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THE STANDARD EDITION
OF THE COMPLETE PSYCHOLOGICAL WORKS OF
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Translated from the German under the General Editorship of
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In Collaboration with
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Assisted by
ALIX STRACHEY and ALAN TYSON

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(1927–1931)
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Civilization and its Discontents
and
Other Works

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de Sanctis (1924), which incidentally takes all the analysis into account. Study of this work
suggested that by no means every case of conver­
sed so easily as this one. In no respect, how­
contradict the views arrived at on the
research. The point which our present
is into relief is the manner in which the con­
to a particular determining event, which
scepticism to flare up for a last time before

DOSTOEVSKY AND PARRICIDE
(1928 [1927])
EDITOR'S NOTE

DOSTOJEWSKI UND DIE VATERTÖTUNG

(a) GERMAN EDITIONS:
1934 G.S., 12, 7–26.
1948 G.W., 14, 399–418.

(b) ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS:
'Dostoevski and Parricide'
1929 The Realist, 1 (4), 18–33. (Tr. D. F. Tait.)
'Dostoevsky and Parricide'
1945 Int. J. Psycho-Anal., 26 (1 & 2), 1–8. (The above very considerably revised and with a slightly modified title.)
1945 Partisan Review, 12 (4), 530–44. (Reprint of above.)
1950 C.P., 5, 222–42. (Further revision of above.)

The present translation is a very slightly corrected reprint of that of 1950.

From 1925 onwards, Fulöp-Miller and Eckstein began issuing a series of volumes supplementary to the great complete German edition of Dostoevsky which, edited by Moeller van den Bruck, had been completed a few years earlier. The new volumes, uniform with the complete edition, contained posthumous writings, unfinished drafts and material from various sources throwing light on Dostoevsky’s character and works. One of these volumes was to contain a collection of preliminary drafts and sketches relating to The Brothers Karamazov and a discussion of the book’s sources; and the editors were anxious to
persuade Freud to contribute an introduction dealing with the psychology both of the book and of its author. They seem to have approached him early in 1926 and he had begun writing his essay by the end of June of that year. He was deflected from it, however, by the urgent necessity for producing his pamphlet on lay analysis (1926e) in view of the proceedings which had been begun against Theodor Reik (Standard Ed., 20, 180). Thereafter he seems to have lost interest in the Dostoevsky essay, particularly, as Ernest Jones tells us (1957, 152), after he had come across a book on the same subject by Neufeld (1923), which, as he says in a footnote (p. 194)—with considerable modesty, it must be remarked—, contained most of the ideas that he himself was putting forward. It is not clear when he took the essay up again. Jones (loc. cit.) suggests that it was finished early in 1927; but this seems scarcely likely, since Stefan Zweig’s story with which the later part of the essay is concerned only appeared in 1927. The volume to which Freud’s essay served as an introduction (The Original Version of the Brothers Karamazov) was not published until the autumn of 1928.

The essay falls into two distinct parts. The first deals with Dostoevsky’s character in general, with his masochism, his sense of guilt, his ‘epileptoid’ attacks and his double attitude in the Oedipus complex. The second discusses the special point of his passion for gambling and leads to an account of a short story by Stefan Zweig which throws light on the genesis of that addiction. As will be seen from a subsequent letter of Freud’s to Theodor Reik which we print as an appendix (p. 195), the two parts of the essay are more closely related than appears on the surface.

The present essay may show signs of being an ‘occasional’ piece, but it contains much that is of interest—for instance, Freud’s first discussion of hysterical attacks since his early paper on the subject written twenty years before (1909a), a restatement of his later views on the Oedipus complex and the sense of guilt, and a sidelight on the problem of masturbation which is not to be found in his earlier account of the question (1912f). But above all, he had an opportunity here for expressing his views on a writer whom he placed in the very front rank of all.

Four facets may be distinguished in the rich Dostoevsky: the creative artist, the neurotic, the sinner. How is one to find one’s way in complexity?

The creative artist is the least doubtful: Dostoevsky, the creator of a most magnificent novel ever written: The Brothers Karamazov, is not far behind Shakespeare. The Brothers Karamazov is the most magnificent novel ever written: The Inquisitor, one of the peaks in the literature of hard, hardly be valued too highly. Before the problem of artist analysis must, alas, lay down its arms.

The moralist in Dostoevsky is the most relevant for us. We seek to rank him high as a moralist on the man who has gone through the depths of sin, and is the highest summit of morality, we are neglecting the problem of artist analysis. A moral man is one who reacts to temptation with moral standards and then in his remorse settles himself open to the reproach that he feels it in his heart, without yielding to temptation. He alternately sins and then in his remorse lays himself open to the reproach that he has not achieved morality. He has not achieved renunciation, for the moral artist analysis, practical human interest. He reminds one of the great migrations, who murdered and did penance became an actual technique for enabling things to be done. Ivan the Terrible behaved in exactly this compromise with morality is a characteristic. Nor was the final outcome of Dostoevsky’s moralist analysis very glorious. After the most violent struggle between the instinctual demands of the individual with the demands of the community, he landed in the retrograde position both to temporal and spiritual authority, of the Tsar and for the God of the Christians, Russian nationalism—a position which lessened with smaller effort. This is the weak point in morality. Dostoevsky threw away the chance of being and liberator of humanity and made himself gaolers. The future of human civilization was a thank him for. It seems probable that he was
FOUR FACETS MAY BE DISTINGUISHED IN THE RICH PERSONALITY OF DOSTOEVSKY: THE CREATIVE ARTIST, THE NEUROTIC, THE MORALIST AND THE SINNER. HOW IS ONE TO FIND ONE'S WAY IN THIS BEWILDERING COMPLEXITY?


