Story and Emotion in Dostoevsky’s

The Brothers Karamazov

Research and dissemination of Dostoevsky’s work has been dominated by interest in the ideological aspects of his authorship. This is especially the case for his masterpiece The Brothers Karamazov (1880). In his monumental Dostoevsky. The Mantle of the Prophet 1871–1881 (2002), Joseph Frank, for example, writes that “Indeed this work towers even over his earlier masterpieces, and succeeds in achieving a classical expression of the great theme that had preoccupied him since Notes from the Underground: the conflict between reason and Christian faith” (Frank 2002, 567). This is evident too from Dostoevsky’s own self-understanding of and participation in his era, as it is expressed, for example, in his magazine Vremja and in Diary of a Writer. The conflict between ideas, ideologies and philosophies of life is central to all of Dostoevsky’s great novels. One has only to think of the contrast between Raskolnikov and Sonya in Crime and Punishment, the contrast between Myshkin and Rogozhin in The Idiot, or between Alyosha, Mitya and Ivan in The Brothers Karamazov. Still, it is surprising that the affective aspect has not played a larger role in the reception of Dostoevsky’s work. Deborah A. Martinsen’s book Surprised by Shame. Dostoevsky’s Liars and Narrative Exposure (2003), in which the study of shame plays a decisive roll, is an interesting exception. To my understanding, Dostoevsky is an author who in long passages in the course of the plot writes from one affect to the next, to the same extent that he writes from event to event. The affects are often the very incentives for the epic events, they are almost always unusually powerful, and the shift between different affects are possibly just as important happenings in the story as the outer events are. The affects often have as much of a meaning for the incidents as the incidents have on the affects. An indication of this focus on affects in The Brothers Karamazov comes as early as the opening discussion of the central father figure Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov’s first wife. The narrator wants to explain why a rich, beautiful and intelligent girl could decide to marry such an insignificant fellow and “ill-natured buffoon” as Fyodor Pavlovich (Dostoevsky 1976, 3). The explanation is “romantic” inclinations, and in this connection the narrator refers to another

young girl he himself knew, who committed suicide by throwing herself into a
river “entirely to satisfy her own caprice, and to be like Shakespeare’s Ophelia” (3).
The narrator comments, “Indeed, if this precipice, a chosen and favourite spot of
hers, had been less picturesque, if there had been a prosaic flat bank in its place,
most likely the suicide would never have occurred.” This fatal occurrence is con-
nected to the “romantic generation” and is represented in a light, critically ironic
tone (3). However it becomes apparent that the acts of the novel’s main characters
are just as affect-driven as the romantic woman’s, and the depictions are then usu-
ally without irony. Fyodor Pavlovich’s second wife, who is only described briefly
in the introduction, is also depicted as a woman totally engulfed by the power of
her emotions. Not only is she characterized by “phenomenal meekness and sub-
missiveness,” her sensitivity developed into a nerve disease that presented itself
in fits of hysterics; she was said to be “possessed by devils,” and the narrator
informs us that this nerve disease is an illness that is “frequently found in peasant
women” (8). But it is not only hysterical women who, from the beginning, focus
clear attention on the emotional drama in The Brothers Karamazov; “the buffoon,”
Fyodor Pavlovich himself, is characterized already in the opening paragraphs as
“a trashy and depraved type” (2), and “of a voluptuous temper” (3). There can be
no doubt that we shall encounter emotionally driven characters in Dostoevsky’s
masterpiece. These are the aspects I will pursue in this reading. I wish to illumi-
nate the affective patterns of the main characters’ personalities. Moreover, I will
investigate how Dostoevsky to some extent uses affective elements as primary
motives in the novel’s plot. And additionally, I will attempt to contribute to a
reevaluation of the established image of Ivan Fyodorovich and his supposedly
rationalistic, logical and coolly intellectual attitude towards life. An analysis with
an emphasis on affective systems will likely show that Ivan is just as emotionally
or affectively driven as his half-brother Dmitri, even if his temperament is differ-
ent. To underrate Ivan’s affective pattern of reactions is a widespread misinterpre-
tation. In addition, with a background in text analysis, it should likely be possible
to establish incrementally a few concepts for phenomena that can perhaps have
relevance beyond the concrete text interpretation. In my opinion, classical narrat-
ology requires supplementation by means of a “postclassical” expansion of the
analytical system of concepts so that there is a place for affective and emotional
aspects of the complex art of narrative. The following is therefore partially
intended as an interpretation of Dostoevsky’s masterpiece, The Brothers Karama-
zov, and partly towards supplementation of narratological concepts.

