

12-2011

# Returning the Ticket: Rejecting God in Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*

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RETURNING THE TICKET: REJECTING GOD IN DOSTOEVSKY'S *THE BROTHERS*  
*KARAMAZOV* AND HARDY'S *JUDE THE OBSCURE*

RETURNING THE TICKET: REJECTING GOD IN DOSTOEVSKY'S *THE BROTHERS*  
*KARAMAZOV* AND HARDY'S *JUDE THE OBSCURE*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in English

By

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Ouachita Baptist University  
Bachelor of Arts in English, 2009

December 2011  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Fyodor Dostoevsky and Thomas Hardy both explored the intricacies of the burgeoning spiritual crisis of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in their works. The two most prominent of these works, Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, show the stories of two characters, Ivan and Jude respectively, that choose to reject God. This thesis explores the connection between these two characters, specifically as they represent the two authors' outsider characters. It looks at the reasons behind their rejection, the ways that their rejection plays out in their lives, and the novels' alternatives, namely Christianity and selfless love, to their rejection.

This thesis is approved for recommendation  
to the Graduate Council.

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## Introduction

For two writers who lived in different countries and never interacted with each other, Fyodor Dostoevsky and Thomas Hardy share several noteworthy similarities. Both authors wrote in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, both were in tune with the intellectual current of the time, and both influenced later thinkers with their controversial works. The most important connection between these two writers, though, involves their portrayal of characters that choose to reject God.<sup>1</sup> More specifically, Ivan in Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and Jude in Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* both turn away from God in related ways and for similar reasons. The two novels also offer similar alternatives to these characters' rejections of God.

Numerous scholars have looked at how Dostoevsky's and Hardy's works individually deal with philosophy, God, and Christianity. James P. Scanlan, in *Dostoevsky the Thinker*, argues that Dostoevsky's novels reveal his interest in and attention to how philosophy affects humans. Nicholas Berdyaev explains that Dostoevsky focused his entire artistic career on "one single theme, man and man's destiny," that this theme was strongly Christian, and that he was "a great Christian writer who denounced as the essential defect of Humanism its powerlessness to find a solution to the tragedy of human destiny" (39). Berdyaev also convincingly argues that Dostoevsky's focus was "the riddle of the [human] spirit," and that "he did not have to solve the divine problem as does the pagan, but the problem of mankind, which is the problem of the spiritual man, the Christian" (24).

While many scholars believe that Dostoevsky was a Christian, most scholars argue that Hardy lost his faith in Christianity in his early adulthood. In "The Gospel According to Hardy,"

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this thesis, all uses of the word "God" and its related derivatives refer to the God of Christianity. Similarly, all uses of "religion" refer to Christianity, and all uses of "Spirit" to Christianity's Holy Spirit.

Pamela Dalziel discusses Hardy's interaction with Christianity throughout his life, and how this interaction affected his writing. She shows how Hardy's faith progressed from having "a distinctly Evangelical cast" in his youth (11), to having "a kind of gentlemanly, unimpassioned faith, more social than religious" (12). Unlike Dostoevsky, Hardy ultimately rejected Christianity because, like Jude, he ultimately found its rules and structure too strict and hypocritical to live by. F. B. Pinion further explains that Hardy's Christianity was defeated by his understanding of scientific thought, but that he still held on to "his belief in the higher moral values proclaimed in the Bible and by the Church" (168). Hardy's universe lacked the love of God and instead contained only indifference and apathy (169). Essentially, while Hardy and his works ultimately reject formal Christianity, they both still retain an appreciation for and a basic foundation in Christian tenets. Dalziel identifies Hardy's "central preoccupations" with Christianity as focused "on the law as curse, on suffering, and on the saving force of love" (13). Pinion also notes that Hardy embraced a broad and unspecific form of Christianity that focused on love and that wove Christian love with rationalism together (179). Hardy's early upbringing in Christianity forever shaped his outlook on life, and his novels reveal this religious slant, specifically his interest with the three aforementioned aspects of Christianity.

Some critics also point out the prophetic aspects of the two authors' works, specifically their ability to foresee the turmoil and intellectual crisis of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. William Hubben, in *Dostoevsky, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Kafka*, specifically points out Dostoevsky's early exploration of the "European revolution" growing inside humanity that would come to a head in the World Wars. Berdyaev also emphasizes Dostoevsky as a writer who worked "when modern times were coming to an end and a new epoch of history was dawning" (60). Deborah L. Collins points out Hardy's awareness of the changing understanding of the world at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup>

century in *Thomas Hardy and His God: A Liturgy of Unbelief*. Albert J. Guerard and Barry N. Schwartz also note Hardy's transitional state between the Victorian and modern eras and between the faith of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the doubt and loss of belief of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Related to Hardy's portrayal of God, Harold Child argues that Hardy presents a God that is completely uninvolved with humanity. William R. Goetz, on the other hand, maintains that in *Jude the Obscure*, it's not God who is causing Jude's religious problems, but rather Jude's society and its interpretation of religion. Similarly, Norman Holland argues very convincingly that Hardy's novel depicts the late Victorians' problems with Christianity.

Other authors have pointed out Dostoevsky's and Hardy's alternatives to the characters, like Ivan and Jude, who reject God. Berdyaev argues in "Dostoevsky, the Nature of Man, and Evil" that Dostoevsky portrays true freedom as available only through faith in Christ. Linda Ivanitis contends in "The Other Lazarus in *Crime and Punishment*" that Dostoevsky presents an answer to these outsider characters that is found in the Russian people, and that only by accepting Russians can the God-rejecting characters accept God. In "The Nihilists and Raskolnikov's New Idea," N. Strakhov points out Dostoevsky's characters' dualities of simultaneous faith and doubt. And Holland briefly explores what answers Hardy offers to the problem of rejecting God in *Jude the Obscure*.

Countless thinkers have looked at the many facets of Dostoevsky's and Hardy's complex works individually, but none have compared them to each other. Because of this lack of scholarly research into the connection between Dostoevsky and Hardy, and between their outsider characters, this thesis explores some of the similarities between them by juxtaposing two of their novels. Specifically, this thesis addresses the nature of two of Dostoevsky's and Hardy's most interesting outsider characters: Ivan and Jude.

In Dostoevsky's and Hardy's novels, Ivan and Jude join a larger group of characters that in some way choose to reject both God and society. These characters, which I will refer to as "outsider characters," are not only socially ostracized, but they also cannot connect with religion and spirituality. They find problems with God, His world, and His boundaries, and thus ultimately decide to reject religion, choosing instead to live their lives independent of God and His rules. As Ivan explains to his brother Alyosha, these outsider characters ultimately decide to "most respectfully return [God] the ticket" (*Brothers* 226). Their position as outsider characters also develops because of their frustration, anger, and pride. They not only illustrate extreme instances of pushing against humanity's God-created boundaries, but, more significantly, they represent a direct and blatant rebellion against God.

These outsider characters reject God by rejecting their own people, their personal purpose in life, and love. As a result of these rejections, however, these characters have nothing to live for. Their lives become meaningless and riddled with even more frustration, anger, and pride. Most interestingly, many of these characters use various forms of murder or suicide to push their boundaries and rebel against God. In their attempt to reject God and gain ultimate power and freedom, however, they find themselves inextricably tied up within God and His laws, and in the end realize that they are unable to free themselves from the boundaries God has placed around them.

In Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, several characters choose to reject God. These characters include Smerdyakov, Miüsov, Rakitin, and Fyodor Karamazov in *The Brothers Karamazov*; and Arabella, Sue, and Phillotson in *Jude the Obscure*. Each of these characters rejects God in different ways, though. While characters like Smerdyakov and Rakitin completely turn away from God and to atheism, others simply reject

God in favor of a life of carousing, as in the examples of Fyodor and Arabella. But while many of these characters that reject God do so thoughtlessly and without much difficulty, two of them turn away from God in significant and complex ways. These two characters, Ivan Karamazov in *The Brothers Karamazov* and Jude Fawley in *Jude the Obscure*, reject God and choose instead to embrace realism, cynicism, and contemporary theories. Ivan and Jude are also both indirectly responsible for murders that occur in some way as a result of their rejection of God.

Dostoevsky's outsider characters appear throughout his works, beginning with his first novella, *Poor Folk*, and continuing all the way to his final novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*.<sup>2</sup> His early outsider characters each exhibit extreme dualities of mind, dreaming tendencies, lack of social interaction, and feelings of purposelessness, and in the later novels, these characters continue to manifest these traits. More significantly, though, the reasons behind these attributes begin to become shockingly apparent in Dostoevsky's later novels. The outsider characters want freedom from God and the rules and laws He has created on earth. They see these laws as constricting and binding, and therefore seek to free themselves from all hindrances and ties to God and His rules. They want to be free to act as they please, without having to acknowledge and stay within the God-created boundaries of the world. Freedom is appealing to Dostoevsky's outsider characters not only because it offers no limits and restrictions, but also because it offers power and strength to those who achieve it. For many of these outsider characters, their rebellion from God eventually manifests itself in murder. Occasionally, as in the cases of Svidrigailov in *Crime and Punishment*, Stavrogin in *Devils*, and Smerdyakov in *The Brothers Karamazov*, rebelling against God means committing suicide. These outsider characters also sometimes

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<sup>2</sup> The most notable of these characters include Dievushkin in *Poor Folk*, the Underground Man in *Notes from Underground*, Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*, and most of the major characters in *Devils*.

commit murder, as do Raskolnikov and Smerdyakov. Almost all of Dostoevsky's outsider characters end their own lives or another person's life in attempts to extricate themselves from the confines of God's world and rules.

Berdyayev notes Dostoevsky's focus on one main outsider character, pointing out that in each novel, "[t]his chief figure always represents a puzzle which everybody tries to solve" (41). Berdyayev also makes an interesting argument that while Raskolnikov and the Underground Man present these "problems and riddles," Dostoevsky's other major outsider characters (namely Versilov in *A Raw Youth*, Stavrogin, and Ivan Karamazov), "are themselves these problems and riddles" (45). The outsider characters each have similar characteristics and each focus their novels around puzzling questions of humanity's existence and purpose.

Hardy's works also have several outsider characters. But Hardy's outsider characters lack the passion in their rejection that Dostoevsky's outsider characters so commonly show. Instead, the outsider characters in Hardy's works seem to reject God unwillingly. Many of them start out with a strong and unrelenting faith in God, as well as a clear admiration of religion and spirituality. Their realization of the harshness of reality, though, gradually turns them away from the God that they initially follow so wholeheartedly. But while Dostoevsky's outsider characters often commit murder to solidify their rejection of God, Hardy's commonly commit suicide, as Frank R. Giordano, Jr. explores in his analysis of these "self-destructive characters." These characters suffer so much under the hardships of their lives that "their attachment to life becomes tenuous, their vulnerability to the death instinct inevitable" (Giordano 7). As is the case with Dostoevsky's outsider characters, Hardy's outsider characters find themselves unable to live in a world ruled by God, and decide to upset His most important law of life by ending their own lives.

In *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Jude the Obscure*, Ivan Karamazov and Jude Fawley stand out as the epitome of these outsider characters. Both have no true friends and struggle with social interaction. Ivan confesses to Alyosha that he wants to be friends with his younger brother because although he doesn't have friends, he would like to (*Brothers* 215). Jude senses his isolation so intensely that at one point he even considers himself a ghost, feeling like "one who walked but could not make himself seen or heard" (*Jude* 67). These two characters also have few successes in life. While Ivan can boast of his impressive intellectual feats that include his publications and education, these accomplishments give him little acclaim outside of universities, and he remains without any clear career or tangible achievement throughout the novel. Jude has even fewer accomplishments than Ivan: he is always either denied the opportunity to succeed, as happens when he is denied admission to Christminster's university; or else he fails to perform adequately in the positions he is given, such as when he gets fired for not scaring the birds away from Mr. Troutham the farmer's field.

This thesis examines the novels' portrayals of Ivan and Jude as outsider characters. It specifically explores these characters' rejection of God, looking at the reasons behind their rejection, how their rejection plays out in the novels, and the novels' alternatives to their rejection. The first chapter of this thesis looks at Ivan's and Jude's motivation for turning from God; the second chapter explains how their rejection of God leads to murder; and the third chapter explores how both novels present a radical form of Christianity as the answer to the problems that the characters encounter in the world. Essentially, this thesis argues that while Dostoevsky and Hardy present characters that choose to reject God and Christianity, and while the novels may often times present a critique of the Christian God and Christianity, they also

show the flaws in Ivan's and Jude's rejection, and offer as the answer to the characters' problems the very God and Christianity that Ivan and Jude reject.