THE MORALIST IN DOSTOEVSKY IS THE MOST READILY ASSAILABLE. IF WE SEEK TO RANK HIM HIGH AS A MORALIST ON THE PLEA THAT ONLY A MAN WHO HAS GONE THROUGH THE DEPTHS OF SIN CAN REACH THE HIGHEST SUMMIT OF MORALITY, WE ARE NEGLECTING A DOUBT THAT ARISES. A MORAL MAN IS ONE WHO REACTS TO TEMPTATION AS SOON AS HE FEELS IT IN HIS HEART, WITHOUT YIELDING TO IT. A MAN WHO ALTERNATELY SINS AND THEN IN HIS REMORSE ERECTS HIGH MORAL STANDARDS LAY'S HIMSELF OPEN TO THE REPROACH THAT HE HAS MADE THINGS TOO EASY FOR HIMSELF. HE HAS NOT ACHIEVED THE ESSENCE OF MORALITY, RENUNCIATION, FOR THE MORAL CONDUCT OF LIFE IS A PRACTICAL HUMAN INTEREST. HE REMINDS US OF THE BARBARIANS OF THE GREAT MIGRATIONS, WHO MURDERED AND DID Penance FOR IT, TILL PENANCE BECAME AN ACTUAL TECHNIQUE FOR ENABLING MURDER TO BE DONE. IVAN THE TERRIBLE BEHAVED IN EXACTLY THIS WAY; INDEED THIS COMPROMISE WITH MORALITY IS A CHARACTERISTIC RUSSIAN TRAIT. NOR WAS THE FINAL OUTCOME OF DOSTOEVSKY'S MORAL STRIVINGS ANYTHING VERY GLORIOUS. AFTER THE MOST VIOLENT STRUGGLES TO RECONCILE THE INSTINCTUAL DEMANDS OF THE INDIVIDUAL WITH THE CLAIMS OF THE COMMUNITY, HE LANDED IN THE RETROGRADE POSITION OF SUBMISSION BOTH TO TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY, OF VENERATION BOTH FOR THE TSAR AND FOR THE GOD OF THE CHRISTIANS, AND OF A NARROW RUSSIAN NATIONALISM—A POSITION WHICH LESSER MINDS HAVE REACHED WITH SMALLER EFFORT. THIS IS THE WEAK POINT IN THAT GREAT PERSONALITY. DOSTOEVSKY THREW AWAY THE CHANCE OF BECOMING A TEACHER AND LIBERATOR OF HUMANITY AND MADE HIMSELF ONE WITH THEIR GAOLERS. THE FUTURE OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION WILL HAVE LITTLE TO THANK HIM FOR. IT SEEMS PROBABLE THAT HE WAS CONdemned TO THIS
failure by his neurosis. The greatness of his intelligence and the strength of his love for humanity might have opened to him another, an apostolic, way of life.

To consider Dostoevsky as a sinner or a criminal rouses violent opposition, which need not be based upon a philistine assessment of criminals. The real motive for this opposition soon becomes apparent. Two traits are essential in a criminal: boundless egoism and a strong destructive urge. Common to both of these, and a necessary condition for their expression, is absence of love, lack of an emotional appreciation of (human) objects. One at once recalls the contrast to this presented by Dostoevsky — his great need of love and his enormous capacity for love, which is to be seen in manifestations of exaggerated kindness and caused him to love and to help where he had a right to hate and to be revengeful, as, for example, in his relations with his first wife and her lover. That being so, it must be asked why there is any temptation to reckon Dostoevsky among the criminals. The answer is that it comes from his choice of material, which singles out from all others violent, murderous and egoistic characters, thus pointing to the existence of similar tendencies within himself, and also from certain facts in his life, like his passion for gambling and his possible confession to a sadistic disposition, which inevitably marked his personality, one quantitative and two qualitative traits in plenty, which show themselves in his irritability, his love of tormenting and his intolerance even towards people he loved, and which appear also in the way in which, as

1 See the discussion of this in Fülöp-Miller and Eckstein (1926). Stefan Zweig (1920) writes: ‘He was not halted by the barriers of bourgeois morality; and no one can say exactly how far he transgressed the bounds of law in his own life or how much of the criminal instincts of his heroes was realized in himself.’ For the intimate connection between Dostoevsky’s characters and his own experiences, see René Fülöp-Miller’s remarks in the introductory section of Fülöp-Miller and Eckstein (1925), which are based upon N. Strakhov (1921). — [The topic of a sexual assault on an immature girl appears several times in Dostoevsky’s writings — especially in the posthumous Stavrogin’s Confession and The Life of a Great Sinner.]
an author, he treats his readers. Thus in little things he was a sadist towards others, and in bigger things a sadist towards himself, in fact a masochist—that is to say the mildest, kindliest, most helpful person possible.

We have selected three factors from Dostoevsky's complex personality, one quantitative and two qualitative: the extraordinary intensity of his emotional life, his perverse innate instinctual disposition, which inevitably marked him out to be a sado-masochist or a criminal, and his unanalysable artistic gift. This combination might very well exist without neurosis; there are people who are complete masochists without being neurotic. Nevertheless, the balance of forces between his instinctual demands and the inhibitions opposing them (plus the available methods of sublimation) would even so make it necessary to classify Dostoevsky as what is known as an 'instinctual character'. But the position is obscured by the simultaneous presence of neurosis, which, as we have said, was not in the circumstances inevitable, but which comes into being the more readily, the richer the complication which has to be mastered by the ego. For neurosis is after all only a sign that the ego has not succeeded in making a synthesis, that in attempting to do so it has forfeited its unity.

How then, strictly speaking, does his neurosis show itself? Dostoevsky called himself an epileptic, and was regarded as such by other people, on account of his severe attacks, which were accompanied by loss of consciousness, muscular convulsions and subsequent depression. Now it is highly probable that this so-called epilepsy was only a symptom of his neurosis and must accordingly be classified as hystero-epilepsy—that is, as severe hysteria. We cannot be completely certain on this point for two reasons—firstly, because the anamnestic data on Dostoevsky's alleged epilepsy are defective and untrustworthy, and secondly, because our understanding of pathological states combined with epileptiform attacks is imperfect.