But first we must cast a glance at the actual plot structure of the novel.
PLOT STRUCTURE

*The Brothers Karamazov* has a relatively complicated plot structure in which unequal configurations intersect with each other and shape connections between different layers in the plot. It is natural at the outset to allow for at least five intersecting plot constellations: the family plot, the crime plot, the erotic plot, the social plot and the ideological plot.\(^{10}\)

The novel’s title forewarns one of the plot structures, the family plot. Fully central to the work is the relationship between fathers and sons.\(^{11}\) At the center stands Fyodor Pavlovich, the father figure. He is encircled by four sons in a complicated family structure. With his first wife, Adelaïda Ivanovna, he has a son Dmitri Fyodorovich who is twenty-eight years old when the main action begins. But Fyodor Pavlovich was “one of the most senseless madcaps in the whole district” (2) and Adelaïda Ivanovna ran away from him when Dmitri was three years old, only to die a short time later in exceedingly down-and-out circumstances. With his second wife, Sofya Ivanovna, Fyodor Pavlovich had two sons, Ivan and Alexey, of about twenty four and twenty years of age respectively when the story starts. Sofya Ivanovna died when Alexey was four years old. In addition to the three legitimate sons, Fyodor Pavlovich had an illegitimate son, Smerdyakov, who was born in dramatic circumstances to a homeless woman, Stinking Lizaveta. It was highly probable that it was Fyodor Pavlovich who impregnated her, something that actually happened as a consequence of a wager with drinking companions. Lizaveta died during the birth, which took place in Fyodor Pavlovich’s garden. The servant Grigory found Lizaveta while she was giving birth, and took care of Smerdyakov. He grew up under Grigori’s protection, and later became Fyodor Pavlovich’s servant.

---

10. Victor Terras writes the following about different points of view of the polyphonic composition in *The Brothers Karamazov*: “The Brothers Karamazov shows the world on several levels, or from several viewpoints, in a style we might call ‘polyphonic’ (with reference to Bakhtin). Viacheslav Ivanov distinguishes the level of plot, the psychological, and the metaphysical; Gesen splits the last of these into the ‘metaphysical’ and the ‘mystical.’ Belknap very aptly says that ‘it is as if God and Christ and the Devil could only be approached through a hierarchy of narrators,’” (see Terras, Victor. [1981]. *A Karamazov Companion. Commentary on the Genesis, Language, and Style of Dostoevsky’s Novel*. University of Wisconsin Press, 85).

Fyodor Pavlovich had no sense of responsibility and no capacity for consideration of others. None of his sons grew up in his house. Grigory cared for them in their early years, and then Dmitry was fetched by his mother’s cousin, Pyotr Alexandrovich Müñsov, who saw to his upbringing and education. Ivan and Alexey were taken in by Sofya Ivanovna’s foster mother, the widow of a general, and were later placed with Yefim Petrovich Polyonov, who became their guardian and foster father. It is the tension and conflicts between Fyodor Pavlovich and his sons that initiate the action and contribute to the novel’s rise of tension, disgrace and catastrophe.