Both Dostoevsky and Hardy were deeply intellectual and philosophical thinkers. Their works, especially *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Jude the Obscure*, shed light on important questions that were surfacing in the late nineteenth century. The two novels portray Ivan and Jude as complex outsider characters who follow a path different from most of their peers. Looking closely at Ivan's and Jude's rejection of God and the reasons behind it, as well as the alternatives to their rejection, sheds light on the characters themselves and on the authors' own religious beliefs.

Most importantly, though, exploring Ivan's and Jude's rejection of God and Christianity helps us understand the mindset of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian and English societies. Ivan and Jude represent people in a world that has become fractured and disintegrated, torn apart by the opposition between science and faith. They portray people who have been catapulted into the late 19<sup>th</sup> century's world of rapid industrialization, development, and progress, where individuals have lost much of their former significance to machines and theories. Ivan and Jude represent the people of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century who became isolated from community, and who gravitated towards intellectual ideas that, just like the Christianity they turned from, ultimately failed to adequately explain and nurture the spiritual nature of man. Studying the similarities between the Russian and English outsider characters of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century will show how their mindset was more widespread than scholars have considered up until now.

## Chapter 1: Why Ivan and Jude Reject God

In *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Jude the Obscure*, Ivan and Jude decide to turn away from God, Christianity, and the Christian Church. In order to understand their rejection completely, it's necessary to identify both *why* they reject God, and also *how* they do so. This chapter elucidates the reasons behind Ivan's and Jude's decisions to turn away from God by looking closely at these characters' desire for freedom; their lack of loving relationships, role models, and community; and their belief that God got the world wrong.

Ivan desperately yearns for freedom from God and His laws. He reveals his desire for freedom in his discussion of the Grand Inquisitor. Just like his Grand Inquisitor, Ivan finds Christianity unable to adequately answer the many questions that he has about the world's problems. Because Christianity cannot answer these questions, Ivan decides that he must free himself from the binds of Christian rules. His chosen alternative to Christianity is a type of socialism. Specifically, he decides to create and adhere to a socialistic solution to people's suffering that offers only the most powerful people the freedom to do as they please. Ivan places himself alongside the Grand Inquisitor in this group of powerful "free" people who decide what's best for the masses. These people think they know better than God and believe they are able to do better things for humanity than God himself can do. But because these powerful people are connected to God and ruled by Him in His world, they must free themselves from Him in order to achieve these "good" goals for humanity. This scenario represented in the Grand Inquisitor's brand of socialism appeals to Ivan because it both supposedly allows him to free himself from God and Christianity, and gives him an alternative to the God and Christianity that he cannot accept.

Ivan's acute yearning for freedom from God manifests itself so prominently throughout *The Brothers Karamazov* that some critics argue that Ivan is an atheist. Stewart R. Sutherland specifically explores the portrayal and purpose of Ivan's supposed atheism, contending that Dostoevsky sets up this depiction of atheism in order to contrast it with the option of religious belief (1-2). Dostoevsky himself, early in his development of this novel, even titled it *Atheism* ("Letters" 751). And Ivan does indeed exhibit some atheistic qualities: he chooses to liberate himself from religion, deciding to focus more on his intellectual growth than his spiritual development; and he closely identifies with the Grand Inquisitor, who doesn't believe in God (*Brothers* 242).<sup>3</sup>

But Ivan's beliefs and ideas are complex, and fail to fit neatly into the definition of mere atheism. Sutherland acknowledges that Ivan "seems to be an odd kind of atheist" because he accepts God (25). But the designation of "atheist" hardly fits Ivan at all. He does openly question God's existence, as Dostoevsky points out in a letter to A. N. Maykov which explains the novel's main focus ("Letters" 752). But Ivan also tells Alyosha that rather than worrying about the complexities of atheism versus belief in God, he "accepts God outright simply" (*Brothers* 216). Ivan appears to be more agnostic than atheistic, finding himself plagued with doubts and uncertainties. He states explicitly that it's not God or His existence that he rejects, because he has decided not to question "whether man created God or God man"; instead, Ivan claims he rejects "the world created by Him" (216).<sup>4</sup> Sutherland seemingly acknowledges Ivan's acceptance of the existence of God, but he still overlooks the importance of this acceptance. Ivan does present

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<sup>3</sup> Not only does Ivan identify with the Grand Inquisitor, but he appears to use this character that he created as his own personal mouthpiece. Thus the Grand Inquisitor's arguments ultimately belong to Ivan, and in turn, his atheism is Ivan's apparent atheism.

<sup>4</sup> As I will show later, despite this claim that he is only rejecting God's world, Ivan actually rejects both God and His world.

some atheistic arguments, but ultimately Ivan believes in God; as I'll discuss later, he simply finds too many problems with God's way of handling the affairs of the world.

Instead of calling Ivan a mere atheist, it makes more sense to classify him as a doubter. Alyosha explains that Ivan "has a stormy spirit," and that "[h]e is haunted by a great, unsolved doubt. He is one of those who don't want millions, but an answer to their questions" (72). Ivan wrestles with the idea of having blind faith in God. It seems as if his heart wants to trust in God, but his over-analytical mind won't let him completely give himself over to faith in this God that allows so much suffering in the world.

Jude desires freedom from God as well. His desire, though, stems more from the frustrations of his life than from a belief that he knows a better way than God's. Jude's original conception of Christianity misleads him. Because he equates God with his conception of Christianity, he finds this God he thought he knew to be impossibly unfair, and thus decides that he would rather free himself from all relations to God than to continue following a religion that does nothing but deceive and hurt him. In his forsaking of religion and Christianity, Jude also nearly always seems to call not God's existence into question, but rather God's creation and His way of dealing with humanity.

Towards the end of the novel, though, Jude does begin to question even the existence of God. Near the end of the novel, when Sue bemoans their hopeless lives and exclaims that "[i]t is no use fighting against God!", Jude responds by completely disregarding God's role in their lives, stating instead that they are fighting "only against man and senseless circumstances" (*Jude* 311). The novel shows Jude's progression from desiring to be completely dependent upon God to willing himself free from God's control, even to the point of denying God's existence. Thus while Ivan's beliefs about God appear to remain fairly constant throughout *The Brothers*

*Karamazov*, Jude gradually shifts from a committed faith to a nearly atheistic view in *Jude the Obscure*.

Along with their desire for freedom, Ivan's and Jude's lack of stable and loving relationships also factors into their rejection of God. Neither Ivan nor Jude has a stable family life. Both, in fact, were either abandoned or orphaned by their parents and left in the care of family members or family friends. Ivan's mother died when he was a child, and he and Alyosha were raised by an assortment of relatives and acquaintances. While Alyosha has a clear connection to his mother through their shared faith,<sup>5</sup> Ivan remains disconnected from her. At one point Ivan's father, Fyodor, even forgets that Alyosha's mother is Ivan's mother, too, and Ivan angrily has to remind Fyodor of as much (*Brothers* 126).

Fyodor, while present in Ivan's life for at least part of the time, serves as a poor father figure for him, and does little to offer him any real fatherly support. Instead, Fyodor neglects his sons and allows various other people to step in and take care of them. Specifically, after Ivan and Alyosha's mother dies, Ivan moves from the care of his step-grandmother, to her primary heir, Yefim Petrovich, to a boarding school, and finally to a university. While these early relationships of Ivan's are supportive and helpful (in her will, Ivan's step-grandmother leaves him and Alyosha each enough money for their education and provisions), Ivan's home life still lacks stability and security, and he even recognizes that he and Alyosha were living "not in their own home but on other people's charity" (10).

Karen Stepanian discusses the lack of loving relationships in *The Brothers Karamazov*, arguing that normal familial connections are disrupted in the novel's "world that forgot God,"

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<sup>5</sup> Alyosha and Ivan's mother was religiously devout and prayed continuously. Alyosha's only memory of her is the time she held him up to the religious icons during her prayer time. Alyosha develops a piety similar to his mother's; his religious devotion eventually leads him to enter the Christian monastery.

and in their place, “orphanhood becomes a dominant form of being” (89). For this reason, Ivan’s isolation is not completely his fault: he lives in a world that discourages loving relationships and instead promotes individuality and disconnectedness. His isolation is at least in part a product and reflection of his society’s own isolation, and as such is to be expected.

*Jude the Obscure*, too, reveals a pattern of disjointed families. Jude’s parents are completely absent from his life. They both died when Jude was young, leaving his great aunt to raise him. She fails to give him adequate love and attention, though, and Jude consequently lives most of his early life alone. Even when he gets older, Jude’s aunt only offers advice and support sparingly, and often nags Jude for not listening to her earlier advice. Unlike Ivan, though, Jude has no siblings to support him, making his family life even more isolated and alone.

Related to their disconnectedness, Jude’s family also manifests a supposed inherent inability to stay married. Jude’s great aunt tells him several times that he should not marry because of this marital problem of the Fawley family. His parents and one of his aunts find themselves so unable to “get on together” in marriage that they get divorces (*Jude* 58). Sue, Jude’s cousin and lover, also remarks on the Fawley family’s tendency towards divorce, calling them “an odd and peculiar family” that is unfit for marriage (149). Jude’s family lacks both the constancy and intimacy of marriage, and this lack partly explains why he finds no immediate relatives to turn to in his times of need.

In fact, Jude has no one close to him that he can turn to. He has no true loving relationship in his life: nobody ever completely and openly loves him. Even as a small boy, his great aunt only takes care of him obligatorily, never showing any visible fondness for him. When hired to scare away the crows, Jude realizes that these birds are unloved like him, and both he and the birds “liv[e] in a world which did not want them” (*Jude* 8). The novel’s later description

of Little Father Time as “wanted by nobody” (247) also aptly describes young Jude’s predicament. Just like his son Father Time, Jude begins and ends his life ultimately alone, living a life with few true experiences of pure love. Throughout his life, Jude also loses or fails to gain everyone and everything that he loves: he worships Christminster and initially desires an education there above everything else, but society prevents him from becoming a true scholar of Christminster’s college; he loves Sue, but is ultimately separated from her when she returns to her marriage with Phillotson; and he loves his children, but loses them as well when Father Time commits his murders and suicide.

Because Ivan and Jude have little solidarity in their families, they have no immediate familial role models to follow. They lack mentors not only in their families, but also in every part of their lives, and this absence of encouraging mentors in their lives also negatively affects their relationship with God and increases their cynicism. *The Brothers Karamazov* presents no evidence that Ivan had any steady role models to guide him through his early years; instead, his adolescence consists of irregular travel, either to a new foster home or to a different school. Yefim Petrovich has the potential to mentor Ivan, but he sends Ivan away to boarding school and dies just a few years later. At his boarding school, Ivan has a tutor who also seems to figure importantly in this stage of Ivan’s life, but he also dies before Ivan graduates. Ivan’s uprooted life, therefore, combined with the loss of nearly everyone close to him, prevents him from settling down in one place or finding a positive adult influence in his life.

Because Ivan has had few intimate relationships in his life, he doesn’t know how to act in social settings; he therefore appears aloof, unsociable, and unknowable to most of his acquaintances. The novel’s narrator admits that he sees Ivan as “an enigmatic figure” (*Brothers* 12). Alyosha too finds Ivan to be as mysterious and puzzling as “a riddle” (211). Ivan seems so

inscrutable to those around him because he remains quiet and detached in most of his interactions with people, especially his father. Ivan tries to avoid talking with his father altogether, but almost every time he does speak to Fyodor, he immediately loses his patience and snaps abusively at him, as happens when the family is leaving Alyosha's monastery (81).

