

Acknowledgements — VII

List of Abbreviations — XIII

Part A: Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard

The First Chapter

Polyphony — 11

- 1.1 Trying to Understand Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard — **13**
- 1.2 Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard in Dialogue with Their Characters — **14**

The Second Chapter

Individual Self-Development Towards Ethical and Religious Perfection — 18

- 2.1 The Difficulty of Being Humble — **21**
- 2.2 The Difficulty of Love — **25**
- 2.3 The Difficulty of Leading an Authentic Ethical and Religious Life — **30**
- 2.4 The Incommunicability of Christian Truth — **33**

The Third Chapter

The Problem of Existential Entrapment — 35

- 3.1 Existential Entrapment: Preliminary Remarks — **36**
- 3.2 Existential Entrapment as the Impossibility of Existential Movement — **36**
- 3.3 Usefulness of the Polyphonic Structure for Identifying Existential Entrapment — **38**
- 3.4 Methodological Summary — **39**
- 3.5 Obstacles on Life's Way: Categories of Existential Entrapment — **40**

Part B: The Stories of Entrapment

The Fourth Chapter

Affective Obstacles to Ethical-Religious Development — 45

- 4.1 Trapped by Fear and Temptation — **46**
- 4.1.1 Judge William: The Fear of the Religious and the Temptation of the Ethical — **46**
- 4.1.2 Conclusion: No Exit — **57**
- 4.2 Trapped by Paradoxical Pleasures — **57**
- 4.2.1 The Underground Man: Bound by Strange Pleasures — **58**
- 4.2.2 Aesthete A: The Aesthetic Value of Boredom and Depression — **67**
- 4.2.3 Conclusion: The Hedonistic Rebellion — **77**
- 4.3 Trapped by Fantasy — **80**
- 4.3.1 The Young Man: A Romantic Dreamer — **81**
- 4.3.2 General Ivolgin: Captivated by Ridiculous Dreams — **88**
- 4.3.3 Frater Taciturnus: Living in a Fairy-Tale — **93**
- 4.3.4 Conclusion: Lost in Fantasy — **100**
- 4.4 Gratificatory Entrapment — **104**
- 4.4.1 Dmitri Karamazov: The Seductive Power of Gratification — **107**
- 4.4.2 Johannes the Seducer: The Instrumentalist — **115**
- 4.4.3 Conclusion: Lost in Aestheticism — **126**

The Fifth Chapter

Rational Obstacles to Ethical-Religious Development — 129

- 5.1 Self-Interrogatory Entrapment — **129**
- 5.1.1 Marie Beaumarchais: The Inconspicuous Self-Interrogator — **130**
- 5.1.2 Donna Elvira: The Vengeful Self-Interrogator — **136**
- 5.1.3 Nastasya Filippovna: The Wilful Self-Interrogator — **140**
- 5.1.4 Conclusion: The Life of Indecision — **149**
- 5.2 Monoideatic Entrapment — **155**
- 5.2.1 Ivan Karamazov: The Doubter — **156**
- 5.2.2 Kirillov: The Monomaniacal God-Man — **165**
- 5.2.3 Johannes Climacus: Between Wisdom and Madness — **171**
- 5.2.4 Conclusion: Obsessed with an Idea — **176**

The Sixth Chapter

Misguided Faith as an Obstacle to Ethical-Religious Development — 182

- 6.1 Trapped by a Weak and Indecisive Faith and Love — **183**
- 6.1.1 Quidam: Stuck on the Precipice of Religiosity — **183**
- 6.1.2 Prince Myshkin: Trapped by Impotent Love — **191**

- 6.2 Trapped by Authoritative and Prophetic Faith — **197**
- 6.2.1 Adler: The Confused Prophet — **198**
- 6.2.2 The Grand Inquisitor: The False Martyr — **205**
- 6.2.3 Conclusion: Face to Face with Christ — **211**

Part C: The Way out of Entrapment

The Seventh Chapter

Escaping Entrapment — 219

- 7.1 The Stories of Revolt — **219**
- 7.1.1 Raskolnikov: Napoleon Under an Old Woman's Bed — **220**
- 7.1.2 Svidrigailov: A Cynical Revolt — **228**
- 7.1.3 Conclusion: Failed Attempts at Superheroism — **234**
- 7.2 The Stories of Authentic Freedom — **237**
- 7.2.1 Markel: The Bedridden Saint — **242**
- 7.2.2 The Tax Collector: An Easy Walk of Faith — **244**

The Eighth Chapter

Authenticity — 249

- 8.1 The Two Existential Moves — **249**
- 8.2 The Dynamic Understanding of Human Subjectivity — **250**
- 8.3 Bringing the Leap of Faith Closer to the Ground — **250**
- 8.4 Salvation: The Divine Gift of Joy — **251**
- 8.5 On the Attributes of Divine Joy — **253**

Original Language Editions — 257

Index — 267