This father-son configuration is contrasted to another type of father-son relationship in the novel. Alexey, most often referred to as Alyosha, is a novice in a monastery, and has a strong relationship with the elder monk, Zosima. This relationship is built on affiliation, and can be regarded as a positive counter example of a father-son relationship. When Zosima dies, Alyosha is sent “out in the world,” and the novel’s childhood motif, which is developed in Book X, is continued towards the end of the work along the lines of a new father-son relationship, where Alyosha appears as the guide to the young boys and as a partner in a possible future fraternity constructed upon affiliation. The biological family plot is depicted as destructive and quite free of any form of behaviors of attachment. Opposed to this are two environments tied to the figure of Alyosha, one clerical and one profane, where different forms of brother-ship are practiced under the leadership of non-biological father figures.

Just as central as the family plot is the crime plot. These two plot structures are tied closely together because the pivotal criminal act in the novel is the fratricide of Fyodor Pavlovich. The complexity consists in the fact that there is also a miscarriage (a murder) of justice. Dmitri is convicted of the murder, but the culprit is Smerdyakov. The crime plot is complicated still further by being linked to an ethical dilemma. As mentioned, Fyodor Pavlovich was regarded as one of the most mad and depraved subjects in his district. Many had wanted him dead, including Ivan, who feels guilty in complicity since he contributed in influencing Smerdyakov with his ideological point of view that “everything is allowed” when God is dead. Towards the end of the novel Ivan becomes seriously ill because of guilt.

One of the reasons that the miscarriage of justice occurs is that the court makes a natural, but erroneous connection between the criminal case and a third central plot configuration, the erotic plot structure. The erotic plot is also complex. It consists of three intense triangular relationships. The most important is the triangle that involves both the father Fyodor Pavlovich and his son Dmitri. They are both
obsessed by desire for the same woman, the erotically inciting *femme fatale* Grushenka. This erotic configuration is depicted with an intensity that makes the two libertines’ desires appear pathological, includes violence and threats of violence, and is intensified by being tied to an economical struggle between the same rivals. Dmitri believes he has been cheated out of his 3000 ruble inheritance, and Fyodor Pavlovich wants to pay Grushenka the same sum for just one visit. This rivalry is transferred to the criminal case, and nullifies any chance for Dmitri to be acquitted in court after Fyodor Pavlovich is killed.

Another erotic triangle which is depicted with great intensity is the relationship between Grushenka, Dmitri and Dmitri’s fiancée, the haughty Katerina Ivanovna. While Dmitri is chasing after Grushenka, his fiancée is namely trying to determine what will become of their relationship. The two women are implacable rivals throughout the entire novel. The engaged couple have an exceedingly strong, but ambivalent, relationship to each other, and this also persists to the novel’s last pages. During the court case, Katerina Ivanovna gives two different depositions, one in strong support of Dmitri, and one that is crushing, perhaps even decisive, to the guilty verdict. Nevertheless they throw themselves into each others’ arms in their last meeting at the prison hospital after Dmitri is sentenced. By then they have both begun new relationships, but confess an everlasting and impossible love for each other.

The new relationship into which Katerina is entering is a love affair with Dmitri’s half brother Ivan, who is seriously ill at her home. The third erotic triangle then is that of Dmitri – Katerina Ivanovna – Ivan. It is depicted with much less intensity than the other two, but while there is no doubt that Ivan harbors deep contempt for Dmitri, the rivalry between the two brothers is not violent or destructive. In fact, Ivan devises detailed plans and pays expenses so that Dmitri can escape under transport to the labor camp in Siberia.

As in most of Dostoevsky’s novels, there is a *social plot structure* in *The Brothers Karamazov* too, but perhaps it is an exaggeration to talk about plot in this context. It may be just as correct to employ the term: a societal theme. But social constellations tied to central characters in the novel take part in shaping a dynamic and complicated plot development in the work. It concerns, for example, the social tension between the three “legitimate” brothers on the one hand and Smerdyakov, with his homeless and socially outcast mother, on the other. It also concerns the tension between Dmitri on the one hand and Captain Snegiryov on the other hand. Dmitri’s degrading and violent treatment of the unfortunate staff captain foreshadows the story of Ilyusha and the school boys whom Alyosha enters into fraternity with towards the end of the novel. This development creates the final climax in the
text along with Alyosha’s speech to the boys when Ilyusha dies. It would not be unreasonable to regard the social configuration as a subplot in the novel. Even if it has a subordinate position as regards the plot, it is nonetheless thematically important, underscored since it has the last word in the novel. It represents possible joint efforts that point ahead towards the future and a new generation. All of the other constellations in the novel reflect a conspicuous lack of solidarity where one would otherwise expect to find it, in family relations and romantic relationships. In addition, the social layer in the novel reveals Dostoevsky’s legacy from realism. As in most of Dostoevsky’s novels, virtually all social strata are represented, and many different environments are described.