To take the second point first. It is unnecessary here to reproduce the whole pathology of epilepsy, for it would throw no decisive light on the problem. But this may be said. The old morbus sacer is still in evidence as an ostensible clinical entity, the uncanny disease with its incalculable, apparently unprovoked convulsive attacks, its changing of the character into irritability and aggressiveness, and its progressive lowering of all the...
mental faculties. But the outlines of this picture are quite lacking in precision. The attacks, so savage in their onset, accompanied by biting of the tongue and incontinence of urine and working up to the dangerous status epilepticus with its risk of severe self-injuries, may, nevertheless, be reduced to brief periods of absence, or rapidly passing fits of vertigo or may be replaced by short spaces of time during which the patient does something out of character, as though he were under the control of his unconscious. These attacks, though as a rule determined, in a way we do not understand, by purely physical causes, may nevertheless owe their first appearance to some purely mental cause (a fright, for instance) or may react in other respects to mental excitations. However characteristic intellectual impairment may be in the overwhelming majority of cases, at least one case is known to us (that of Helmholtz) in which the affliction did not interfere with the highest intellectual achievement. (Other cases of which the same assertion has been made are either disputable or open to the same doubts as the case of Dostoevsky himself.) People who are victims of epilepsy may give an impression of dullness and arrested development just as the disease often accompanies the most palpable idiocy and the grossest cerebral defects, even though not as a necessary component of the clinical picture. But these attacks, with all their variations, also occur in other people who display complete mental development and, if anything, an excessive and as a rule insufficiently controlled emotional life. It is no wonder in these circumstances that it has been found impossible to maintain that ‘epilepsy’ is a single clinical entity. The similarity that we find in the manifest symptoms seems to call for a functional view of them. It is as though a mechanism for abnormal instinctual discharge had been laid down organically, which could be made use of in quite different circumstances—both in the case of disturbances of cerebral activity due to severe histolytic or toxic affections, and also in the case of inadequate control over the mental economy and at times when the activity of the energy operating in the mind reaches crisis-pitch. Behind this dichotomy we have a glimpse of the identity of the underlying mechanism of instinctual discharge. Nor can that mechanism stand remote from the sexual processes, which are fundamentally of toxic origin: the earliest physicians described coition as a minor epilepsy, and thus recognized in the sexual discharging stimuli.\(^1\)

The ‘epileptic reaction’, as this common called, is also undoubtedly at the disposal of the essence it is to get rid by somatic means of amorous which it cannot deal with psychically. The attack becomes a symptom of hysteria and is identified by it just as it is by the normal sexual process. It is therefore quite right to distinguish between an ‘affective’ epilepsy. The practical significance of this person who suffers from the first kind has a disease while a person who suffers from the second kind of epilepsy. In the first case his mental life is subjected to an influence from without, in the second case the direct expression of his mental life itself.

It is extremely probable that Dostoevsky’s epileptic reaction was of the second kind. This cannot, strictly speaking, be proved. We should have to be in a position to insert the first attacks and their subsequent fluctuations of his mental life; and for that we know too little. The attacks themselves teach us nothing about the relations between them: their experiences are defective and often contradict the probable assumption is that the attacks went back to childhood, that their place was taken to begin symptoms and that they did not assume an epileptic form after the shattering experience of his eighteenth murder of his father.\(^2\) It would be very much to

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1 See René Fulop-Miller (1924). [Cf. the account of Dostoevsky (1921) in her life of her father.] Of especial interest that in the novelist’s childhood ‘something indescribable and agonizing’ happened, to which the first attacks were to be traced (from an article by Suvorin in the Dostoevsky and Parricide (1924, xiv). See also Orest Miller (1921, 140): ‘There is a special piece of evidence about Fyodor Mikhailovich’s dealings with his eldest son. It is a piece of evidence which was given to me orally by one who was a close friend of Mikhailovich, and I cannot bring myself to reproduce it, since I have had no confirmation of this matter."

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2 [Cf. Freud’s earlier paper on hysterical attacks (1919, 234.)]
DOSTOEVSKY AND PARRICIDE

But the outlines of this picture are quite clear. The attacks, so savage in their onset, shaking of the tongue and incontinence of urine and the dangerous status epilepticus with its risk of death, may, nevertheless, be reduced to brief or rapidly passing fits of vertigo or may be spaces of time during which the patient does not, as though he were under the control of an alien personality. These attacks, though as a rule determined, do not understand, by purely physical causes, may have their first appearance to some purely mental (for instance) or may react in other respects to mental function. However characteristic intellectual impairment is the overwhelming majority of cases, at least one to ten (that of Helmholtz) in which the affliction is with the highest intellectual achievement. If the same assertion has been made are open or to the same doubts as the case of oneself. People who are victims of epilepsy may have loss of dulness and arrested development as often accompanies the most palpable idiocy and cerebral defects, even though not as a necessary clinical picture. But these attacks, with all the same, also occur in other people who display come-development and, if anything, an excessive and as a result controlled emotional life. It is no wonder in cases that it has been found impossible to main or as a single clinical entity. The similarity that manifest symptoms seems to call for a functional mechanism for abnormal discharge had been laid down organically, which use of in quite different circumstances—both in disturbances of cerebral activity due to severe affections, and also in the case of inadequate mental economy and at times when the activity operating in the mind reaches crisis-pitch. Anatomy we have a glimpse of the identity of the mechanism of instinctual discharge. Nor can that be remote from the sexual processes, which are of toxic origin: the earliest physicians described their epilepsy, and thus recognized in the sexual act a mitigation and adaptation of the epileptic method of discharging stimuli.⁴

The 'epileptic reaction', as this common element may be called, is also undoubtedly at the disposal of the neurosis whose essence it is to get rid of by somatic means of amounts of excitation which it cannot deal with psychically. Thus the epileptic attack becomes a symptom of hysteria and is adapted and modified by it just as it is by the normal sexual process of discharge. It is therefore quite right to distinguish between an organic and an 'affective' epilepsy. The practical significance of this is that a person who suffers from the first kind has a disease of the brain, while a person who suffers from the second kind is a neurotic. In the first case his mental life is subjected to an alien disturbance from without, in the second case the disturbance is an expression of his mental life itself.