Ivan's spiritual outlook is affected not only by his absence of family and close friends, but also by his lack of a spiritual mentor to lead him down the proper path of Christian faith. While Alyosha enters the monastery and finds Zosima as an ideal Christian model who guides him towards stronger faith and a greater understanding of love, Ivan remains out in the secular world of universities. His decision to pursue the more isolated life of the mind instead of the monk's more ascetic but communal lifestyle cements the absence of an older Christian example in his life.<sup>6</sup>

Jude has no mentor to support him in his spiritual upbringing either, and this lack of a spiritual guide also contributes to his struggle with faith. But unlike Ivan, who appears content with his isolation, Jude longs for a connection with a mentor (or at least an established entity), and thus attempts to find one that will guide him. He spends much of his childhood and all of his adult life searching for a foundation that will ground him in life and provide him with "something to anchor on, to cling to" (*Jude* 18). He first looks to God and Christianity to be this "anchor." At the very beginning of the novel, he tries to pray simply because he wants to see Christminster. He had heard from different people that prayer could occasionally help you get things you want, and so he prays and does indeed get to see the far-off city (14). He also turns to prayer and religion when he tries to keep his mind away from thoughts about Sue, spending all

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<sup>6</sup> As I'll discuss in the next chapter, Ivan's one interaction with Zosima at the beginning of the novel reveals the weaknesses in Ivan's views of God, as well as his possible yearning for a mentor like Zosima.

his free time studying Scripture and reading Church history (170). But he soon learns that his struggle against his fleshly desires will not be won through his attempts at religiosity, and that indeed this faith is no sturdy foundation for his life after all. At another point in the novel, while once again thinking about his love for Sue, Jude feels compelled to pray to ward off his tempting thoughts. He quickly gives up, though, deciding that “[it is] quite impossible ... to ask to be delivered from temptation when your heart’s desire [is] to be tempted unto seventy times seven” (84-5). At this point, when Jude begins trying to use Christianity to save himself from his fleshly desires, his attempts to follow the Christian God appear half-hearted. Soon after these attempts, Jude abandons his religious efforts completely.

Not only does Jude look to Christianity for his foundation, but he also looks to several people and ideas related to those people as potential mentors and guides. At the beginning of the novel, he attempts to turn to his former teacher Mr. Phillotson and the city of Christminster to which Phillotson moves. Jude idealizes and idolizes Phillotson and Christminster, and believes that his own moving to Christminster and entering into the university will fulfill and ground him as it supposedly fulfilled and grounded his beloved teacher. Phillotson offers Jude his first glimpse of a person uprooting himself and going to a new place in search of a better life. Jude idealistically believes that Phillotson has too much intelligence and talent to live in Marygreen, and that he will do well in Christminster (*Jude* 5). He idealizes Christminster even before he sees it for the first time. When he finally does see it from far away, he sees only its glittery gold appearance, which he equates with “the heavenly Jerusalem” (13). He sees Christminster as the end goal for his aspirations, focusing on its positive aspects and ignoring its negative parts.

Both Christminster and Phillotson eventually let Jude down, though, and ultimately appear unfeeling towards his loneliness and lack of mentor. When Jude finally gets to

Christminster, the narrator personifies the college's buildings to reveal Jude's dashed hopes of finding a foundation in it: to Jude, the buildings' formerly "sympathetic countenances" are gone, and in their place are "pompous" looks that lack "[t]he spirits of the great men" that had come to the university before him (*Jude* 71). Jude's dream of grounding himself in Christminster is quickly dashed, and once he realizes that Christminster will never serve as his foundation, his dream explodes "like an iridescent soap-bubble" (100). He sees that he will find no foundation in either Phillotson or Christminster, and once he understands this fact, he begins rapidly spiraling into despair.

But Jude looks for a foundation in other places as well. He briefly considers Arabella's relationship as a possible ground for his life, but quickly sees the folly in that endeavor when he realizes she merely presents a façade of innocence and beauty, and that she is actually quite cunning, worldly, and physically unattractive. When Jude realizes her hair and dimples are mostly fake, and when she unsympathetically demands that he kill their pig, Jude realizes that she is not at all the ideal woman he used to think she was.

Later in the novel, Jude thinks that the author of a moving and inspirational hymn might possibly serve as the mentor and friend that he so desperately seeks. In relation to this man and Jude's desire for a personal connection, Jude even refers to himself as "[a] hungry soul in pursuit of a full soul" (*Jude* 173). But the composer has no desire to befriend Jude, and isn't at all the "full soul" he had originally imagined. He is instead a searching and selfish person just like everyone else Jude knows.

Jude's last hope for a firm foundation is Sue, who Jude believes is finally going to provide the support that he's been looking for everywhere. He idealizes Sue even more than Phillotson and Christminster. When he first sees her, he remarks on her job as an engraver,

which he calls her “sweet, saintly, Christian business” (76). Jude fully believes that in Sue he has finally “found anchorage for his thoughts” (79), and this thought excites him. He sees Sue as the perfect woman, and hopes that his relationship with her will finally give him the solid grounding that he so desperately seeks. Not even Sue can support him, though, and she eventually leaves him because her fears about the immorality of their supposedly extramarital relationship completely consume her.

Not only do Sue’s imperfections cause Jude to lose all hope of finding a solid foundation in his life, but she also contributes to his loss of faith in God, mostly because she openly questions his already fragile beliefs. At the beginning of the novel, Jude appears to be a Christian, and allows Christianity to shape his beliefs and worldview.<sup>7</sup> Sue, on the other hand, has no solid religious beliefs until the very end of the novel, and instead seems to rely solely on reason and logic to support her worldview.

When Sue spends time with Jude, she openly challenges his beliefs. At one point she asks him how the saints of his religion will help him if he decides to pursue a relationship with her, but does so in a mocking way by calling Christianity’s saints “demigods” that reside in a “Pantheon” (*Jude* 147). She doubts faith and religious beliefs, believing that it constricts people and forces them to do things they don’t want to do. She even says that she enjoys being free from laws, implicitly including the regulations of Christianity (122). Sue’s skepticism towards religion influences Jude’s own growing disbelief, and each time he interacts with her he seems to lose more of his faith.

At the end of the novel, after Sue has converted to a harsh and self-abusing form of Christianity, Jude describes her as formerly being someone “who saw all [*his*] superstitions as

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<sup>7</sup> Jude tells Sue that Christianity is one of the things in life he accepts “on trust” (*Jude* 135).

cobwebs that she could brush away with a word” (*Jude* 363). Sue, as she is before her trauma-induced conversion, presents the disbelief and doubts of many others around her, and these doubts affect Jude’s beliefs, ultimately persuading him to leave behind his religion and instead accept a life devoted solely to reason. In effect, Sue leads Jude intellectually away from both God and Christianity.<sup>8</sup>

While Sue fails to serve as an adequate foundation for Jude, and while she encourages Jude’s rejection of God, she also serves as Jude’s confidant whom he tells about his decreasing faith in God. When Sue fears that Jude, because of his religious beliefs, thinks she has sinned by telling him about her marital problems, Jude assures her that while he used to follow his religion wholeheartedly, he has recently begun to turn away from his doctrines (*Jude* 191). Faced with having to choose between an ecclesiastical career and his love for Sue, Jude chooses Sue. He does so because he cannot relinquish his love for her, and he considers it “glaringly inconsistent” for him to be a minister of a religion that sees sexuality as negative (193). Eventually Jude abandons his beliefs in exchange for being able to be with Sue, not because she forces him to, but because he feels he cannot measure up to a religion so seemingly grounded in pleasing society. Sue embraces the aforementioned self-punishing form of Christianity after Father Time kills her children and himself, and this conversion rids Jude of the last bit of faith that he has (319). By the end of the novel, Sue becomes being exactly the opposite of what Jude originally wants her to be: he longs for her to ground him in his unstable and lonely life, but instead she takes what little faith he has and destroys it, and then leaves him even lonelier than he was before he met her.

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<sup>8</sup> Interestingly, Sue here mirrors Ivan, as both have strong doubts about God and Christianity that cause them (at least initially) to reject God. Both also serve as mentors for other characters, Ivan for Smerdyakov and Sue for Jude. As mentors, these two characters introduce their mentees to their doubts, and instill a new belief system that radically affects the rest of their mentees’ lives.

Because Jude's search for a solid foundation ends in futility and because "[f]rustration is the permanent condition of his life" (Alvarez 114), he gradually loses his faith in both God and the world. His loss of faith and descent into cynicism begins early on in his childhood, when he starts to see the world as deceptive and disappointing. While he initially believes Latin and Greek have easy-to-memorize systems that act as a code for their translation, once he begins studying these languages he sees that his belief is a "grand delusion," and that he will have to spend years memorizing countless words and grammatical rules (*Jude* 23). Marjorie Garson identifies a parallel between this realization and Jude's later job as a stonemason, where he must work "laboriously and fragmentedly, by learning to shape one letter at a time" (460). As he grows up and seeks to fulfill his various aspirations, Jude realizes that the world is just like Latin and Greek: much more complicated and imperfect than his idealistic and immature self wants to believe.

Not only are Ivan's and Jude's lives marked by an almost complete absence of loving relationships and firm foundations, but they are also separated from supportive communities. In Ivan's case, he willingly takes himself out of his surrounding community because he cannot relate to others and doesn't understand how to interact with them; in Jude's case, his surrounding community is already so fragmented and damaged that he cannot find an adequate place in it, and thus decides to separate himself from it. In both cases, the results of their leaving communities are severe. Both Ivan and Jude feel lonely and depressed outside of community, and both seek forms of community to reunite with.

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevsky presents the Christian Church as the primary community from which Ivan has separated himself. Father Zosima points out that the Church is closely connected to God. He explains that someone "who does not believe in God will not

believe in God's people," and that "[h]e who believes in God's people will see His Holiness too, even though he had not believed it till then" (*Brothers* 273). This close relationship between the Christian Church and God creates a problem for Ivan, because it means he cannot have community without God: in *The Brothers Karamazov*, the two go hand in hand. By isolating himself from God, he has no other choice but to distance himself from the Christian community as well. Hence Ivan's social problems appear simultaneously as the cause and the effect of his turning away from God: because God is the foundation of the Christian Church in *The Brothers Karamazov*, and because the Christian Church represents the one supposedly totally unified community on earth, separating himself from God inevitably leads to separating himself from this community.

This cutting off of social contact as one of Ivan's ways of rebelling against God works in two ways. First, it flies directly in the face of God's plan for a united and supportive Church that accepts and encourages everyone. By attacking God's plan for a Church body, Ivan is attacking God himself and the establishments He has created on earth. Second, Ivan cuts off all social contact in order to achieve the aforementioned freedom and power that he so desperately desires. Towards the end of the novel, he finds himself "very fond of being alone" (*Brothers* 571). By isolating himself from those around him, Ivan believes that he will be able to cut off all social ties that so constrict, bind, and suffocate him. He wants to achieve complete freedom from restrictions and boundaries, and only by ridding himself of social interaction can he even begin to get rid of these social ties. These social ties are not so easy to break, however, as Ivan sees when Alyosha and his family remain by him despite Ivan's attempts to push them away. Even when Ivan demands that Alyosha not talk to him ever again, Alyosha still tells him to come to him first if he ever needs anything (570). Alyosha also continues to worry about Ivan throughout

the novel, asking others about his well-being and periodically checking on him himself. The boundaries and ties that God has set in place in Ivan's life, then, are immutable: try as he might, nothing Ivan does will ever sever his connection to God and His people so that he can become independent.<sup>9</sup>

But while Ivan mostly separates himself from others, he does ultimately seek out and find a form of community where he belongs. He does so by creating a very small community of his own towards the end of the novel. And interestingly, the shape that Ivan's community takes relates to his desire for independence from God. As he begins losing his sanity, Ivan has hallucinations of a devil that comes to visit him. This devil comes to visit him several times, each time seemingly without Ivan's permission. During each visit, they discuss Ivan's life, focusing on his philosophies and views of the world.

This imagined devil serves as a strange version of Ivan's own created community. He acts "familiarily" with the devil (*Brothers* 604), who calls Ivan his "dear friend" (605), and this

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<sup>9</sup> While Ivan does much to isolate himself from community in general and the Church in particular, one outsider character in *The Brothers Karamazov*, Smerdyakov, cuts off his ties with all people. He specifically resents his connection to the Russian people. He tells Marya Kondratyevna that he "hate[s] all Russia" and has no respect for his own people (*Brothers* 206). Everyone around him has taunted him and treated him cruelly for being the son of an idiot woman and for not having a father, and this treatment has created a bitter resentment and hatred in Smerdyakov's heart, not only towards his peers, but towards all of Russian society. He therefore decides to separate himself from all people around him. While he still interacts with people, particularly Fyodor, Grigory, and Martha, he does so contemptuously, showing obvious scorn for others.

Smerdyakov figures significantly into the question of rejecting community in *The Brothers Karamazov* not only because he is the only one who fully shuns those around him, but because he is also the only character completely shunned by the other characters. While Ivan at least has a legitimate family that cares for him, and Father Zosima who understands him, Smerdyakov has no one. He is the illegitimate child of Fyodor, who despises him, and the adopted child of Fyodor's servants Grigory and Martha, who only tolerate him. He has no peer group like Ivan had at his university, and his only mentor, Ivan, loathes him. Thus Smerdyakov is the novel's only character who cannot and will not fit into society. His lack of communal support may explain why Smerdyakov commits suicide: because no one loves him, and because no one is around to persuade him to change his mind, Smerdyakov kills himself.

devil knows him better than Ivan's other acquaintances. In this moment, Ivan seems to be attempting, albeit unconsciously and unwillingly, to supersede the Christian community with his own uniquely-designed, "closely-knit" community.