From a contemporary perspective it is striking that the portrayal of social life is almost without focus on any type of economic life. Almost none of the characters we encounter work. There are farmers on the periphery of the novel’s center, and one assumes that they work on the estates that are mentioned. But for that matter we hear little about people participating in any kind of working life. Economics plays an important role in the novel, but only in the form of inheritance and loans. Fyodor Pavlovich, who works his way up economically in society, evidently does so primarily by means of “vile tricks” and by arrogating the dowry of his first wife. People seem chiefly to live on inherited fortunes or financial subsidy. We first encounter Alyosha as a novice in the monastery, but after he leaves there, we hear nothing of how he finds a means of support. He is continually present wherever people congregate, runs from errand to errand, and fills his days with conversations. Dmitri is desperately in search of money, but in connection with this he thinks only of inheritance. When Madame Khokhlakov makes the suggestion that he go away to work in the mines, he regards that as something unthinkable, pure punishment. It is not just work for wages that is alien to the universe of Dostoevsky’s novel – that could have an historical explanation – but it seems almost as if the life of work on the whole is foreign to him.

If the social configurations shape a subplot, one can perhaps say the opposite about the ideological plot. The configurations are complex on this level also. The dynamic development of the ideological tensions in the text take place in a nationalistic sphere, a sphere critical of modernity, and a religious sphere. There are elements of the Pan-Slavism that one is familiar with from the rest of Dostoevsky’s authorship. Traditional Russia, the Russian folk spirit, is assumed to have a historically significant responsibility with the purpose of nurturing and maintaining essential values which modern Europe seems to have renounced with its socialist and nihilistic developments. European influence is essentially detrimental, as is already evident in the beginning of the novel when Adelaida Ivanovna’s strange
“lack of mental freedom” and romantic unsuitability for life are claimed to be due to “an echo of foreign ideas” (3). Dmitri’s foster father, Pyotr Alexandrovich Miūsov, is “a man of enlightened ideas and of European culture” and has been heavily influenced by his life in France, it is said that he “had known Proudhon and Bakunin personally” (5). All the same he is mainly positively portrayed. And yet, the ideological contrasts are clear: He “began an endless lawsuit ... He regarded it as his duty as a citizen and a man of culture to open an attack against the ‘clericals’.” (5–6). Towards the end of the novel, the contrast between the Russian and the foreign becomes clearly apparent in Dmitri’s contempt for America. He considers having to flee to America as a punishment in itself, and is already planning his return to Russia incognito. The layers of nationalism and critique of modernity in the text contribute to make the ideological tensions epoch-dependent and displays the author’s reactionary attitudes. However, they are not predominant in the representation. A much greater emphasis is placed on the religious aspects through the tension between European modernity and Russian tradition. These aspects too would probably have been engulfed by the course of time had it not been for the fact that the author through Ivan had bestowed on world literature some of the most famous textual passages we know on the subject, the legend about the “Grand Inquisitor” and Ivan’s rebellion against God. The struggle between the Russian belief in God and radical atheism can be said to form a certain plot structure in the novel since it develops dynamically through the course of the story and is tightly tied to the tension between the two brothers, Ivan, the rebel against God, and Alyosha “the monk.” The tension passes through several stages. However, it is indicative for the novel’s development that the greatest climax comes relatively early in the course of the text, that is, before the middle, in Book V. This is where Ivan advances his atheism, and the rest of the novel can be regarded as an attempt to reply to Ivan’s initiative. To the degree that the novel succeeds in this, it is a narrative answer that is given, not an argumentative one. So therefore it is reasonable to work with the ideological contrasts as a plot.