It is extremely probable that Dostoevsky's epilepsy was of the second kind. This cannot, strictly speaking, be proved. To do so we should have to be in a position to insert the first appearance of the attacks and their subsequent fluctuations into the thread of his mental life; and for that we know too little. The descriptions of the attacks themselves teach us nothing and our information about the relations between them and Dostoevsky's experiences is defective and often contradictory. The most probable assumption is that the attacks went back far into his childhood, that their place was taken to begin with by milder symptoms and that they did not assume an epileptic form until after the shattering experience of his eighteenth year—the murder of his father.⁵ It would be very much to the point if it were to be much to the point if it

¹ [Cf. Freud's earlier paper on hysterical attacks (1909a), Standard Ed., 9, 234.]
² See René Fülöp-Miller (1924). [Cf. also the account given by Aimée Dostoevsky (1921) in her life of her father.] Of especial interest is the information that in the novelist's childhood 'something terrible, unforgettable and agonizing' happened, to which the first signs of his illness were to be traced (from an article by Suvorin in the newspaper Novoe Vremya, 1881, quoted in the introduction to Fülöp-Miller and Eckstein, 1925, xlv). See also Orest Miller (1921, 140): 'There is, however, another special piece of evidence about Fyodor Mikhailovich's illness, which relates to his earliest youth and brings the illness into connection with a tragic event in the family life of his parents. But, although this piece of evidence was given to me orally by one who was a close friend of Fyodor Mikhailovich, I cannot bring myself to reproduce it fully and precisely since I have had no confirmation of this rumour from any other
could be established that they ceased completely during his exile in Siberia, but other accounts contradict this.\(^1\)

The unmistakable connection between the murder of the father in *The Brothers Karamazov* and the fate of Dostoevsky's own father has struck more than one of his biographers, and has led them to refer to 'a certain modern school of psychology'. From the standpoint of psycho-analysis (for that is what is meant), we are tempted to see in that event the severest trauma and to regard Dostoevsky's reaction to it as the turning-point of his neurosis. But if I undertake to substantiate this view psycho-analytically, I shall have to risk the danger of being unintelligible to all those readers who are unfamiliar with the language and theories of psycho-analysis.

We have one certain starting-point. We know the meaning of the first attacks from which Dostoevsky suffered in his early years, long before the incidence of the 'epilepsy'. These attacks had the significance of death: they were heralded by a fear of death and consisted of lethargic, somnolent states. The illness first came over him while he was still a boy, in the form of a sudden, groundless melancholy, a feeling, as he later told his friend Soloviev, as though he were going to die on the spot. And there in fact followed a state exactly similar to real death. His brother Andrey tells us that even when he was quite young Fyodor used to leave little notes about before he went to sleep, saying that he was afraid he might fall into this death-like sleep during the night and therefore begged that his burial should be postponed for five days. (Fulop-Miller and Eckstein, 1925, lx.)

We know the meaning and intention of such deathlike attacks.\(^2\) They signify an identification with a dead person, quarter.\(^2\) Biographers and scientific research workers cannot feel grateful for this discretion.

\(^1\) Most of the accounts, including Dostoevsky's own, assert on the contrary that the illness only assumed its final, epileptic character during the Siberian exile. Unfortunately there is reason to distrust the autobiographical statements of neurotics. Experience shows that their memories introduce falsifications which are designed to interrupt disagreeable causal connections. Nevertheless, it appears certain that Dostoevsky's detention in the Siberian prison markedly altered his pathological condition. Cf. Fulop-Miller (1924, 1186).

\(^2\) [The explanation was already given by Freud in a letter to Fliess of February 8, 1897 (Freud, 1950a, Letter 58).]
either with someone who is really dead or with someone who is still alive and whom the subject wishes dead. The latter case is the more significant. The attack then has the value of a punishment. One has wished another person dead, and now one is this other person and is dead oneself. At this point psycho-analytical theory brings in the assertion that for a boy this other person is usually his father and that the attack (which is termed hysterical) is thus a self-punishment for a death-wish against a hated father.

Parricide, according to a well-known view, is the principal and primal crime of humanity as well as of the individual. (See my Totem and Taboo, 1912-13.) It is in any case the main source of the sense of guilt, though we do not know if it is the only one: researches have not yet been able to establish with certainty the mental origin of guilt and the need for expiation. But it is not necessary for it to be the only one. The psychological situation is complicated and requires elucidation. The relation of a boy to his father is, as we say, an 'ambivalent' one. In addition to the hate which seeks to get rid of the father as a rival, a measure of tenderness for him is also habitually present. The two attitudes of mind combine to produce identification with the father; the boy wants to be in his father's place because he admires him and wants to be like him, and also because he wants to put him out of the way. This whole development now comes up against a powerful obstacle. At a certain moment the child comes to understand that an attempt to remove his father as a rival would be punished by him with castration. So from fear of castration—that is, in the interests of preserving his masculinity—he gives up his wish to possess his mother and get rid of his father. In so far as this wish remains in the unconscious it forms the basis of the sense of guilt. We believe that what we have here been describing are normal processes, the normal fate of the so-called 'Oedipus complex'; nevertheless it requires an important amplification.

A further complication arises when the constitutional factor we call bisexuality is comparatively strongly developed in a child. For then, under the threat to the boy's masculinity by castration, his inclination becomes strengthened to diverge in the direction of femininity, to put himself instead in his mother's place and take over her role as object of his father's love. But the fear of castration makes this solution impossible as well.
The boy understands that he must also submit to castration if he wants to be loved by his father as a woman. Thus both impulses, hatred of the father and being in love with the father, undergo repression. There is a certain psychological distinction in the fact that the hatred of the father is given up on account of fear of an external danger (castration), while the being in love with the father is treated as an internal instinctual danger, though fundamentally it goes back to the same external danger.

What makes hatred of the father unacceptable is fear of the father; castration is terrible, whether as a punishment or as the price of love. Of the two factors which repress hatred of the father, the first, the direct fear of punishment and castration, may be called the normal one; its pathogenic intensification seems to come only with the addition of the second factor, the fear of the feminine attitude. Thus a strong innate bisexual disposition becomes one of the preconditions or reinforcements of neurosis. Such a disposition must certainly be assumed in Dostoevsky, and it shows itself in a viable form (as latent homosexuality) in the important part played by male friendships in his life, in his strangely tender attitude towards rivals in love and in his remarkable understanding of situations which are explicable only by repressed homosexuality, as many examples from his novels show.

I am sorry, though: I cannot alter the facts, if this exposition of the attitudes of hatred and love towards the father and their transformations under the influence of the threat of castration seems to readers unfamiliar with psycho-analysis unsavoury and incredible. I should myself expect that it is precisely the castration complex that would be bound to arouse the most general repudiation. But I can only insist that psycho-analytic experience has put these matters in particular beyond the reach of doubt and has taught us to recognize in them the key to every neurosis. This key, then, we must apply to our author's so-called epilepsy. So alien to our consciousness are the things by which our unconscious mental life is governed!

