



## **The Grand Inquisitor: with related chapters from The Brothers Karamazov**

*Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Constance Garnett, Charles Guignon (Editor)*

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This new edition presents *The Grand Inquisitor* together with the preceding chapter, *Rebellion*, and the extended reply offered by Dostoevsky in the following sections, entitled *The Russian Monk*. By showing how Dostoevsky frames the Grand Inquisitor story in the wider context of the novel, this edition captures the subtlety and power of Dostoevsky's critique of modernity as well as his alternative vision of human fulfillment.

## **The Grand Inquisitor: with related chapters from The Brothers Karamazov Details**

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## **From Reader Review The Grand Inquisitor: with related chapters from The Brothers Karamazov for online ebook**

### **Demetri says**

i added this becuz this chapter from the brothers karamazov inspired me.

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### **Bruno-Ken says**

Just finished it: I am dumbstruck.

Has anything truly new been written since this?

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### **Stephen says**

This is an excellent selection of key sections of the novel. The juxtaposition of "The Grand Inquisitor" and "The Russian Monk" highlights how the life and teaching of Father Zossima serves as a reply to the concerns Ivan expresses about God.

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### **Monika says**

I appreciated the introduction tying the Brothers Karamozov and Dostoevsky's belief on Religion and it's importance during a time in Russia of great turmoil. I have often questioned similar religous aspects and the general nature of man.

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### **Courtney says**

I think it is probably a beautifully written and extremely thought provoking work however as a mere beginner in the world of philosophy it was very difficult for me to stay engaged.

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### **Brandt says**

If you appreciate the task of interpreting literature, then this book is for you. This book consists of The Grand Inquisitor section of Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. This section is introduced by Charles B. Guignon. In reviewing this edition, one of the first things I noticed is that it is based on the Constance Garnett translation of *The Brothers Karamazov*. This is an O.K. translation but, as Guignon rightfully points out, some changes to the translation had to be made, "in order to update the vocabulary and style" (Guignon note n.p.). The importance of the translation is something that can not be overlooked and this is my main

critique of the book. The Grand Inquisitor section presented in this book has little to any footnotes/end notes. It is very hard for someone, I would imagine, that does not have experience with *The Brothers Karamazov*, or Dostoevsky in general, to accurately understand and interpret the meaning of this masterpiece. I have read over some of the reviews by others, and to some extent quite a few are innocently guilty of missing the point. The very first thing I would suggest, before reading this book, is to read *The Brothers Karamazov*. I also highly recommend reading it in the newest translation by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. This edition was published in 2002, and is absolutely amazing. The amount of detail that both Pevear and Volokhonsky put into translating this masterpiece is breathtaking. Once you have read and are familiar with the tremendous attention to detail that has been put into the endnotes of this newer edition of *The Brothers Karamazov*, attention can then be turned back to reading this section of the book. If you do this, I can guarantee your understanding of Dostoevsky, and his literature, will be deeply rewarded.

Up to this point, the review is a little unfair, but, I do not want to belittle or denigrate one of the intriguing parts of this book *viz.*, the introduction by Guignon. In the introduction, Guignon presents some important corollaries to Dostoevsky's style of writing, and indeed, traces the importance of this writing in the greater context of existentialism. Along with this, the introduction provides amazing insight into the reasoning behind Dostoevsky's character representation, and the ideologies represented. With this introduction Guignon has managed to capture the depths of Dostoevsky's power to offer a critique of modernity and also present an alternate vision of reality. Guignon's careful analysis should not be dismissed because it speaks to the underlying implications of the Grand Inquisitor.

The only thing that would make this review better is if they would update this book with the current aforementioned translations.

I will leave this review as it is and hope the those that do read it, will have the opportunity to read the newest addition of *The Brothers Karamazov* and pay close attention to the context of Guignon's introduction.

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### **Mingy Nguyen says**

I found Dostoyevsky's words through the monk Zosima somewhat similar to Buddhist teachings. Also, a takeaway: the pursuit of scientific objectivity during the Enlightenment Era unfolds the picture of reality as an aggregate of brute and meaningless material objects in causal interactions, thus invalidating the initial motivation. This is the Enlightenment Paradox.