The religious layer in the text is already introduced in the introduction, in Book I, Chapter V, “Elders.” It is continued in Book II. Ivan’s legend and renunciation appears in Book V. It is proposed in a conversation with Alyosha, and is so incontestable that even Alyosha, the monk, is compelled to agree with his repudiating brother. The following Book VI, “The Russian Monk” cannot manage to bring a balance to the ideological struggle. It presents no answer to Ivan’s fundamental question, and does not counter his criticism. One can scarcely see it in any other light than that the plot development and the fate of the persons bearing the ideologies give a narrative victory in the battle to the believer Alyosha. In the course
of the novel, Ivan falls to pieces from within, his personality disintegrates, and he is overtaken by madness. He cannot tolerate the burden from his feeling of guilt and his isolated existence. At the conclusion of the novel, Ivan is lying ill and unconscious in the home of Katerina Ivanovna, and it appears uncertain if he will survive – while Alyosha gives his ecstatic speech for the “gang of boys” about a fellowship for the future, where a new future for a new generation is indicated. Yet no one has been capable of refuting Ivan’s revolt against God.

AFFECTIVE NARRATOLOGY

As we have seen, ever since the early days of literary theory there has been attention to the importance of emotions for aesthetic experience. Plato’s restrictive stand in *The Republic* was due to fear of what aesthetically evoked feelings could lead to in community life. In Aristotle’s *Poetics*, we find an entirely different attitude: “Through fear and pity” the artistic imitation of human actions can lead to “the catharsis of the emotions involved.” In spite of different attitudes in principle to the emotional aspects of art, both are still primarily engaged with art’s effects on listeners or the public. This tendency has been continued in contributions to modern theory. Two examples are Alan Palmer’s *Fictional Minds* (2004) and Suzanne Keen’s *Empathy and the Novel* (2007). Palmer is especially occupied with the meaning of emotions as readers work on understanding “fictional minds.” Keen discusses the empathic appeal that emanates from novel to reader. In *Affective Narratology. The Emotional Structure of Stories*, Patrick Colm Hogan asserts that “Other recent work on emotion and narrative has tended to focus on reader response in a more strictly empirical or experimental way” (Hogan 2011, 14) and refers to Keith Oatley’s contributions, among others.

These are extremely pivotal questions which concern the functions of art and literature, and I shall return to such questions later. However, in my reading of *The Brothers Karamazov* I want, following Patrick Colm Hogan, to direct attention to a greater degree towards a possible affective narratology; first and foremost my reading will deal with the function of emotions in the plot and their importance for the characters in the story. On several points in the following, I will take advantage of viewpoints from Hogan’s book. But Hogan moves gradually in a direction of greater generalization, and directs focus towards “the broad structure of stories” and towards “main cross-cultural types of stories,” of which he believes there are three prototypes: “heroic, romantic and sacrificial” (19). Everything considered, Hogan is more engaged with “The Mind” than with either stories or emotions in his research, as comes to light in his book *The Mind and Its Stories. Narrative Uni-
versals and Human Emotion (2003). (He would like literature to have a larger role in cognitive study in order to find commonalities.) He seeks answers to the type of question posed by, for example, Mark Turner, who states, “We do not ask, what is the human mind that it can create and understand a text? What is a text that it can be created and understood by the human mind?” With this background Hogan is looking for “literary universals” (Hogan 2003, 4). I have another intention, which is to undertake a more specific analysis of circumstances in the selected text, The Brothers Karamazov. So I will only be able to take advantage of Hogan’s conclusions to a certain extent.

Having outlined the novels’ plot configurations, the intention now is to trace an “affective narratology” in Dostoevsky’s art of the novel. The narrative proceedings in the novel begin in Book II in a quite definite way, not by the occurrence of a sudden and unexpected event that starts a dramatic chain of actions, but by those involved in the complex family structure themselves arranging a meeting or a family council. However even the title of Book II warns that the family council will not proceed as planned: “An Unfortunate Gathering.”