But what has been said so far does not exhaust the consequences of the repression of the hatred of the father in the Oedipus complex. There is something fresh to be added: namely that in spite of everything the identification with the father finally makes a permanent place for itself in the ego. It is received into the ego, but establishes itself there as a separate agency in contrast to the rest of the content of the parental influence, the most important factor of which was hard, violent and cruel, the super-ego, who is permitted from him and, in the relations between the father, who is feared in any case, is also especially severe father. This characteristic of bis disposition becomes one of the preconditions or reinforcements of neurosis. Such a disposition must certainly be assumed in Dostoevsky, and it shows itself in a viable form (as latent homosexuality) in the important part played by male friendships in his life, in his strangely tender attitude towards rivals in love and in his remarkable understanding of situations which are explicable only by repressed homosexuality, as many examples from his novels show.

The normal processes in the formation of consciousness are similar to the abnormal ones described here. We can thus be understood as an accidental fact, the father, who is feared in any case, is also especially severe father. This characteristic of bis disposition becomes one of the preconditions or reinforcements of neurosis. Such a disposition must certainly be assumed in Dostoevsky, and it shows itself in a viable form (as latent homosexuality) in the important part played by male friendships in his life, in his strangely tender attitude towards rivals in love and in his remarkable understanding of situations which are explicable only by repressed homosexuality, as many examples from his novels show.

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The normal processes in the formation of consciousness are similar to the abnormal ones described here. We can thus be understood as an accidental fact, the father, who is feared in any case, is also especially severe father. This characteristic of bis disposition becomes one of the preconditions or reinforcements of neurosis. Such a disposition must certainly be assumed in Dostoevsky, and it shows itself in a viable form (as latent homosexuality) in the important part played by male friendships in his life, in his strangely tender attitude towards rivals in love and in his remarkable understanding of situations which are explicable only by repressed homosexuality, as many examples from his novels show.

The boy understands that he must also submit to castration if he wants to be loved by his father as a woman. Thus both impulses, hatred of the father and being in love with the father, undergo repression. There is a certain psychological distinction in the fact that the hatred of the father is given up on account of fear of an external danger (castration), while the being in love with the father is treated as an internal instinctual danger, though fundamentally it goes back to the same external danger.

What makes hatred of the father unacceptable is fear of the father; castration is terrible, whether as a punishment or as the price of love. Of the two factors which repress hatred of the father, the first, the direct fear of punishment and castration, may be called the normal one; its pathogenic intensification seems to come only with the addition of the second factor, the fear of the feminine attitude. Thus a strong innate bisexual disposition becomes one of the preconditions or reinforcements of neurosis. Such a disposition must certainly be assumed in Dostoevsky, and it shows itself in a viable form (as latent homosexuality) in the important part played by male friendships in his life, in his strangely tender attitude towards rivals in love and in his remarkable understanding of situations which are explicable only by repressed homosexuality, as many examples from his novels show.

I am sorry, though: I cannot alter the facts, if this exposition of the attitudes of hatred and love towards the father and their transformations under the influence of the threat of castration seems to readers unfamiliar with psycho-analysis unsavoury and incredible. I should myself expect that it is precisely the castration complex that would be bound to arouse the most general repudiation. But I can only insist that psycho-analytic experience has put these matters in particular beyond the reach of doubt and has taught us to recognize in them the key to every neurosis. This key, then, we must apply to our author's so-called epilepsy. So alien to our consciousness are the things by which our unconscious mental life is governed!

But what has been said so far does not exhaust the consequences of the repression of the hatred of the father in the Oedipus complex. There is something fresh to be added: namely that in spite of everything the identification with the father finally makes a permanent place for itself in the ego. It is received into the ego, but establishes itself there as a separate
Ile must also submit to castration if he lather as a woman. Thus both impulses, being in love with the father, undergo a certain psychological distinction in the role of the father is given up on account of fear (castration), while the being in love with an internal instinctual danger, though it goes back to the same external danger.

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Is been said so far does not exhaust the conse-repression of the hatred of the father in the plot. There is something fresh to be added: in spite of everything the identification with the takes a permanent place for itself in the ego. It is the ego, but establishes itself there as a separate agency in contrast to the rest of the content of the ego. We then give it the name of super-ego and ascribe to it, the inheritor of the parental influence, the most important functions. If the father was hard, violent and cruel, the super-ego takes over those attributes from him and, in the relations between the ego and it, the passivity which was supposed to have been repressed is re-established. The super-ego has become sadistic, and the ego becomes masochistic—that is to say, at bottom passive in a feminine way. A great need for punishment develops in the ego, which in part offers itself as a victim to Fate, and in part finds satisfaction in ill-treatment by the super-ego (that is, in the sense of guilt). For every punishment is ultimately castration and, as such, a fulfilment of the old passive attitude towards the father. Even Fate is, in the last resort, only a later projection of the father.

The normal processes in the formation of conscience must be similar to the abnormal ones described here. We have not yet succeeded in fixing the boundary line between them. It will be observed that here the largest share in the outcome is ascribed to the passive component of repressed femininity. In addition, it must be of importance as an accidental factor whether the father, who is feared in any case, is also especially violent in reality. This was true in Dostoevsky's case, and we can trace back the fact of his extraordinary sense of guilt and of his masochistic conduct of life to a specially strong feminine component. Thus the formula for Dostoevsky is as follows: a person with a specially strong innate bisexual disposition, who can defend himself with special intensity against dependence on a specially severe father. This characteristic of bisexuality comes as an addition to the components of his nature that we have already recognized. His early symptoms of death-like attacks can thus be understood as a father-identification on the part of his ego, which is permitted by his super-ego as a punishment. 'You wanted to kill your father in order to be your father yourself. Now you are your father, but a dead father'—the regular mechanism of hysterical symptoms. And further: 'Now your father is killing you.' For the ego the death symptom is a satisfaction in phantasy of the masculine wish and at the same time a masochistic satisfaction; for the super-ego it is a punitive satisfaction—that is, a sadistic satisfaction. Both of them, the ego and the super-ego, carry on the role of father.
To sum up, the relation between the subject and his father-object, while retaining its content, has been transformed into a relation between the ego and the super-ego—a new setting on a fresh stage. Infantile reactions from the Oedipus complex such as these may disappear if reality gives them no further nourishment. But the father’s character remained the same, or rather, it deteriorated with the years, and thus Dostoevsky’s hatred for his father and his death-wish against that wicked father were maintained. Now it is a dangerous thing if reality fulfils such repressed wishes. The phantasy has become reality and all defensive measures are thereupon reinforced. Dostoevsky’s attacks now assumed an epileptic character; they still undoubtedly signified an identification with his father as a punishment, but they had become terrible, like his father’s frightful death itself. What further content they had absorbed, particularly what sexual content, escapes conjecture.