Jude also finds himself alienated from his community in *Jude the Obscure*; his separation, however, is not as voluntary as Ivan's. While Ivan still has communities to return to, the communities around Jude have broken down so much that few remain for him to join. As Simon Gatrell points out, "[Jude's] search in the novel is that of the isolated man for a community that will accept him and help him to achieve his ambitions" (155). Everywhere Jude goes, the communities that do still exist turn him away, whether it's at Christminster's university or when he and his family look for a place to stay in Christminster.

The communities that do exist in Jude's world hold problematic views of God and religion. Many of their views are wrapped up in strict rules and superstitions. One of these superstitions that are intermingled with rules shows up when Jude and Sue are hired to repair a church's engraved Ten Commandments. When some people from the church find out that the couple is not married, they begin gossiping about them, interspersing their rumors with a story of the church's previous stone restorers. In this story, the men who are supposed to repair the Ten Commandments get too drunk to finish the job, but a devil comes in and finishes it for them. This devil maligns the Commandments, though, blacking out the word "not" for each commandment. A little while after Jude and Sue overhear the church members telling this story, they find out that they've been excused from their job (270-4). This instance of mingling superstition with societal rules reveals this particular church community's tendency to associate "inappropriate" actions such as drinking and sexual relationships outside of marriage with

evilness and the devil. It also shows the negative effect that these views have on people who don't fit within their rigid interpretations.

Jude also alludes to these troublesome views when he explains to the Remembrance Day crowd that he sees a problem in their culture's "social formulas" (297). While he is explicitly referring to his society's view of marriage, Jude's indictment also seems to encompass society's view and portrayal of religion and God. Marriage is one of the Church's sacraments, and as such it has been twisted and skewed from its original intention in Hardy's novel. As the next chapter discusses, Sue points out that the Church took the biblical portrayal of a sexual relationship and manipulated it, ridding the portrayal of any significance or relevance for marriage and sexual intimacy. In Jude's world, society and the Church have taken basic aspects of Christianity, including marriage, and manipulated them to fit their own personal agendas. In a sense, Jude's society has taken the true God of Christianity and shoved Him out of Christianity. Thus Barry N. Schwartz's analysis of Jude as an "epic hero, lacking divine intervention, who becomes one of the first anti-heroes of existentialism and able guide to the realities of twentieth-century life" (793) is almost, but not completely, accurate. Jude does indeed seem to lack divine intervention, but this lack appears partly because of Jude's and society's expectations of the type of intervention they'll receive.<sup>10</sup>

Because Jude cannot find a place to fit in within his society, he decides to leave it. But while Jude ultimately removes himself from those around him, he still yearns to be part of a social group that will accept him. Marjorie Garson specifically notes Jude's "desire to be lifted above competing voices, absorbed into a unified community" (458). He longs for a social group

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<sup>10</sup> As I'll discuss in the third chapter, the societies of *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Jude the Obscure* have completely separated God from Christianity, and the Christianity that Ivan and Jude understand is not true Christianity.

that will accept him and Sue together, and that will nurture both his spiritual and intellectual needs. All he finds instead, though, is isolation and loneliness. Where he thinks he will find the intellectuals of Christminster, he instead only finds ghostly specters of the community that in Jude's mind must have once existed at Christminster's university (*Jude* 68). His conversations with this imaginary community around him further reveals Jude's lack of a true community, as he himself realizes with frustration (69). And by the end of the novel, Jude realizes that he will be "an outsider to the end of [his] days" (298).

Thus, because of a combination of neglect from the community and Ivan's and Jude's intentional rejection of it, neither outsider character has communities to support him. But Garson makes an interesting point related to community. She argues that, in *Jude the Obscure*, Jude exhibits a "logocentric wistfulness" that creates and encourages his longing for oneness with "a transcendent reality behind words and signs" (458). Jude's world consists of words and written text, and many times these words represent actual entities. Jude sees these words that stand for real things and unconsciously translates this notion to other parts of his life. For example, he thinks that just having the desire to be a scholar is nearly enough to make him one, and that loving Sue is enough to create a perfect union between them. With this idea in mind, then, the plot of *Jude* becomes a narrative of Jude's realizing that ideas and longings don't always translate into reality. Garson argues that Jude's desire to "make the individual whole, and unite him creatively with an organic community" remains throughout the novel "intrinsically unrealizable" (460), and she is mostly right. Hardy does indeed present Jude's life as completely void of potential for realizing any of his goals and dreams. And this impossibility of achieving goals appears controlled mostly by Fate. But Garson overlooks the novel's suggestion that while

achieving some goals may be impossible for Jude, others are not. The answer that Hardy's novel subtly presents, as the third chapter explains, is to return to the traditional Christian ideal of love.

While Ivan's and Jude's desire for freedom from God, combined with their lack of loving relationships, strongly influence their turning away from God, the most significant reason why Ivan and Jude reject God is because they feel like His plan is horribly wrong. Ivan's problem with God concerns His ability to be a proper God. More precisely, the problem Ivan finds with God has to do with His creation, namely the suffering that exists in the world that God created. Similarly, Ivan has a problem with the way God interacts with humanity. When he explains to Alyosha why he doesn't accept God, he says that it is because he doesn't accept the way God ordered the world and its laws. Instead of waiting for the afterlife to see all the retribution distributed for sin and suffering, he "want[s] to see with [his] own eyes the hind lie down with the lion and the victim rise up and embrace his murderer" (*Brothers* 225). Ivan is angry because God appears apathetic to the suffering of innocents in the world. He is also infuriated that this suffering is a part of God's plan in the first place. He realizes that God's plan includes freedom of choice for humanity, but he also sees that humans are inevitably bound to make the wrong choice in deciding to have knowledge, thus heaping pain and suffering on themselves. Ivan concludes that this knowledge is not worth the suffering, wherein lies his problem with God's plan (226). Because Ivan cannot accept suffering, especially the suffering of innocent children, he cannot rationally allow himself to accept God and the plan for the world He has created.

Jude sees problems with God's world, too. When attempting simultaneously to take care of a neighbor's farm plot and the birds that try to eat the farm's seeds, he notices a "flaw in the terrestrial scheme, by which what was good for God's birds was bad for God's gardener" (*Jude* 10). Throughout the novel, Jude sees that real life doesn't always measure up with his idealistic

understandings of how things should be, and he attributes this problem to the inadequacy of God's world and His way of interacting with it. Because Jude cannot reconcile the unfairness of life with God's Providence, he chooses to cut himself off completely from God, and ultimately even cuts himself off from God's world by committing suicide.

Jude gradually loses his faith in the world, God, and Christianity, and thus becomes cynical and jaded. After Arabella tricks him into marrying her, Jude realizes that Arabella has little feeling, and this realization rids him of all his youthful sentimentality (*Jude* 61). This moment also begins his gradual descent into cynicism that lasts throughout the rest of the novel. As Jude travels from place to place in search of a stable life, he sees the many flaws and problems in the world and begins to question his belief that everything works out for good (190). Interacting with Sue further reveals his jaded feelings, because it's in their conversations that he admits how "[his] experiences go contrary to [his] dogmas" (187), and that therefore "[his] doctrines and [he] begin to part company" (191). Life treats Jude harshly, and he reacts by re-evaluating his beliefs and reformulating his outlook on life. Once Sue turns to her radical brand of Christianity after their children's deaths, Jude completely abandons his optimism and hopefulness. He tells her that her actions take last shreds of respect he had left for the Church out of him (319). Over the course of the novel, Jude's God and religion fail him, and he reacts by forsaking his faith in the God that he believed wanted humanity's best. *Jude the Obscure* thus illustrates Jude's gradual turn from a completely idealistic and optimistic outlook to a more realistic and jaded one.

## Chapter 2: How Ivan and Jude Reject God

Ivan and Jude thus decide to turn away from God because of a complex interaction between their need for independence, their lack of positive relationships and community, their generally cynical outlook, and their disapproval of God's way of ruling the world. But not only do Ivan and Jude have multiple and interrelated reasons for rejecting God, their rejection also manifests itself in the novels in myriad ways, namely through their ideological rejection and their passivity that allows murders to happen.

Both Ivan and Jude reject God using their intellects. Ivan chooses to rebel by creating intellectual theories that rationalize his rejection. Specifically, he creates theories and arguments that both present his worldview and that accuse God of the many faults and problems he has found in His creation. Ivan writes an article that presents his socialist argument that the authority of the Christian Church should encompass the entire secular state. He supports this argument by saying that in this model, the Church's elevated authority would allow the Church to help criminals mend their ways and also potentially prevent future crime (*Brothers* 56). In this theory, Ivan openly presents a socialist solution to the problems he sees with the structure of government. He creates an intellectual and reasoned alternative to the world's current structure, and in doing so, shows that he finds the current world systems to be lacking. In attacking the government, Ivan is also attacking the system that the Christian God has set in place to watch over humanity.<sup>11</sup> Hence his challenge to the government stands as a challenge to God Himself.

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<sup>11</sup> See Romans 13, which states at the beginning that all people should obey the government, because "[t]he authorities that exist have been established by God" and that "whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted."

Ivan's article also attacks immortality. According to Ivan, without immortality and God, everything becomes lawful,<sup>12</sup> and that in this state of amorality, "crime [is] ... recognized as the inevitable, the most rational, even honorable outcome" (*Brothers* 60). Here again Ivan attacks the current world order that religion has helped to perpetuate, and chooses to offer his own alternatives to this traditional model. The religious model of virtue and goodness becomes irrelevant in Ivan's theoretical world without immortality, and in their place, crime and vice become perfectly acceptable and even expected.

Ivan uses his reasoning skills most effectively in rebelling against God when he presents his argument on the suffering of children. He presents his "[c]harming pictures" (*Brothers* 222) of real-life gruesome accounts of children suffering, ultimately arguing that he cannot understand the logic of allowing this senseless suffering to happen.<sup>13</sup> Ivan's final conclusion is that God's promise of harmony and forgiveness in heaven falls flat because children's "tears are unatoned for," and because Ivan wants justice right now on Earth (225). Therefore, since this suffering finds no ultimate justice in Ivan's eyes, and because the world contains such ghastly horrors that God allows to happen, Ivan has no choice but to reject God's world (226). In doing so, as Camus explains, Ivan is also rejecting "the basic interdependence, introduced by Christianity, between suffering and truth" (837). Because Ivan cannot accept the fact that in Christian theology, some people will always be suffering, he also cannot accept the God of Christianity who allows this suffering.

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<sup>12</sup> As Albert Camus points out, the introduction to this "everything is permitted" philosophy marks the beginning of modern nihilism (838).

<sup>13</sup> Ivan's argument here indeed stands strong, and Dostoevsky even described it as "irrefutable" ("Letters" 758). As I'll show in my third chapter, though, the novel presents an equally complex and compelling response to Ivan's challenge of God's world.

Although this argument about God's seeming apathy towards the suffering of children remains the most heartrending part of his speech, Ivan's most noteworthy theoretical challenge to God appears in the argument of his "Grand Inquisitor." In this section, Ivan argues that in Christianity, God has demanded too much of most humans because most people are unable to forsake the basic needs of human life to follow Christ. He argues that the majority of humanity is too weak to experience the true freedom that Christ offers in Christianity, and that they would rather have peace than freedom (*Brothers* 235). Therefore, in place of following Christ, the Grand Inquisitor suggests that the Church supply humanity with these needs. Specifically, the Grand Inquisitor presents his own take on the Devil's tempting of Christ with the "three powers" that alone are able to make humans happy; he labels these three temptations as "miracle, mystery, and authority" (236). Only when the Church takes complete control over humanity by offering it these three needs will humans be satisfied.