Book II is basically comprised by two emotionally harrowing visits, one in the monastery cell of the Elder Zosima (Chapters I–VI) and one with the Father Superior, where the visitors are invited to dinner (Chapter VIII). Both visits end in scandalous scenes. Between these visits the author has inserted a calmer interlude in which Alyosha and the divinity student Rakitin discuss the rivalry between Fyodor Pavlovich and Dmitri (Chapter VII). The first visit, which is most thoroughly described, has a comparable three part composition. It consists of two conversational sequences in Zosima’s cell, interrupted by an interlude in which Zosima leaves the cell to meet with some visiting women who are waiting for his blessing. With respect to composition, Dostoevsky works with a fractal structure wherein not only the pattern, but also the spiral of suspense, are reflected. Both structures create an ascent of motion from tension to scandal with a calmer section inserted as a rhythmic resting pulse in the dramatic proceedings. The parts of the composition are marked by arrivals, entrances and exits from the story’s different spaces. What is striking in the narrative is that Dostoevsky creates a highly dramatic development totally without the use of events or incidents. He does so entirely through the means of conversation between people. Within the basic structure of composition he has placed six different sequences of conversation, and it is solely clashes between persons and temperaments that shape the dramatic development; in other words, the unveiling and collision of aggressive and destructive emotions in a narratively limited space. The first conversation takes place mainly between Fyodor Pavlovich, Pyotr Alexandrovich Müesov and the
Elder Zosima; the second between Zosima and the women; the third between Ivan and the clerics; the fourth between Fyodor Pavlovich and Dmitri; the fifth between Alyosha and Rakitin; and the sixth between Fyodor Pavlovich and all the others present with the Father Superior.

The prerequisites for destructive emotions being able to exist and develop so catastrophically during the conference lie in the complex structure of the family. The biological family relations are first and foremost characterized by a lack of affects and emotions that usually hold families together. The father Fyodor Pavlovich has no abilities at all as a figure of attachment. If we use Keith Oatley and Jennifer Jenkins’ three central concepts of social motivation, assertion, attachment and affiliation, one can conclude that the Karamazov family emerges as totally without attachment.12 Fyodor Pavlovich is completely governed by assertion. The three brothers did not grow up together, and the action begins when they all three suddenly find themselves in their hometown at the same time. To a certain extent, and to differing degrees, they develop a certain affiliation for each other as the story advances. But to a much greater extent, it is the destructive feelings among the members of the family that determine the course of the action.

Viewed through the progress of emotions, Book II starts with the arrival at the monastery where we are advised that Miüsov is uncomfortable with the situation and is anxious about what might occur. As an atheist, he opposes the entire institution of the monastery, which, moreover, he is engaged in a lawsuit against. In addition, as Dmitri’s foster father, he reacts with loathing for Fyodor Pavlovich. He shows great irritation when no one greetstheym at their arrival at the monastery, and the narrator clearly describes his feelings: “His liberal irony was rapidly changing almost into anger” (28). Of course Fyodor Pavlovich notices Miüsov’s irritability and teases him with provocative sarcasm and contemptuous sneers. Shortly thereafter, he mocks Miüsov for being brought to an uproar: “I can’t think why you are so agitated” (31).

In many ways this opening is prototypical for the entire following proceedings. The meeting is characterized by a latent tension which causes everyone to be in a state of emotional preparedness in one form or another. For example, it is said of Alyosha that “The blood rushed to Alyosha’s cheeks. He was ashamed” almost as soon as the visitors enter Zosima’s cell, simply in fear of what would happen next (32). In this situation Fyodor Pavlovich behaves as a provocateur and buffoon and