One thing is remarkable: in the aura of the epileptic attack, one moment of supreme bliss is experienced. This may very well be a record of the triumph and sense of liberation felt on hearing the news of the death, to be followed immediately by an all the more cruel punishment. We have divined just such a sequence of triumph and mourning, of festive joy and mourning, in the brothers of the primal horde who murdered their father, and we find it repeated in the ceremony of the totem meal. If it proved to be the case that Dostoevsky was free from his attacks in Siberia, that would merely substantiate the view that they were his punishment. He did not need them any longer when he was being punished in another way. But that cannot be proved. Rather does this necessity for punishment on the part of Dostoevsky’s mental economy explain the fact that he passed unbroken through these years of misery and humiliation. Dostoevsky’s condemnation as a political prisoner was unjust and he must have known it, but he accepted the undeserved punishment at the hands of the Little Father, the Tsar, as a substitute for the punishment he deserved for his sin against his real father. Instead of punishing himself, he got himself punished by his father’s deputy. Here we have a glimpse of the psychological justification of the punishments inflicted by society. It is a fact that large groups of criminals want to be punished. Their

1 See Totem and Taboo ([1912-13], Section 5 of Essay IV, Standard Ed., 13, 140).

super-ego demands it and so saves itself the conflicting the punishment itself.

Everyone who is familiar with the complication of meaning undergone by hysterical symptoms will understand that no attempt can be made here to meaning of Dostoevsky’s attacks beyond this is enough that we may assume that their origin remained unchanged behind all later accretions. We say that Dostoevsky never got free from the comedy of killing which his attacks had so often played. Here penitence gained the upper hand. sphere retained more freedom: according trustworthy reports he wavered, up to the last moment between faith and atheism. His great intellectual possibility for him to overlook any of the intellect which faith leads. By an individual recapitulation in world-history he hoped to find a way of escape from guilt in the Christ ideal, and even to suffer as a claim to be playing a Christ-like whole he did not achieve freedom and became that was because the filial guilt, which is present beings generally and on which religious feeling him attained a super-individual intensity and surmountable even to his great intelligence. In

1 [Cf. ‘Criminals from a Sense of Guilt’, the third ‘Some Character-Types Met with in Psycho-Analysis’, Standard Ed., 14, 332.]
2 The best account of the meaning and content of given by Dostoevsky himself, when he told his friend Irritability and depression after an epileptic attack it that he seemed to himself a criminal and could not stand that he had a burden of unknown guilt upon him, that some great misdeed, which oppressed him. (Fulda-R.) In self-accusations like these psycho-analysis sees sign of ‘psychical reality’, and it endeavours to make it known to consciousness.
3 S.P. XXI—N
DOSTOEVSKY AND PARRICIDE

The relation between the subject and his father-taking its content, has been transformed into a super-ego and the super-ego—a new setting on a whole reactions from the Oedipus complex such as if reality gives them no further nourishment, their character remained the same, or rather, it in the years, and thus Dostoevsky’s hatred for his death-wish against that wicked father were ow it is a dangerous thing if reality fulfils such es. The phantasy has become reality and all ears are thereupon reinforced. Dostoevsky’s at- ned an epileptic character; they still undoubtedly atification with his father as a punishment, but are terrible, like his father’s frightful death itself. content they had absorbed, particularly what escapes conjecture.

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1 [Cf. ‘Criminals from a Sense of Guilt’, the third essay in Freud’s ‘Some Character-Types Met with in Psycho-Analytic Work’ (1916d), Standard Ed., 14, 332.]

1 The best account of the meaning and content of his attacks was given by Dostoevsky himself, when he told his friend Strakhov that his irritability and depression after an epileptic attack were due to the fact that he seemed to himself a criminal and could not get rid of the feeling that he had a burden of unknown guilt upon him, that he had committed some great misdeed, which oppressed him. (Fülöp-Miller, 1924, 1188.) In self-accusations like these psycho-analysis sees signs of a recognition of ‘psychical reality’, and it endeavours to make the unknown guilt known to consciousness.

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are laying ourselves open to the charge of having abandoned the impartiality of analysis and of subjecting Dostoevsky to judgements that can only be justified from the partisan standpoint of a particular Weltanschauung. A conservative would take the side of the Grand Inquisitor and would judge Dostoevsky differently. The objection is just; and one can only say in extenuation that Dostoevsky's decision has every appearance of having been determined by an intellectual inhibition due to his neurosis.

It can scarcely be owing to chance that three of the masterpieces of the literature of all time—the Oedipus Rex of Sophocles, Shakespeare's Hamlet and Dostoevsky's The Brothers Karamazov—should all deal with the same subject, parricide. In all three, moreover, the motive for the deed, sexual rivalry for a woman, is laid bare.

The most straightforward is certainly the representation in the drama derived from the Greek legend. In this it is still the hero himself who commits the crime. But poetic treatment is impossible without softening and disguise. The naked admission of an intention to commit parricide, as we arrive at it in analysis, seems intolerable without analytic preparation. The Greek drama, while retaining the crime, introduces the indispensable toning-down in a masterly fashion by projecting the hero's unconscious motive into reality in the form of a compulsion by a destiny which is alien to him. The hero commits the deed unintentionally and apparently uninfluenced by the woman; this latter element is however taken into account in the circumstance that the hero can only obtain possession of the queen mother after he has repeated his deed upon the monster who symbolizes the father. After his guilt has been revealed and made conscious, the hero makes no attempt to exculpate himself by appealing to the artificial expedient of the compulsion of destiny. His crime is acknowledged and punished as though it were a full and conscious one—which is bound to appear unjust to our reason, but which psychologically is perfectly correct.

