and in Stepan Trofimovich, who is supposed to help her acquire status among the Petersburg elite. Through her two "sons" (she does, in effect, create

Stepan Trofimovich) she plans to attain a type of societal paradise that had always remained out of her reach. Stepan Trofimovich cannot deliver what she wants, and at the novel's end she almost damns him on his deathbed: "Помнишь ли, пустой, пустой, беславный, малодушный, вечно, вечно пустой человек" (422).¹⁸ This condemnation, as well as her inability to comprehend Stepan Trofimovich's *profession de foi*, reveal Varvara Petrovna's false religious consciousness. Her religious "conversion" is self-serving, not spiritual; she intends to sell Gospels to avoid boredom.

Her son, who also fails to lead her into paradise, chooses a life of pleasure; in intense sensations and wild unbridledness ("дикая разнуданность" [28]), he attempts to drown his existential malaise. Like Adam and Eve, Stavrogin is lured by sensual pleasures. He becomes involved in relationships with three of the novel's female characters—Liza Nikolaevna, Dar'ia Pavlovna, and Mar'ia Timofeevna. He is also suspected of being the father of Mar'ia Shatova's son. Among other reasons, this carnal obsession prohibits him from playing the role of the savior. Rather, like Adam and Eve, he is cast out of paradise. All attempts in the novel to return to a prelapsarian state are doomed to failure: Stavrogin cannot overcome his demonic pride; Varvara Petrovna's ego prohibits her from joining Stepan Trofimovich in his newfound faith; and even those characters who undergo a spiritual rebirth are fated to die soon after—newfound beginnings are marked by their imminent endings. Conversely, seemingly definitive endings portend imminent beginnings: although the novel concludes with Stavrogin's suicide, there is no suggestion that his death will bring an effectual end to the chaotic world of *Бесы*.

Just as the novel does not progress evenly across historical time, it also does not develop at a uniform pace. It begins with a slow, centripetal force that draws the novel's characters together. This bringing-together occurs over an extended span of time, during which the narrator provides detailed descriptions of each character. As it nears the end, however, the novel progresses at a breathtaking pace. Characters like Mar'ia Shatova, hitherto absent from the scene, appear and just as quickly exit. Additionally, a host of characters is killed off. The resulting absence suggests that an intensely centrifugal force, one that flings the characters out of the narrative, has replaced the centripetal force of the novel's beginning. The town is left virtually without any "actors"; the scene on which Dostoevsky's timeless drama has just played itself out is deserted, to be repopulated once more for the

drama of *The Brothers Karamazov*, where the same small “anytown” will again metonymically host Russia, with all her sins and blessings, with her demons and Christs.

Notes

* All English translations of passages from *Bezy* are taken from Dostoevsky, *Demons*.