This challenge to the fundamentals of Christianity stands out as Ivan's clearest and most direct challenge to God's world and laws. Here Ivan fully reveals both his dissatisfaction with God and his plan to overthrow what he thinks is an inadequate ruling method, namely the independence that Christianity offers its followers through Christ. His Grand Inquisitor attacks Christ for setting up a religion designed only for the elite, and Ivan too attacks God for not caring about the weak who are unable to abide by His harsh laws and live in the spirit of freedom that Christianity requires. Ivan's accusations against God present the most focused and in-depth instance of an outsider character attacking God for making the world the wrong way. Even Dostoevsky acknowledged that Ivan's challenge presents the most "difficult, that is, shrewd, ideas" that still have no clear answer ("Letters" 753). Ivan has thought about the weaknesses of

Christianity, and in his speeches about suffering and the Grand Inquisitor, he attacks all the major problems and offers his own solutions to them.

But while Ivan appear strong and firm in his convincing presentations of theories and arguments that attack God, this intellectual onslaught against Christianity ultimately reflects Ivan's wavering religious beliefs and inability to commit to one viewpoint. He stands reluctantly between belief and disbelief, choosing not to take a firm stance either way. As Gary Saul Morson points out, Ivan wants merely to entertain divergent views without choosing between them (485). Edward Wasiolek further notes that just as *The Brothers Karamazov* portrays Dmitri's external choice between murdering his father or sparing him, so it shows Ivan as a character deeply internally divided between faith in God and rejection of His creation (151); the novel's "external drama is Ivan's internal drama" (150). While other characters are able to make firm decisions and stand by them, Ivan finds himself overwhelmed with indecision, and thus he chooses to not take a side in the important beliefs of his life. He seems to fear the depth of emotional commitment that comes with taking a definite stance and thus chooses instead to play it safe inside his familiar and safe realm of reason and logic. Ivan also knows that commitment implies unyielding loyalty, even when this loyalty comes into conflict with the mind, and he is therefore unwilling to commit to a belief system.

He cannot even commit to any of the major arguments that he expounds. His presentation of his article's argument about the Church, government, and immortality, is at least partially sarcastic, although he admits to Zosima that he "wasn't altogether joking" (*Brothers* 61). Immediately after telling Alyosha his Grand Inquisitor story that he appears to be so passionate

about, he backtracks and says that “it’s all nonsense” and is really “only a senseless poem of a senseless student” (243).<sup>14,15</sup>

Interestingly, Ivan’s inability to make a choice mirrors his view of God. Just as Ivan cannot act decisively and thus remains inactive, so he sees God as remaining passive in spite of the world’s many quandaries. Ivan accuses God of not responding to his accusations, but he himself is unwilling to help others; he does little throughout the novel to ease the suffering that he seems to be so concerned about. In fact, as I’ll discuss shortly, Ivan is absent in the most crucial moment of suffering in the novel: Fyodor’s murder. Ivan remains nearly as passive throughout the novel as his Grand Inquisitor’s Christ does. Indeed, throughout the majority of the novel, Ivan’s main actions involve verbally explicating his intellectual theories. Smerdyakov calls Ivan out on his passivity, telling him that although he used to be brave, now “[he] won’t dare to do anything” (*Brothers* 600). He believes that God is unwilling or unable to rid the world of suffering, but ironically, it is Ivan himself that is unwilling or unable to act in any meaningful way.

Jude also uses his intellect to reject God. His studies initially lead him closer to God, mainly because he studies to be a church minister. But as Jude progresses through his life and realizes that he won’t be able to achieve his career and social aspirations, his intellectual pursuits become more secular, and his mindset becomes more cynical. Sue introduces him to her own more secular views, and he eventually completely converts to them. He even realizes towards the

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<sup>14</sup> Paradoxically, Ivan commits to his non-commitment. In attempting to not choose a side, he chooses the not-choosing side. See Morson’s “Paradoxical Dostoevsky” for a more detailed exploration of *The Brothers Karamazov*’s numerous instances of paradox.

<sup>15</sup> But even while Ivan appears unable to commit to a stance, he seems to see the value in being able to do so, as he admires Alyosha’s ability to “stand firm” in his beliefs (210).

end of the novel that his mentality has been drawing ever closer to the worldly views that Sue holds when they first meet (*Jude* 279).

The height of Jude's intellectual rejection of God appears in his speech at the Remembrance Day parade. There Jude, the "Tutor of St. Slums" (295), speaks before a large crowd of people about his latest theory about the inability of one person to social-climb as he attempted. He also explains that while he used to hold "a neat stock of fixed opinions," his experiences in life have taken those opinions away and replaced them with doubt and uncertainties (297).

While this scene doesn't directly mention God or Christianity, the very absence of any spirituality or religion highlights Jude's total renunciation of all things religious. While earlier in the novel, Jude often refers to God's Providence and will, by the time he returns to Christminster, he has lost all faith in this divine Providence and will that he hoped would guide him towards his goals in life. In place of this faith in God, at the Remembrance Day parade Jude has only his unrealized dreams and frustrations with society to talk about.

This moment in *Jude the Obscure* illustrates Jude's intellectual rejection of God. The significant difference between Jude's intellectual rejection of God and Ivan's, though, is that while Ivan's rejection is primarily reasoning-based, Jude's is based more on his own personal experiences. Specifically, Ivan bases his rejection on stories and theories that he has heard from other people, while Jude turns away from God because of the negative events of his life. At the beginning of the novel, Jude is optimistic about the future, believing that he will achieve success in his life. As soon as he learns that his beloved mentor Phillotson is moving to Christminster, he decides that he himself will move there as well once he gets older. Because he loves learning and knowledge, Jude also decides early on that he will be a scholar at Christminster. A bit later in the

novel, after falling in love with Sue, Jude also decides that committing his life to Sue will make both of them happy and give both of them fulfilled lives. But the circumstances of his life inevitably let him down, and in the end he feels like he has no reasons left to follow God.

Ivan and Jude turn away from God ideologically, but their most dangerous rejection of God appears when they allow murders to happen. In Ivan's case, he implicitly gives Smerdyakov permission to murder Fyodor. After his talk with Alyosha about suffering and the Grand Inquisitor, Ivan returns to his father's house. There Smerdyakov greets him and hints at the probability of Fyodor's murder occurring if Ivan leaves town. He even explains in detail how no one will be around to see the murder because Smerdyakov's adopted parents Martha and Grigory will be incapacitated from drinking and he will supposedly be unconscious from a severe epileptic seizure. This conversation, combined with Smerdyakov's haughty self-assuredness, irritates Ivan and causes him to rush angrily back to his room and, seemingly without a reason, decide to leave town. Ivan does indeed leave the next day. He even officially confirms his disdain for Fyodor by promising to do business for him in Chermashnya on the way, but then immediately deciding not to once he drives away. Smerdyakov then takes Ivan's leaving as a signal of permission to kill Fyodor, stating that their earlier conversation was "worthwhile" in convincing Ivan to leave (*Brothers* 259); later that same night, Smerdyakov does indeed kill Fyodor.

Although Ivan never physically kills his father, he consciously knows from Smerdyakov's hints that something terrible will happen to Fyodor if he leaves. But in spite of knowing that Smerdyakov is up to no good, and even *because* he knows as much, Ivan leaves town, thus implicitly condoning Fyodor's murder. Dostoevsky acknowledges Ivan's responsibility and his at least partial awareness of his actions in a letter to E. N. Lebedev, stating

that “Ivan Fyodorovich participated in the murder only obliquely and remotely” when he “*seemed to permit* Smerdyakov to commit that crime. Smerdyakov had to have that *permission*” (“Letters” 763). Ivan even acknowledges his own responsibility for the crime after he visits Smerdyakov for the second time. He admits to himself that he is just as guilty as Smerdyakov for the murder because he “put him up to it” (*Brothers* 585). Ivan had an idea that something terrible was going to happen to his father if he left town, but he left anyway. His hatred for Fyodor and his buffoonery had reached its boiling point, and he could not tolerate his father any longer.

Not only does Ivan condone Fyodor’s murder, but he also serves as Smerdyakov’s mentor. He teaches Smerdyakov how to think critically as he himself does, and he introduces him to the Western thinking that has so drastically influenced his own worldview. In doing so, Ivan molds Smerdyakov’s mind, filling it with the theories that lead to Smerdyakov’s atheism and extreme cynicism. Specifically, Ivan teaches Smerdyakov about his theory concerning immortality and virtue. Smerdyakov later admits to Ivan that this idea spurred him on in his decision to commit murder (*Brothers* 599). Smerdyakov’s atheistic and cynical worldview ultimately leads him to his plan to murder Fyodor and later kill himself. Smerdyakov even considers himself Ivan’s tool and “faithful servant” who commits the murder as part of Ivan’s bidding (590).

In his discussion of paradox in *The Brothers Karamazov*, Morson explains that Ivan teaches Smerdyakov how to use paradox in thinking critically. He argues that while Ivan uses paradox to keep from making a decision, Smerdyakov employs it “to mock both faith and logic” (486). Thus, in mentoring Smerdyakov, Ivan creates a monster of sorts. Smerdyakov not only understands the implications of Ivan’s theories, but he takes these theories all the way to their logical conclusions and acts accordingly, with horrifying results. Ultimately, Ivan lacks the

amorality, contempt, and fearlessness required to commit the actions that his theories require, so he fills Smerdyakov with these theories as a way to act them out from a safe distance.

Morson also argues that not only is Ivan indirectly responsible for Smerdyakov's actions, but that Ivan has already mentally committed Fyodor's murder when he sees Fyodor as "a walking corpse" the night before he leaves, and that this scene actually serves as the novel's otherwise missing murder scene (487-8). Even Ivan himself, when looking back at the events surrounding Fyodor's death, considers this moment "the basest action of his life" (*Brothers* 255). Martin Goldstein makes note of Ivan's guilt as well, noting that in knocking down the peasant on his way to see Smerdyakov, Ivan "is symbolically committing the murder he was not brave enough to do in his own person" (338). Most significantly, Alyosha psychically senses Ivan's guilt and assures him that he did not commit the crime, even in spite of his having "accused [him]self and confessed to [him]self that [he is] the murderer and no one else"; Ivan reacts first with silence, then with joking sarcasm, and finally accuses Alyosha of seeing the devil that visits him and encourages his guilt (570).

Ivan's intellectual implication in his father's murder is significant because it further illustrates Ivan's unwillingness to commit to a real-world decision. Instead of actually going through with the murder himself, he remains in the background, detached from the decision-making process that might constrain him and separate him from his ultimate desire: freedom. He commits murder in the easiest, most passive way he can: by leaving and therefore allowing someone else to act. In doing so, he has no legal responsibility for the crime and can thus continue living his life dedicated to the mind.

Jude, too, appears to commit murder through passivity, and his murders also appear at the height of his rejection of God. Towards the end of the novel, when Jude returns to

Christminster with Sue and their family, he irresponsibly leads the family to watch the Remembrance Day parade instead of finding a place to stay for the night. Sue realizes that their decision to go to the parade begins to bring out one of Jude's "tempestuous, self-harrowing moods" (294). By the time they reach the crowd of parade-watchers, he becomes completely unwilling to turn back until he sees the academic procession. The poor family stands in the cold, pouring-down rain<sup>16</sup> as Jude watches the parade and gives a mournful speech about his inability to rise above his social status. They are then unable to find lodging for the entire family, and only find a temporary room for Sue and the children after petitioning several landladies.

Once they settle down for the night in their room, Father Time asks Sue if it would have been better for him not to have been born. Sue, tired and not knowing the depth of Father Time's concern, admits that children make life much harder and more complicated for adults. Little Father Time then learns that Sue is pregnant with another child, and cries out in despair his fatal idea that "[i]f we children was gone there'd be no trouble at all!" (*Jude* 303). Later that night, Father Time kills the two younger children and himself, and Jude and Sue find their bodies the next morning.

Jude's responsibility for the children's death appears less obviously in *Jude the Obscure* than Ivan's responsibility for Fyodor's murder. Jude still remains answerable for Father Time's actions, though, because his decision to delay the search for a room precipitated the child's anxiety about the family's dire situation. The delay also forces Jude to find a room separate from the rest of the family, leaving Sue to deal with the younger children and Father Time's

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<sup>16</sup> This moment of exposure to the rain and cold correlates with the novel's later moment when Jude returns to Marygreen despite his oncoming illness. As Frederick P. W. McDowell points out, when Jude goes to see Sue for the last time, he "in effect commits suicide" by stubbornly neglecting his health and well-being (438). In both situations, Jude selfishly chooses to gratify himself in the short-term, forgetting his obligations as a responsible adult, father, and husband.

apprehensions alone. Had Jude been present with Sue when Father Time began inquiring about the state of their family and the hardship of having children, he might have been able to quiet some of Father Time's worries enough to get him through the night and next morning. Regardless, his absence from the family at this crucial point plays a role in Father Time's decision to kill the small children and himself. Because Jude chooses watching the parade over finding a place for his family, the family is forced to stay in a less than ideal and temporary room, with Jude staying in a separate hotel in another part of town. This arrangement takes Jude out of the picture and puts more stress on both Sue and Father Time, which in turn leads to Father Time's fatal decision. Furthermore, Father Time commits the actual murders and suicide when Sue and Jude go out in the morning briefly to spend time alone. Had Jude been with the family in the hotel room, the couple would have had no need to see each other alone the next day.