In the English play the presentation is more indirect; the hero does not commit the crime himself; it is carried out by someone else, for whom it is not parricide. The forbidden motive of sexual rivalry for the woman does not need, therefore, to be disguised. Moreover, we see the hero's Oedipus complex,
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OPEN TO THE CHARGE OF HAVING ABANDONED

PARRICIDE

The Russian novel goes a step further in the same direction. There also the murder is committed by someone else. This other person, however, stands to the murdered man in the same filial relation as the hero, Dmitri; in this other person’s case the motive of sexual rivalry is openly admitted; he is a brother of the hero’s, and it is a remarkable fact that Dostoevsky has attributed to him his own illness, the alleged epilepsy, as though he were seeking to confess that the epileptic, the neurotic, in himself was a parricide. Then, again, in the speech for the defence at the trial, there is the famous mockery of psychology—it is a ‘knife that cuts both ways’: 1 a splendid piece of disguise, for we have only to reverse it in order to discover the deepest meaning of Dostoevsky’s view of things. It is not psychology that deserves the mockery, but the procedure of judicial enquiry. It is a matter of indifference who actually committed the crime; psychology is only concerned to know who desired it emotionally and who welcomed it when it was done. 2 And for that reason all of the brothers, except the contrasted figure of Alyosha, are equally guilty—the impulsive sensualist, the sceptical cynic and the epileptic criminal. In The Brothers Karamazov there is one particularly revealing scene. In the course of his talk with Dmitri, Father Zossima recognizes that Dmitri is prepared to commit parricide, and he bows down at his feet. It is impossible that this can be meant as an expression of admiration; it must mean that the holy man is rejecting the temptation to despise or detest the murderer and for that reason humbles

1 [In the German (and in the original Russian) the simile is ‘a stick with two ends’. The ‘knife that cuts both ways’ is derived from Constance Garnett’s English translation. The phrase occurs in Book XII, Chapter X, of the novel.]

2 [A practical application of this to an actual criminal case is to be found in Freud’s comments on the Halsmann Case (1931a), p. 251 below, where The Brothers Karamazov is again discussed.]
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himself before him. Dostoevsky's sympathy for the criminal is, in fact, boundless; it goes far beyond the pity which the unhappy wretch has a right to, and reminds us of the 'holy awe' with which epileptics and lunatics were regarded in the past. A criminal is to him almost a Redeemer, who has taken on himself the guilt which must else have been borne by others. There is no longer any need for one to murder, since he has already murdered; and one must be grateful to him, for, except for him, one would have been obliged oneself to murder. That is not kindly pity alone, it is identification on the basis of similar murderous impulses—in fact, a slightly displaced narcissism. (In saying this, we are not disputing the ethical value of this kindliness.)

The publication of Dostoevsky's posthumous papers and of his wife's diaries has thrown a glaring light on one episode in his life, namely the period in Germany when he was obsessed with a mania for gambling (cf. Fulop-Miller and Eckstein, 1925), which no one could regard as anything but an unmistakable fit of pathological passion. There was no lack of rationalizations for this remarkable and unworthy behaviour. As often happens with neurotics, Dostoevsky's sense of guilt had taken a tangible shape as a burden of debt, and he was able to take refuge behind the pretext that he was trying by his winnings at the tables to make it possible for him to return to Russia without being arrested by his creditors. But this was no more than a pretext and Dostoevsky was acute enough to recognize the fact and honest enough to admit it. He knew that the chief thing was gambling for its own sake—le jeu pour le jeu. All the details of his impulsively irrational conduct show this and besides. He never rested until he had lost everything: gambling was a method of self-punishment as a time he gave his young wife his promise or his not to play any more or not to play any more on day; and, as she says, he almost always brought losses had reduced himself and her to the direst need to feel sorry that she had married such a man when he had thus unburdened his conscience, anil des- would begin again next day. His young wife offered any real hope of salvation—his literature never went better than when they had lost and pawned their last possessions. Naturally she did the connection. When his sense of guilt wasever the work became less severe and he allowed himself steps along the road to success. What part of a gambler's long-buried child forces its way to repetition in his obsession for play may be divined without difficulty from a study to Dostoevsky himself (1920), has inclusion of three stories Die Verwirrung der Gefühle (1927) one which he calls 'Vierundzwanzig aus dem Leben einer Frau' ['Four-and-Twenty Woman's Life']. This little masterpiece ostensibly to show what an irresponsible creature woman excesses, surprising even to herself, an unexpen may drive her. But the story tells far more of subjected to an analytical interpretation, it may represent (without any apologetic intent) some different, something universally human, or rather culine. And such an interpretation is so extreme

1 'The main thing is the play itself,' he writes in one of his letters. I swear that greed for money has nothing to do with it, although Heaven knows I am sorely in need of money.'
DOSTOEVSKY AND PARRICIDE

Dostoevsky's sympathy for the criminal is, in fact, far beyond the pity which the unhappy and sometimes insane were regarded in the past. A man almost a Redeemer, who has taken on himself the burden of debt, and he was able to take a few steps along the road to success.

What part of a gambler's long-buried childhood is it that forces its way to repetition in his obsession for play? The answer may be divined without difficulty from a story by one of our younger writers. Stefan Zweig, who has incidentally devoted a study to Dostoevsky himself (1920), has included in his collection of three stories Die Verwirrung der Gefühle [Confusion of Feelings] (1927) one which he calls 'Vierundzwanzig Stunden aus dem Leben einer Frau' ['Four-and-Twenty Hours in a Woman's Life']. This little masterpiece ostensibly sets out only to show what an irresponsible creature woman is, and to what excesses, surprising even to herself, an unexpected experience may drive her. But the story tells far more than this. If it is subjected to an analytical interpretation, it will be found to represent (without any apologetic intent) something quite different, something universally human, or rather something masculine. And such an interpretation is so extremely obvious that

impulsively irrational conduct show this and something more besides. He never rested until he had lost everything. For him gambling was a method of self-punishment as well. Time after time he gave his young wife his promise or his word of honour not to play any more or not to play any more on that particular day; and, as she says, he almost always broke it. When his losses had reduced himself and her to the direst need, he derived a second pathological satisfaction from that. He could then scold and humiliate himself before her, invite her to despise him and to feel sorry that she had married such an old sinner; and when he had thus unburdened his conscience, the whole business would begin again next day. His young wife accustomed herself to this cycle, for she had noticed that the one thing which offered any real hope of salvation—his literary production—never went better than when they had lost everything and pawned their last possessions. Naturally she did not understand the connection. When his sense of guilt was satisfied by the punishments he had inflicted on himself, the inhibition upon his work became less severe and he allowed himself to take a few steps along the road to success.1