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### **Daniel Goff says**

the greatest chapters out of the Brothers Karamazov, which is one of the greatest books ever written by the greatest author ever

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### **Amos Smith says**

The Dostoyevsky chapter entitled "The Grand Inquisitor" is sheer brilliance!! Sometimes there is a chapter of a book that is an epigram for the author's life and work. This chapter is that epigram. And even for those who are not interested in swimming in the ocean of Dostoyevsky, this chapter is a must! I am glad for this edition that hones in on this one chapter.

-Amos Smith (author of *Healing The Divide: Recovering Christianity's Mystic Roots*)

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## **DANIA E MENDOZA says**

For me this reaches into the core of you, that sacred knowledge we all have but are easily distracted from. It fuels that "knowing" and confirms it. It voices our doubts and questions we have about humanity and God.

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## **Kenyon says**

This is my second reading of the Brothers Karamazov. The translation I have currently is not the one I would have chosen, but I took what was available. (My current translation is by Andrew MacAndrew; the preferred translation is by Pevear and Volokhonsky; my first reading was the Manuel Komroff translation). I've read most of Dostoevsky's other works (The Adolescent (aka The Raw Youth), The Double, Crime & Punishment (twice), The Idiot, The Possessed (Demons)(twice), The House of the Dead, Notes from Underground (twice), and The Eternal Husband). I love these books, and my favorites have been Crime and Punishment, The Brothers Karamazov, The Adolescent, Notes from Underground, The Idiot and The Double (in that order).

What has immediately struck me about The Brothers Karamazov the second time around (I'm about 40% through it already; it's been about a week) is how modern it is. The text has weathered the decades very well. Aside from incidental references to serfdom (already abolished at this time), horses and carriages, etc., the only major element of the work that seems to have lost relevance in our time is the (large) portion that deals with the discussion of various Christian themes. Even here, though, Dostoevsky has completely anticipated the rise of scientific positivism, state socialism and atheism, and in this sense the struggle that Christianity faces throughout The Brothers Karamazov as it strives to maintain its relevancy in a decadent society is completely on the mark.

Certain passages dealing with Christian themes hold up very well. Ivan's 'poem,' The Grand Inquisitor, is certainly very strong and has even been published by itself. But many of Father Zosima's passages come across as overly preachy and dogmatic (while, perversely, trying to argue against the strict doctrine of Catholicism and especially the Jesuits), and tire this modern reader.

But The Brother's Karamazov is extremely strong because it really deals with almost the complete realm of human experience. There's something for everyone here, and the four brothers Karamazov (along with their father) are complex enough to model almost every type of human behavior. This ranges from the depraved to the sublime, from the voluptuary concerns of Fyodor Karamazov to the (atheistic) intellectual pursuits of Ivan, to the scoundrel and rogue Dimitry to the saint Alyosha. And then, of course, there's Smerdyakov, the smelly one, who presents a more common type of man, the one that finds himself in servitude and unsure of himself, but striving to differentiate his being from the mass of others through some decisive action.

The women are less completely characterized, but are typified upon similar lines: Katerina, Lise, Grushenka (I love that name, it fits the character so completely), Martha and the other's I've not yet re-encountered are sufficiently different to allow you to sincerely believe in their distinct personalities.

What I love about the Brothers Karamazov as opposed to, say, Anna Karenina, is that no single element of the plot is completely unbelievable (I.E. even though the themes are epic, the action is not). These are regular

people with typical concerns and behaviors. Nothing really happens throughout much of the book. There is a love triangle, but it's mostly talk. There is a touch of the spiritually sublime, but it's based in reality (I love, for instance, that the body of the supposed saint Zosima smells rotten, as it's supposed not to); Karamazov is simply an impetuous, debauched drunk; Ivan is a little bit lost, and Dmitry and Alyosha (and Katerina) are callow, inexperienced youths trying to find some way for themselves. This flourish of realism makes the novel great. [10/23/2011].

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