Thus both Ivan and Jude allow murders to take place, and both do so by being absent from the scene at the critical moment of need. Their absence either intentionally (as in Ivan's case) or unintentionally (as with Jude) gives their consent to the murders. These two characters also both allow these murders to occur as a result of their rejection of God. Ivan's revolt from God's world culminates in his decision not to act in response to Smerdyakov's hints at murder; Jude's decision to abandon God appears more desperate and comes only after his many attempts to fit into society and what he believes is God's plan, but still reaches its height at Father Time's combined murders and suicide in Christminster.

Morson makes an interesting point related to this idea that Ivan and Jude allow the murders to happen and are therefore guilty. He argues that, in Dostoevsky's world, "[s]ometimes actions do not follow from intentions but are part of the process by which intentions themselves

develop over time” (478). Essentially, Morson contends that even though a character may not *intend* to commit an action, their actions leading up to the culminating action (in this case, murder) contribute to the decision to commit the culminating action.<sup>17</sup> This argument relates to *Jude the Obscure* as well, as much of the novel’s plot happens not because Jude wills it to happen, but because his situation in life and the decisions he makes leading up to the important plot points inevitably lead to the actions that take place in the novel. It also explains how Ivan and Jude can be at least partially responsible for crimes that they did not explicitly commit: they are guilty because their previous actions and processes lead up to and thus contribute in some way to the novels’ murders. Because intention, as Morson explains it, remains in a continual state of flux and development, the processes that Ivan and Jude go through lead the plots of the novels inevitably towards murder, regardless of their intentions. Thus, they must bear at least partial responsibility for the murders that happen in their absences.

Interestingly, both Ivan’s and Jude’s implicit responsibility in the novels’ murders relate to their views of God. Both characters are absent from the crime scene at the crucial moments of murder, and similarly, both Ivan and Jude believe that God is absent from the world’s goings-on, particularly those that demand His presence. Essentially, Ivan and Jude see God as impotent in the world just as they themselves are powerless, and their impotence manifests itself most clearly in their passive involvement in the novels’ murders. They see God’s lack of action in the world as a problem and therefore decide to separate themselves from this impotent and cruel deity. Ivan and Jude fail to realize, however, how similar to God they are. They don’t see the similarity

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<sup>17</sup> Indeed, Morson argues that this “processual intention” drives the actions of many of Dostoevsky’s novels, most notably Raskolnikov’s murdering of the pawnbroker in *Crime and Punishment*.

between God's supposed inaction and their own, and they consequently unknowingly accuse God of the very crimes that they themselves are committing.

### Chapter 3: Alternatives in Christianity to Ivan's and Jude's Rejection of God

Ivan's and Jude's reasons for rejecting God, combined with the ways their rejection plays out in their lives, then, correlate to their social and religious problems as outsider characters. But *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Jude the Obscure* don't merely illustrate both Ivan's and Jude's problematic views of Christianity and their reasons for turning away from God: they also present alternative views of Christianity and several characters that embody these views.

Indeed, both of these novels set up a distinct contrast between Christianity and reason. As Goldstein explains, all of Dostoevsky's novels portray this battle of reason versus faith, and that "[i]n this confrontation intellect shines forth dazzlingly at first, seeming to carry everything before it, but in the end its superficiality and lack of human warmth are exposed, as simple piety stands firm" (326). Of Dostoevsky's works, this clash of reason and faith appears most clearly in *The Brothers Karamazov*, and Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* depicts this dichotomy as well. While Hardy doesn't explicitly focus on this "confrontation" in *Jude the Obscure*, it still figures significantly into the novel. Specifically, the novels use Alyosha, Father Zosima, and Mrs. Edlin to show how Christian community, the Holy Spirit, and selfless, active love are the answers to the outsider characters' problems and questions. Both novels juxtapose reason with Christianity, and in both novels, true Christianity subtly triumphs.

It's important to remember, though, that the messages of these two novels remain distinct. Dostoevsky's main theme in *The Brothers Karamazov* emphasizes the importance of upholding love and community above everything else. Hardy, however, questions the viability of true community in *Jude the Obscure*, conveying instead the idea that a genuinely loving community is impossible in the late Victorian era. But while *Jude the Obscure* portrays the dysfunctions of community and religion, Hardy still subtly shows that it's not community and

religion itself that is the problem, but the ways that people have distorted them that are problematic. Thus both novels reveal a flaw in the contemporary structure of organized Christianity, while also offering alternatives that would return Christianity to its biblical roots.

Alyosha is one of *The Brothers Karamazov*'s main Christian figures. Several critics have noted Alyosha's portrayal of what William Henry Chamberlin calls "the ideal Russian Christian" (36).<sup>18</sup> While his role in the novel is more passive than Zosima's, Alyosha still acts as a Christ-like servant, continually helping those around him. Specifically, he meets with his father and brothers at various times and locations to listen to their problems. Alyosha's actions model many Christian qualities, including patience, humility, and faithfulness. People that interact with Alyosha notice these Christian virtues. Fyodor feels as if Alyosha's presence "pierce[s] his heart" because he does not judge or despise his father and instead exhibits "an invariable kindness, a perfectly natural unaffected devotion to the old man who deserved it so little" (*Brothers* 84). Alyosha is also contrasted with Ivan because Alyosha cares deeply for others, while Ivan does not (*Stepanian* 91). Not only this, but the two brothers stand apart because Ivan cannot understand this compassion that drives Alyosha's selfless actions, as he reveals when he tells Alyosha that he doesn't understand how to love people individually.

Father Zosima stands out as *The Brothers Karamazov*'s most explicit model of a Christian. Ivan first meets Zosima when the Karamazovs all come together in the local monastery to meet with the monk and to visit Alyosha. During this encounter, Zosima gets to hear Ivan's theories about the Church and immortality from Ivan himself. In this moment, while

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<sup>18</sup> Strem calls Alyosha "the saintly man, the triumph of the soul" (24). *Stepanian* argues that Dostoevsky intended Alyosha to be the model for future readers (98). And Connolly points out Alyosha's moment of religious transformation after his Cana of Galilee dream as an image of Christian "death and resurrection" as well as "a fundamental transformation of the spirit" (46).

nearly everyone else seems amazed or outraged by Ivan's ideas, Zosima reads further into them, seeing past the theories and into Ivan's heart. He asks Ivan if he truly believes his argument that virtue cannot exist without immortality, and when Ivan says he does, Zosima postulates that Ivan's beliefs either make him very happy or very sad. Zosima then alleges that Ivan doesn't actually believe in either immortality or his own theory, stating that instead, this "question" of immortality haunts Ivan who, like "the martyr [who] likes sometimes to divert himself with his despair," attempts to "divert [him]self with magazine articles, and discussions in society, though [he doesn't] believe [his] own arguments, and with an aching heart mock[s] at them inwardly" (*Brothers* 61). Ivan has a great doubt within him, and he longs to "make an end of the wavering" within his heart that incessantly distresses him (600).

Zosima knows that Ivan has a battle raging within himself about this immortality question that "clamors for an answer" and remains Ivan's single "great grief"; Zosima also knows, and tells Ivan, that "[i]f [the answer] can't be decided in the affirmative, it will never be decided in the negative" (*Brothers* 61). In calling attention to Ivan's internal doubts and fears, Zosima strips away Ivan's intellectual barriers that he has placed around him, leaving him momentarily exposed. Ivan tries to hide his doubts from everyone by appearing self-assured, but Zosima sees straight through his outer confidence. While everyone else in the monastery room only considers Ivan's theory, Zosima reads deeper into it, looking at how the theory represents Ivan's perspective on life.

Zosima understands Ivan for two reasons. The first is because Zosima is one of the novel's only characters that is completely in tune with the Holy Spirit.<sup>19</sup> Another reason Zosima understands Ivan is because Zosima has experienced a crisis of faith similar to Ivan's. As a

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<sup>19</sup> This chapter will define and explain the novels' portrayal of the Holy Spirit in a later section.

young man, Zosima led a life of dissolution, choosing to live selfishly and in isolation in much of the same way that Ivan does. He also harbored resentment and bitterness like Ivan, and grew to hate everyone around him, becoming “a cruel, absurd, almost savage creature” (*Brothers* 274). In true outsider character fashion, the young Zosima found his pride injured in scorned love and chose to react by foolishly challenging his beloved’s suitor to a duel. But unlike most of Dostoevsky’s outsider characters, Zosima had a spiritual epiphany, and immediately afterwards turned away from his outsider nature and to God and Christianity. In particular, he embraced the Holy Spirit, which allowed him for the first time to see the world as his brother Markel, who also experienced a drastic religious conversion, did right before he died. Zosima is therefore able both to understand Ivan’s situation, and also to see the flaws in his perspective as an outsider character.

Thus Zosima is the only character who understands Ivan’s psychology (Morson 485), specifically his outsider character perspective. As Wasiolek puts it in his discussion of the novel’s various oppositions that the opening scene in the monastery first displays, Ivan’s beliefs about God are not contradictory, but rather have a “dreadful indecision,” which Zosima sees. The entire novel, Wasiolek explains, focuses on “not only whether Dmitry’s leap will reach his father or whether it will be stayed by the law of Zossima, but also whether Ivan, who carries both laws in his breast, will choose one or the other” (151). Zosima presents himself as a potential mentor for Ivan, one who can help him work through his doubts to find answers and peace, and who offers an alternative to his solitary life as an outsider. But because Ivan immediately closes himself off again, and because Zosima dies soon after, a mentor relationship never develops, leaving Ivan mentorless as he was before this encounter.

But while Zosima perfectly understands Ivan's inner conflict, he still remains Ivan's antithesis. This contrast between them appears both in the novel's structure and in the characters' philosophies. Structurally, Dostoevsky places Ivan's suffering and Grand Inquisitor speeches immediately adjacent to the "Notes" on Zosima's life. These two sections both serve as the defining accounts of the two characters' ideologies, as well as the most important sections of the novel, as Dostoevsky points out in his letters to V. A. Alekseev and N. A. Lyubimov ("Letters" 753 and 763). Dostoevsky placed these two sections together intentionally: their proximity allows the necessary comparison between their opposing views, and presents Zosima's worldview as the novel's "refutation" to Ivan's "extreme blasphemy" ("Letters" 757).

Ivan's and Zosima's philosophies are also opposites. Ivan, who narrates his ideology through his Grand Inquisitor, sees Christ's power on Earth as inadequate. Instead of God ruling the Earth through Christianity, Ivan believes a stronger power needs to take charge so that the hungry, poor, and weak people of the world will be provided for. Zosima, on the other hand, thinks that Christianity is the best solution to these problems with humanity. He argues the exact opposite of what Ivan says about helping men: given the choice between transforming people by force or with love, Zosima thinks everyone should "[a]lways decide to use humble love," because in doing so, "you may subdue the whole world" and because "[l]oving humility is marvelously strong, the strongest of all things and there is nothing else like it" (*Brothers* 298). While Ivan views his form of socialism as the solution to humanity's problems, Zosima believes completely in the transformative power of Christianity. As I'll discuss later, Dostoevsky placed Zosima's Christian love in the novel as the answer to Ivan's questions, and also as the alternative to Ivan's socialism.

In *Jude the Obscure*, Mrs. Edlin represents the Christian counterpoint to Jude's wavering Christianity. This elderly woman, the nurse and friend of Drusilla, presents the simple and old-fashioned Christianity that Jude and Sue's generation seem either to have lost or forsaken. When she stays with Jude and Sue in anticipation of their assumed wedding, the couple hears her praying the Lord's prayer loudly in the room below them (*Jude* 253). Mrs. Edlin has no apparent qualms about her faith like Jude does, and instead leads a simple life of service to her friends and acquaintances. She appears only briefly throughout the novel, but each time she's described, she seems to be living a fulfilled and quiet life of service to her God.