1 'He always remained at the gaming tables till he had lost everything and was totally ruined. It was only when the damage was quite complete that the demon at last retired from his soul and made way for the creative genius.' (Fülöp-Miller and Eckstein, 1925, lxxxvi.)
it cannot be resisted. It is characteristic of the nature of artistic creation that the author, who is a personal friend of mine, was able to assure me, when I asked him, that the interpretation which I put to him had been completely strange to his knowledge and intention, although some of the details woven into the narrative seemed expressly designed to give a clue to the hidden secret.

In this story, an elderly lady of distinction tells the author about an experience she has had more than twenty years earlier. She has been left a widow when still young and is the mother of two sons, who no longer need her. In her forty-second year, expecting nothing further of life, she happens, on one of her aimless journeyings, to visit the Rooms at Monte Carlo. There, among all the remarkable impressions which the place produces, she is soon fascinated by the sight of a pair of hands which seem to betray all the feelings of the unlucky gambler with terrifying sincerity and intensity. These hands belong to a handsome young man—the author, as though unintentionally, makes him of the same age as the narrator’s elder son—who, after losing everything, leaves the Rooms in the depth of despair, with the evident intention of ending his hopeless life in the Casino gardens. An inexplicable feeling of sympathy compels her to follow him and make every effort to save him. He takes her for one of the importunate women so common there and tries to shake her off; but she stays with him and finds herself obliged, in the most natural way possible, to join him in his apartment at the hotel, and finally to share his bed. After this improvised night of love, she exacts a most solemn vow from the young man, that he will never play again, provides him with money for his journey home and seeks to disguise its analytic meaning. For questionable whether the erotic life of the hands betrays this desire the passion for play is an equivalent of the old masturbate; ‘playing’ is the actual word used to describe the activity of the hands upon the invisible nature of the temptation, the soul which are nevertheless invariably broken, never the stupefying pleasure and the bad conscience subject that he is ruining himself’ (committing these elements remain unaltered in the process. It is true that Zweig’s story is told by the mother. It must flatter the son to think: ‘if my mother dangers masturbation involves me in, she would me from them by allowing me to lavish all my own body’. The equation of the mother and the son is made by the young man in the story, is his same phantasy. It brings the unattainable reach. The bad conscience which accompanies brings about the unhappy ending of the story esting to notice how the façade given to the story seeks to disguise its analytic meaning. For questionable whether the erotic life of the hands sudden and mysterious impulses. On the other reveals an adequate motivation for the surprising this woman who had hitherto turned away fits to the memory of her dead husband, she has

1 [In a letter to Fleiss of December 22, 1897, Freud masturbation is the ‘primal addiction’, for which substitutes (Freud, 1900a, Letter 79).]
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sacrifice all she has in order to keep him and
and to go with him instead of saying goodbye.
les delay her, so that she misses the train. In
he lost one she returns once more to the Rooms
horror, sees once more the hands which had
sympathy: the faithless youth had gone back to
him of his promise, but, obsessed by his
for a spoil-sport, tells her to go, and flings back
which she has tried to rescue him. She hurries

away in deep mortification and learns later that she has not
succeeded in saving him from suicide.

The brilliantly told, faultlessly motivated story is of course
complete in itself and is certain to make a deep effect upon the
reader. But analysis shows us that its invention is based funda-
mentally upon a wishful phantasy belonging to the period of
puberty, which a number of people actually remember con-
sciously. The phantasy embodies a boy's wish that his mother
should herself initiate him into sexual life in order to save him
from the dreaded injuries caused by masturbation. (The numer-
ous creative works that deal with the theme of redemption
have the same origin.) The 'vice' of masturbation is replaced by
the addiction to gambling; and the emphasis laid upon the
passionate activity of the hands betrays this derivation. Indeed,
the passion for play is an equivalent of the old compulsion to
masturbate; 'playing' is the actual word used in the nursery to
describe the activity of the hands upon the genitals. The
irresistible nature of the temptation, the solemn resolutions,
which are nevertheless invariably broken, never to do it again,
the stupefying pleasure and the bad conscience which tells the
subject that he is ruining himself (committing suicide)—all
these elements remain unaltered in the process of substitution.
It is true that Zweig's story is told by the mother, not by the son.
It must flatter the son to think: 'if my mother only knew what
dangers masturbation involves in me, she would certainly save
me from them by allowing me to lavish all my tenderness on her
own body'. The equation of the mother with a prostitute, which
is made by the young man in the story, is linked up with the
same phantasy. It brings the unattainable woman within easy
reach. The bad conscience which accompanies the phantasy
brings about the unhappy ending of the story. It is also inter-
esting to notice how the façade given to the story by its author
seeks to disguise its analytic meaning. For it is extremely
questionable whether the erotic life of women is dominated by
sudden and mysterious impulses. On the contrary, analysis
reveals an adequate motivation for the surprising behaviour of
this woman who had hitherto turned away from love. Faithful
to the memory of her dead husband, she had armed herself

1 [In a letter to Fliess of December 22, 1897, Freud suggested that
masturbation is the 'primal addiction', for which all later addictions are
substitutes (Freud, 1950a, Letter 79).]
against all similar attractions; but—and here the son's phantasy is right—she did not, as a mother, escape her quite unconscious transference of love on to her son, and Fate was able to catch her at this undefended spot.

If the addiction to gambling, with the unsuccessful struggles to break the habit and the opportunities it affords for self-punishment, is a repetition of the compulsion to masturbate, we shall not be surprised to find that it occupied such a large space in Dostoevsky's life. After all, we find no cases of severe neurosis in which the auto-erotic satisfaction of early childhood and of puberty has not played a part; and the relation between efforts to suppress it and fear of the father are too well known to need more than a mention.\footnote{Most of the views which are here expressed are also contained in an excellent book by Jolan Neufeld (1923).}

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