1. “But Stepan Trofimovich’s activity ended almost the moment it began—due, so to speak, to a ‘whirlwind of circumstances’. And just think! It turned out later that there had been not only no ‘whirlwind’ but not even any ‘circumstances’, at least not on that occasion” (8).
2. “But I will speak of these curious events later” (64), “I will explain myself later” (90), “of that later” (513).
3. “But the truth is one, and therefore only one among the nations can have the true God, even if the other nations do have their particular and great gods. The only ‘god-bearing’ nation is the Russian nation” (252).
4. “Reason has never been able to define evil and good, or even to separate evil from good, if only approximately; on the contrary, it has always confused them, shamefully and pitifully; and science has offered the solution of the fist” (251).
5. This plurality of time complies, in large part, to Bakhtin’s definition of the “polyphonic novel.” Extending the meaning of the term “polyphony,” we can understand it as indicating not simply the orchestration of conflicting voices, but also the contrapuntal coexistence of different ideologies, behaviors, qualities, etc. These differences do not emerge over the course or time, nor are they reconciled over time; rather, the differences create the novel’s polyphonic aspect, a simultaneous plurality of opinions and philosophies. Where the polyphonic novel layers voices and opinions, *Bezy* layers temporal aspects—past, present, and future.
6. “I also ask him, finally, to consider that for her the present moment could indeed have been one of those in which the whole essence of a life—all that has been lived through, all the present, and perhaps the future—is suddenly focused” (182).
7. In another place, the narrator vouches to relate events “в точном виде, точно так, как они произошли” (43; [in an exact way, exactly as they occurred; 67]).
8. “I have somewhat forgotten now the order in which it all happened, because there was a tumult” (184).
9. “The rain being exceedingly heavy, the mud in our streets is intolerable.” (230).
10. “Darkness and rain continued as before” (256).
11. Mar’ia Timofeevna’s understanding of the Virgin illustrates her propensity for grasping religious ideas via folkloric narratives. Mar’ia associates Mary with the folkloric image of *Mat’ syra zemlia* (the personification of the moist, life-giving earth).
12. “She has some sort of nervous fits almost every day, and they take away her memory, so that after them she forgets everything that’s just happened and always gets mixed up about time” (143).
13. “‘And how did you know I was dreaming *about that?*...’” (272, emphasis in the original).
14. “‘Yes, knife! You [sic] have a knife in your pocket. You thought I was asleep, but I saw it: tonight, as you came in, you pulled out your knife!’” (278).
15. By creating this link between Stavrogin and the tsar impostor, Dostoevsky implic-

itly suggests a link between the historical moment presented in the novel—the early 1870s—and the Time of Troubles.

16. Viacheslav Ivanov describes Stavrogin as Satan's vassal and suggests that "He gives Satan his life, which had been promised to Christ, and is thereby condemned to carry a void within himself until, whilst still in his earthly life, he is overtaken by the 'other death'" (64). The "other death" is the "annihilation of the personality," which leaves only a "beautiful mask" (64). This image of the empty man is linked to two images in the novel: the novel's biblical epigraph (Luke 8:32-36) and the repeated references to Stavrogin as a silent character. The section from Luke tells of a man who has freed himself of the demons that possessed him and lies, like an emptied vessel, at Jesus's feet. The physical description of Stavrogin, whose face is frequently compared to a mask ("говорили, что лицо его напоминает маску" [29]), resonates with the theme of emptiness, while his silence suggests an already dead inner self.
17. "So what? Why together? Life's separate, and that's separate. Life is, and death is not at all."
 'You've started believing in the future eternal life?'
 'No, not future eternal, but here eternal. There are moments, you reach moments, and time suddenly stops, and will be eternal.'
 'You hope to reach such a moment?'
 'Yes.'" (236).
18. "Do you remember, you empty, empty, inglorious, fainthearted, eternally, eternally empty man!" (659).

Works Cited

- Bakhtin, Mikhail Mikhailovich. "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel." *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Ed. Michael Holquist. Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: U of Texas P, 1981. 84-258.
- . *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984.
- Bettelheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. NY: Vintage, 1989.
- Dostoevsky, Fedor M. *Besy: Roman v trekh chastiakh*. «Besy»: *Antologija russkoi kritiki*. Ed. L.N. Saraskina. Moscow: Soglasie, 1996. 7-434.
- . *Demons*. Trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. NY: Vintage, 1994.
- Holquist, Michael. *Dostoevsky and the Novel*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1977.
- Ivanov, Vyacheslav I. *Freedom and the Tragic Life: A Study in Dostoevsky*. Trans. Norman Cameron. Wolfeboro, NH: Longwood Academic, 1989.
- Leatherbarrow, W. J. "The Devils in the Context of Dostoevsky's Life and Works." *Dostoevsky's The Devils: A Critical Companion*. Ed. W. J. Leatherbarrow. Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 1999. 3-59.
- Propp, Vladimir. *Morphology of the Folktale*. Trans. Laurence Scott. Austin: U of Texas P, 1968.
- Thompson, Diane Oenning. "Problems of the Biblical Word in Dostoevsky's Poetics." *Dostoevsky and the Christian Tradition*. Ed. George Pattison and Diane Oenning Thompson. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001. 69-199.