One of Mrs. Edlin's subtle acts of service includes her attempts to help Jude and Sue in their relationship. She tells them that back when she got married, "Nobody thought o' being afeard o' matrimony" or anything else except "a cannon-ball or empty cupboard" (*Jude* 259). In other words, people in Mrs. Edlin's day only worried about war and hunger, not the social implications of marriage that so consume Jude and Sue. In the end, though, she remains unable to help them move beyond their obsessions with the problems of marriage and the immorality of their actions, though, because Jude and Sue appear ultimately unable and unwilling to ignore society and its acceptance. They remain people-pleasers until the very end, and thus never find happiness in the marriage sacrament.

Along with these physical character manifestations of Christianity as answers to Ivan's and Jude's questions, *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Jude the Obscure* also present pure communities as alternatives to their isolation and loneliness. In spite of Ivan's best efforts to free himself from community, *The Brothers Karamazov* is far from lacking in examples of communities. The monastery's community, albeit riddled with problems, serves as the novel's most prominent physical manifestation of a Christian community. Other communities include

Dmitri's acquaintances that gather together for nights of debauchery, as well as the group of schoolboys led by Kolya Krasotkin. The Church community that appears in Alyosha's dream of Christ's miracle at Cana of Galilee following Zosima's death, however, serves as the novel's purest example of a Christian community.

In his discussion of spiritual epiphany in Dostoevsky's final novel, Julian W. Connolly highlights this dream as the novel's defining moment of true interconnectedness. This dream, Connolly argues, figures importantly in the novel not only because it counters Ivan's claim against the existence of immortality and virtue, but because it also reveals the novel's theme of community, specifically "the willingness or ability to transcend the limits of the individual ego and to achieve a state of union with the Other" (44). In this moment, Alyosha and Ivan, the novel's two opposing heroes,<sup>20</sup> here clash in their understandings of community. Alyosha's Christianity wins the battle here, though. His dream of a community united under Christ presents the novel's answer to Ivan's isolation: only in accepting Christ and His miracles, as Alyosha, Zosima, and the Cana wedding guests do, can a person become part of a community and feel connected to humanity.

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, the only way to return to God is by returning to this community of His people, in particular the Russian people. In her essay "The Other Lazarus in *Crime and Punishment*," Linda Ivanitis explores this connection between turning to God and embracing the Russian Christian community. She shows how the Russian people in *Crime and Punishment* represent a group that Raskolnikov has rejected, but also how he must ultimately return to and accept them as part of his salvation. Similarly, in *The Brothers Karamazov*, Father

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<sup>20</sup> Dostoevsky refers to both Ivan and Alyosha as heroes of *The Brothers Karamazov*. The novel's "From the Author" section points to Alyosha as the story's hero, but Dostoevsky also called Ivan the hero in several letters (752, 758, and 767).

Zosima tells Alyosha that “[u]ntil [one has] become really, in actual fact, a brother to everyone, brotherhood will not come to pass” (282). In other words, Ivan and Smerdyakov have isolated themselves from society and have thus become incapable of relating to other people. Only when they return to God’s plan for the union of Christians (i.e. the Church) will they be able to realize their fullest potential in life.

Another related aspect of Father Zosima’s argument is even more compelling. He contends that community is more than simply a part of one’s salvation: it can potentially lead a person to Christian salvation. He explains that “[o]nly the people and their future spiritual power will convert [Russia’s] atheists” (*Brothers* 273). The Russian people and Russian Orthodox Christianity are closely interconnected, and integrating with one inevitably leads to integrating with the other. Thus in *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevsky portrays Christianity as a religion focused not only on believing in and following Christ, but also on becoming part of the united and nurturing community of the Church.

As I explained in the first chapter of this thesis, the communities of *Jude the Obscure*, while still surviving in some forms throughout the novel, are mostly broken beyond repair. The pure communities of Jude’s world are almost exclusively of the past or imagined by Jude in his idealistic moments: Jude’s immediate family before it was separated through divorce and death; the university community of Christminster that Jude imagines before he arrives there; the closely-knit world in which Mrs. Edlin lived peacefully with her husband. These communities, while not physically present in Hardy’s novel, still figure significantly into Jude’s life because they represent the hope of a community that once was or might have been. The idea of a pure community still exists even while the world’s actual communities have been badly disfigured.

Community factors significantly into the Christian alternatives offered in Dostoevsky's and Hardy's novels, but the Holy Spirit plays the most significant role in the Christianity that Ivan and Jude are rejecting. As Morson explains, "in Dostoevsky's odd theology, it is the Third Person of the Trinity who matters most of all" (489). Stepanian agrees, describing how the Holy Spirit, along with the new life that accompanies one's acceptance of Him, stands as the novel's focal point (88). She also argues that Ivan acts wrongly in disconnecting God the Father and God the Son "by considering them of different natures, acting at cross purposes," and that this in turn reveals how Ivan and his creations, the Grand Inquisitor and the Devil, "sense themselves and God as totally isolated (i.e. they reject the Holy Spirit)" (97). Ivan takes the Holy Spirit out of the religious equation, and in doing so, he closes himself off from the community and love that accompanies this third member of the Holy Trinity.

Ivan specifically ignores the Holy Spirit in his conversation with Alyosha about the suffering of children and the Grand Inquisitor. As Morson notes, Ivan's entire attack against God is focused only on God the Father and God the Son; in fact, most of the novel's characters<sup>21</sup> neglect the role of the Holy Spirit in Christianity (489). In overlooking and ignoring this third member of the Trinity, Dostoevsky's characters cut themselves off from the person of the Holy Trinity that, according to Christian tradition, is closest to them and their "advocate" on earth (*New International Version*, John 14:16).

Related to the Holy Spirit, Ivan doesn't acknowledge spirituality in general. He relies solely on his intellect to guide him in the world, considering it a far surer guide than the spiritual world. But Ivan's neglect of spirituality is problematic as well, as Dostoevsky points out in a letter discussing Jesus's response to Satan that "Man does not live by bread alone" (Matthew

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<sup>21</sup> Along with Ivan, Morson also identifies the ascetic monks and Alyosha before Zosima's death as characters who disregard or overlook the work of the Holy Spirit (489).

4:4). In this letter, Dostoevsky explains his understanding of Christ's answer, his view of spirituality, and in turn, the problem with Ivan ignoring it. Specifically, Dostoevsky states that Christ's answer to Satan serves as

the axiom of man's spiritual origin. The devil's idea could only apply to the beast in man, while Christ knew that by bread alone you cannot animate a man. If there were no spiritual life, no ideal of Beauty, man would pine away, die, go mad, kill himself, or give himself to pagan fantasies. ... he decided it was better to implant the ideal of Beauty in the soul. If it exists in the soul, each would be the brother of everyone else and then, of course, working for each other, all would also be rich.  
(754)

Here Dostoevsky explains his understanding of Christ's temptation: he sees Christ's goal as placing more importance on the spiritual, because in doing so, the spiritual will take care of the physical. This idea relates to Christ's statement in Matthew 6:34 that humans should "not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will take care of itself." Thus Ivan's Grand Inquisitor gets it wrong after all. In focusing only on humanity's physical needs, he ignores their spiritual needs. In doing so, the Grand Inquisitor overlooks a fundamental aspect of human beings: their simultaneous physical and spiritual natures.

Dostoevsky also points out that, as is the case for Dmitri, "unless there's thunder, the peasant won't cross himself" (764). Dmitri represents the Russian who only turns to religious faith in times of trouble, but his reaction to his predicament relates to Ivan. While Dmitri immediately turns to Christianity, Ivan remains in adamant rebellion until he finally realizes that his "devil" is nothing more than a part of him that desires nothing more than self-torment.

But Morson also acknowledges that Ivan is on the right track towards acknowledging and even accepting the Holy Spirit. He rightly argues that because Ivan is still amazed by the “sticky green leaves that open in the spring” and “loves life more than the meaning of it” (*Brothers* 211-2), he is unknowingly approaching the truth of Christianity (Morson 489). Morson makes an important observation here, as Ivan does at times appear on the verge of accepting Christianity. He seems to respect Father Zosima, and also looks favorably on Alyosha as one of the few people who don’t hate him. As evidenced in his thorough understanding of the biblical story of Christ’s temptation, Ivan has studied Christianity, and has probably even considered the merits of faith in God. But Ivan ultimately fails, arguably at least until the end of the novel, to embrace Christianity. He cannot willingly accept Christianity throughout most of the novel because he has taken the Spirit out of the religious equation, and has thus made Christianity about little more than a sort of puppeteer God who manipulates the inhabitants of Earth without any explanation of His motives.

*Jude the Obscure* reveals a similar problem. Jude’s Christianity, as well as the Christianity of his community, emphasizes humanity’s works while simultaneously overlooking the life of the Holy Spirit. William R. Goetz points this problem out when explaining the meaning behind the novel’s epigraph and the last scene between Jude and Sue, which both focus on the first half of 2 Corinthians 3:6, “The letter killeth; the spirit giveth life.” He argues that in both instances, the ignoring of the “spirit” half of the verse implies that Jude’s world has no “opposition between the letter and the spirit,” but instead represents “the world of the letter alone” (213). This observation is extremely important in understanding Hardy’s portrayal of Christianity in *Jude the Obscure*, because it reveals the restrictions and perspectives that society has placed on religion, specifically, that it has chosen to ignore the spiritual aspect of

Christianity. Instead, the Christianity of Jude's world is entirely material and focused only on the present time. Rather than emphasizing love, forgiveness, and unity among everyone, Jude's society chooses to focus on making sure that their outward, physical appearance is acceptable. They worry more about laws and less about the reasoning behind the laws and the God who created them, and consequently forget one of the most important aspects of Christianity: the Holy Spirit.

Jude's and his society's overlooking of the Holy Spirit initially seems wise because it leads to a greater focus on the here-and-now of Earth. Indeed, a major part of Christianity lies in worshipping God by helping others and concentrating on the current and pressing needs on Earth. Paradoxically, though, this ignorance of proper spirituality ultimately leads to the creation of an improper spirituality, namely one that views fleshly desires as evil and only "heavenly" pursuits and goals as praiseworthy. In *Jude the Obscure*'s Christianity, believers place the spiritual world on a plane above the physical world, forcefully separating them from their natural conjunction. In doing so, they forget that in order for Christianity to work on Earth, the corporeal and the spiritual must work together. Thus Jude's problems stem from his confused focus on "the letter [that] killeth" instead of both the letter and "the spirit" of salvation. By avoiding one, Jude gets neither.

Not only do Ivan and Jude overlook the Holy Spirit, but their ideas of God further illustrate their skewed views of Christianity. Ivan and Jude both believe that God should play a prominent role in His creation. While Ivan thinks that God is too passive and has failed to interact adequately and helpfully in the world, Jude finds God's role as too sadistic and controlling, and as well as too focused on rules and regulations.

Ivan's view of God appears when he interacts with his devil. It shows up most clearly, though, in his Grand Inquisitor speech, when the Grand Inquisitor forbids Christ from speaking or acting because "[he has] no right to add anything to what [he had] said of old" (*Brothers* 231). Here the novel shows that Ivan sees God as inactive and impotent. Rather than conquering the world and providing for the hungry and oppressed as the Grand Inquisitor wants to do, Ivan's Christ merely sits back and listens to the Grand Inquisitor's accusations. While Ivan's Christ does act powerfully in the end by silently kissing the Grand Inquisitor, this response is too cryptic and subtle to be seen as an obviously strong retort to the old man's indictments. Hence this scene in Dostoevsky's novel seems to portray Ivan's view of God as a deity who passively and silently stands in the background and does little to mend the problems of the world.

Jude's problematic view of God stems more from his view of Providence than a belief that God is too passive. Norman Holland argues that the problem in *Jude the Obscure* lies in Hardy's late nineteenth-century England and its view of "the Christian ideal of self-sacrifice" (50). Holland correctly points out the novel's attempts to expose the late Victorian society's problematic views of Christianity, particularly that of self-sacrifice. But Holland's thesis overlooks the emphasis Jude places on divine Providence. Throughout his life, Jude struggles to do the right thing, which he initially believes is following the precepts of the Christian religion he's grown up in. He has problems with doing what's right, though, because he often finds his desires in direct opposition with the world's and religion's desires. When things go wrong for he and Sue, the couple tends to blame their misfortune on Providence, reasoning that both society and God don't want them to be together.

Jude first references Providence when he follows Sue into the church: he feels a supernatural element to the worship service he enters into, and can barely fathom "that the psalm

was not specially set by some regardful Providence for this moment” (*Jude* 79). When he goes to Melchester, he sees yet another moment of what he thinks is “an exercise of forethought on the part of a ruling Power”: the local church is being repaired, which will provide him with some stone masonry jobs (115). Later, as he feels convinced that he and Sue should not be together, he decides when he meets Arabella on his way to pick up Sue at the train station that Arabella’s appearance must have been “an intended intervention” sent from above to reprimand him for trying to be with Sue (161). Essentially, every time something happens that seems fortuitously to carry out God’s will (or at least what Jude’s society believes is God’s will), Jude attributes the occurrence to Providence.

One notable exception to this view of Providence occurs in one of Jude’s moments of disbelief. When he begins to explain his frustrating trip to meet the hymn composer as an act of Providence, Jude has a noteworthy thought. The narrator explains that Jude, with his “growing impatience of faith,” rejects this “idea that God sen[ds] people on fools’ errands” (*Jude* 174). Not only is Jude’s faith decreasing here, but Jude is also beginning to suspect the commonly perpetuated ideas about God’s designs and manipulations. Here he briefly addresses the idea that perhaps God is not the same being that people have portrayed him as in religion. He again touches on the argument that “there is something wrong somewhere in our social formulas” when he talks to the crowd at the Christminster Remembrance Day parade (297). While Jude doesn’t expressly argue that the problem with social formulas correlates to a problem with society’s views of religion, he does seem to imply it. This reasoning is significant because, if true, it offers the possibility of a true God (a God separate from most of society’s conceptions of Him) accepting his and Sue’s love for each other. Thus Harold Child’s argument that in Hardy’s novel, “if there is no malignant deity waiting to pounce upon him, there is no kindly

omnipotence to come to the rescue when his own courage, or wisdom, or strength, fall short” (79), itself falls short. He’s right that the God of the novel does seem to play a rather passive role in the characters’ lives, but to present only three categorical options for His actions (“malignant,” “kindly,” or completely absent) seems to oversimplify the novel’s message here. Instead of presenting an absent God, *Jude the Obscure* seems to be presenting a God that is altogether unlike the constructions that Jude and his society have made of him.

And indeed looking closer at other parts of the novel seems to reinforce this idea that the actual God is not exactly the God that Jude, Sue, and their society have been worshipping. In fact, the novel suggests that society has skewed people’s view of religion and God, altering it so that people no longer believe in the God of Christianity at all. Sue alludes to this possibility when she complains about the various misreadings and misunderstandings of the Song of Solomon. She describes these misreadings as flagrant falsifications, “attempt[s] to plaster over with ecclesiastical abstractions such ecstatic, natural, human love as lies in that great and passionate song!” (*Jude* 134). Here Sue argues that the Church has taken the biblical text and manipulated it so as to take out its potentially controversial message. Thus Hardy’s novel leaves some room for the possibility of a Christian God, namely one who inspired the original meaning of the Song of Solomon’s text, that exists apart from the societal constructions of Him.

Perhaps the most important reason Ivan and Jude reject God, though, is because they don’t understand love. At least partly because of his disjointed childhood and unstable family life, Ivan grew up without any loving and nurturing relationships. This lack of affection in his early life alienated him from normal human relationships and distorted his view of love. Miüsov draws attention to Ivan’s problematic view of love when he tells the crowd gathered at the monastery that Ivan had at one point argued “that there [is] nothing in the whole world to make

men love their neighbors,” and that furthermore, because there exists no natural law to make humans love each other, humanity must love because of their belief in immortality (*Brothers* 60). Miüsov presents this theory of Ivan’s, which implies that humans love simply in order to avoid eternal punishment, at the same time he introduces Ivan’s view of the relationship between the Church and the State. Ivan’s views here foreshadow his later Grand Inquisitor speech in that they show the socialist approach Ivan has taken to looking at the world. More importantly, though, Ivan’s views of love show that ultimately he doesn’t understand Christian love as Alyosha and Zosima do. He has had so little love in his life that he cannot see how it can exist outside of fear, namely the fear of punishment after death.

As he confesses to Alyosha right before the Grand Inquisitor story, Ivan believes it’s possible to “love one’s neighbors in the abstract, or even at a distance, but at close quarters it’s almost impossible” (*Brothers* 218). Ivan has thought extensively about both God and love, but his intellectual musings have not gotten him far in the real world, and he still finds himself unable to love anyone completely. In Ivan, Dostoevsky seems to be showing that love exists separately and even outside of rationality. The ability to love doesn’t come from rational pursuits, but instead from something outside of the outsider characters. Camus contemplates Ivan’s predicament and concludes that “[t]here is no possible salvation for the man who feels real compassion” (Camus 838). In other words, Ivan cannot accept God (and, in turn, save himself) because he cannot accept the suffering in the world that he supposedly loves. Camus doesn’t seem to grasp Ivan completely, though, because Ivan himself states that he finds it difficult, if not completely unfeasible, to love real individuals.

*The Brothers Karamazov* offers true Christianity, namely a faith system focused on active and selfless love, as the answer to the suffering, hurt, and weakness that Ivan identifies in the

world. This theme appears throughout the novel, most notably in the monastery scenes with Zosima, in Alyosha's interactions with his family, in Dmitri's bearing of his accusation and later conviction, and in Ilyusha's life of love and sacrifice. Zosima's speech about choosing love over force also reveals this theme (*Brothers* 298). Dostoevsky explicitly wrote the section with Zosima's speech to show "that a pure, ideal Christian is not something abstract but is graphically real, possible, obviously present, and that Christianity is the sole refuge for the Russian land from all its woes" ("Letters" 759-60). Overall, the novel sets up a contrast between atheism and belief in God, between socialism and Christianity, and between isolation and community. In each of these oppositions, Dostoevsky tries to show that belief, Christianity, and community win out, and that the thread that binds these concepts together is love.

Zosima's argument that "all are responsible for all" offers solutions to the frustrated life that Ivan finds himself in. By saying that everyone is responsible for everyone else, Zosima is emphasizing the importance of interconnectedness and community. Alyosha fully understands this after his "Cana of Galilee" dream, and Dmitri even declares that he believes in this doctrine (*Brothers* 560). This idea of mutual responsibility idea is Zosima's "secret of renewal" (24). Gary L. Browning, in his discussion of this secret, explains that each of the Karamazov brothers exhibits a duality of nature, and that "each illustrates the error of following the worldly path *and* the wisdom of accepting God's truth" (522). Only when the brothers choose God's truth over their worldly ways are they able to live in peace and fulfillment. Similarly, the novel implies that humanity will only find satisfaction and completion in life when it accepts this "secret of renewal" that restores true community and love to the world.

To an extent, *Jude the Obscure* also addresses this alternative of active love. As Holland points out, Hardy's novel argues "that the only part of Christianity worth saving is not an ideal of

sacrifice, but rather the notion that somehow we can make this life under Fate's rule more bearable by love for our fellow men" (57). As already mentioned, though, the only example *Jude the Obscure* gives us of an apparently pure love stemming from an unadulterated religious belief comes in the character of Mrs. Edlin.

But Ivan and Jude don't accept these possible alternatives and solutions. Ivan refuses them because his intellect means too much to him, and because he focuses entirely on the world's problems and ignores the Christian love that could help solve these problems. Jude turns away from Christianity because he is unable to see the alternative form of Christianity that Mrs. Edlin follows, and because he never fully explores his ideas that the true God might be different from the one his society worships. Both characters ultimately fail to recognize their problematic views of Christianity, and both thus end up without hope and love.

At the end of *The Brothers Karamazov*, Ivan's religious fate is uncertain. While he does appear to forsake the intellect that so cruelly abused him, he also consequently loses his sanity. The novel leaves open the possibility of Ivan's converting in a similar fashion as Zosima, but it ends without Ivan explicitly reconciling himself to God.

Jude's fate is much more defined and grim. By the end of his life, he finds himself completely without the faith he began with as a boy. His life experiences and searches for a stable foundation lead him nowhere, and he ultimately dies alone. Towards the end of the novel, he describes himself as being "in a chaos of principles—groping in the dark—acting by instinct and not after example" (*Jude* 297). Jude loses his faith in religion and the world, and in the process also loses all optimism and hope for a good life.

## Conclusion

Both *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Jude the Obscure* address the question of what it means to reject God and Christianity in the world of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, where the beliefs and religious systems of the past began to appear inadequate for the problems of an increasingly complex world. While several writers in the late nineteenth century wrote about God- and religion-related problems, few did so with the intensity and honesty that Fyodor Dostoevsky and Thomas Hardy did. These two writers tapped into the beginnings of a spiritual crisis that would eventually reach its peak in the adamant and bold atheism of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Ivan and Jude turn from God and Christianity because they see so many problems with God's creation. The problem with their rejection, though, is that they reject a God and a Christianity that they understand almost exclusively through intellectual theories and social conventions. The God and religion they know and come to despise is one that is based on their contemporary thought about morality and obligations of higher powers. But as Dostoevsky and Hardy portray in the two novels, these contemporary ideas aren't necessarily aligned with the actual Christian God. Using Alyosha, Father Zosima, Mrs. Edlin, and a few other characters, the novels show that purely selfless Christian love is the solution to the problems that Ivan and Jude address in their rejection of God and Christianity.

Dostoevsky and Hardy were both writing about major existential and religious questions for two reasons. The first is that these questions were popular among intellectuals at the time, and both Western and Eastern Europeans were wrestling with understanding if, how, and why God interacts with the world. Many of their contemporaries, especially Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, were the also existential thinkers, and Dostoevsky and Hardy were themselves making important and significant contributions to the development of 19<sup>th</sup> century existentialism.

These two authors were also dealing with these questions because the 19<sup>th</sup> century worlds of Russia and England, while physically distant, were both feeling the effects of rapid industrial, political, and cultural changes. Russia was feeling the beginnings of unrest that would, early on in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, lead to revolution. England was experiencing similar disturbances in the social classes, as the lower class workers were demanding better treatment by their upper class employers, and as socialism began to become more popular.

This thesis focuses on the two most well-developed examples of Dostoevsky's and Hardy's outsider characters who reject God. Further study of the authors' other works, as well as a closer look at the other outsider characters in *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Jude the Obscure* would provide further comparison about how the two authors develop and portray these complex characters. Similarly, looking at Dostoevsky's and Hardy's biographies and exploring their similar and different motivations for writing about the outsider character may also help elucidate this topic more.

Dostoevsky and Hardy were in many ways ahead of their time. While most of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century novelists were focusing on the problems of society and the individual, Dostoevsky and Hardy were closely examining both of those problems, but combining them with the spiritual questions that would dominate much of 20<sup>th</sup> century thought. As Berdyaev points out, the modern man's soul "no longer rests upon secure foundations" because "everything round him is unsteady and contradictory" (60). He also explains that in order to understand Dostoevsky, "it is necessary to have a certain sort of soul—one in some way akin to his own—and we had to wait for the spiritual and intellectual movement which marked the beginning of the twentieth century before such souls could be found" (14). Berdyaev goes on to explain that "with Dostoevsky a new soul and a new perception of the world were born; and he carried this exclusive dynamism

of the spirit, this flame-like mobility, within himself” (20). As Rosemary Sumner points out, it took 70 years after Hardy’s death for his critics to understand how much his writings related to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Sumner also notes that Hardy is now considered by many critics to be understood “less as a traditional Victorian novelist and more as a pioneer in the novel” (1). Both Dostoevsky and Hardy were ahead of their time, and were often prophets of the coming century. Looking into how they connect to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, its philosophies, and its writers would shed even more light on the complex outsider character.

Up until now, the outsider character has been discussed almost exclusively in the context of Russian literature. But as this thesis has shown, the outsider character figures prominently not only in Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*, but also in Hardy’s *Jude the Obscure*. This character is not a purely Russian character; instead, it seems to reflect the mindset of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in both Russia and England. Since this character appears in these two works by very different authors from very different countries, the most significant future contribution to this research would continue to expand the definition of the outsider character to represent an alienated, questioning, and God-rejecting individual of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Further exploration of how other authors, both in and outside of Russia, developed the outsider character would shed important light on the mindset of many people in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, particularly those wrestling with existentialism and the increasing fragmentation of the turn of the century.

Looking at other authors’ alternatives to the outsider characters’ rejection of God would similarly yield an interesting understanding of the ways that Christianity and society’s understanding of its God were changing. As I argue in this thesis, Ivan and Jude misunderstood or stubbornly refused to accept the most significant and important aspects of Christianity that would allow them to follow its God. Continued research into the reasons behind the outsider

characters' misunderstandings and refusals of Christianity's core tenets would also likely help explain the nuances of both the outsider character and the mindset of the coming 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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