---

12. Oatley defines these three concepts of social motivations: “assertion of ourselves against others in conflicts over status and power; attachment, in which we depend on others whom we trust for protection against danger; and affiliation, in which we commit ourselves to each other in friendly cooperation.” (Oatley 2004, 81)
provokes strong counteractive emotions in the other visitors. Time and again Miúsov becomes indignant over the initiatives of Fyodor Pavlovich. The two are constantly flinging provocative remarks at each other, which leads to the steady increase of an emotionally charged atmosphere in the text. In addition, Miúsov reacts with aversion to the Elder. “To all appearances a malicious soul, full of petty pride” he thought (32). When Fyodor Pavlovich begins to speak directly to the Elder, Miúsov loses his self-control, something which happens several times. But Fyodor Pavlovich cannot stop. He throws himself into a performative monologue, an irascible and pathetic performance in which he characterizes himself as “a real buffoon!” (33) He behaves foolishly and with a lack of respect and awakens anger and embarrassment in the others present. “Alyosha stood, with hanging head, on the verge of tears” (35). All the same, everyone seems to be clearly aware that Fyodor Pavlovich is acting and just playing a part (37). Even the Elder remarks that “all this, too, is deceitful posturing” (36). Fyodor Pavlovich is quite simply pulling the old monk’s leg.

Those who are most capable of keeping control of their reactions are nevertheless precisely the monks. Especially Zosima himself reacts in a surprising way. In the middle of Fyodor Pavlovich’s display, he says, “Do not trouble. Make yourself quite at home. And, above all, do not be so ashamed of yourself, for that is at the root of it all” (35). Fyodor Pavlovich’s conduct appears more than anything else precisely shameless – as he appears for that matter in almost everything he does. The Elder, however, gives a psychological analysis of Fyodor Pavlovich’s behavior, and claims that the emotional incentive for his tomfoolery is shame. To this analysis, Fyodor Pavlovich responds with the following admission: “you pierced right through me with that remark, and read me to the core” (36). The two then proceed to a discussion about the pleasure in feeling oneself mistreated and offended. In this way the psychological analysis of compound and paradoxical emotions play an important role in the first conversational sequence. There is an unexpected conclusion to the conversation. After Fyodor Pavlovich obliges with a story he attributes to Miúsov, which by his own account shook his faith, the Elder rises suddenly and leaves the room. He is going to meet with women who are waiting for his blessing.

Emotional Spaces

As a prototype this conversation is interesting with respect to several specific narrative features. In the first place, locality seems to play a significant role in affective narratology. Initially, it appears strange to seek to resolve an economic family
conflict in a monastery cell by means of a family council with a monk, who would be assumed to know more about spiritual questions than inheritance rights. Of course, one could say that this localizing contributes in linking the connection between the novel’s family plot and the ideological plot. However, I think that one can also establish a hypothesis concerning affective narratology from the localization of these conversations. In affective narratology, spatiality aspects play a special role. By means of narrative devices the author creates specific affective or emotional spaces, and allows the affects of the characters to take place within these spaces to attain definite effects. Consequently the localization of emotional incidents do not emerge as neutral surroundings for individual outbursts of feeling. There are both macro- and micro-emotional geographies. For that matter, in Dostoevsky’s view there is little doubt that the very attitude towards life is different in Russia than in Europe. I will return to such emotional macro-geographies in another chapter in this book. Of more current interest for the specific scene we are discussing here is that when the visitors step inside the walls of the monastery, and subsequently into Zosima’s cell, they are arriving in an already emotionally encoded space. Miusov perceives it immediately, and reacts with antipathy, and, as we have already heard, almost with anger. This is not his place. He is very aware that there are powerful expectations for behavior in this space, and he fears with good reason that Fyodor Pavlovich will not respect these expectations. The room is not just a container for the individual emotional display of the people who are present. The room is emotionally encoded.

At this point, it is relevant to bring in some viewpoints from Patrick Colm Hogan’s book *Affective Narratology*. He too is occupied with “Emotional Geography” and that “spatiality, the ‘existential’ experience of location, is fundamentally an emotional experience” (Hogan 2011, 29). Hogan stresses, among other things, what he calls “…the baseline from which emotions arise. This is normalcy. More often than not, emotions are a response to changes in what is routine, habitual, expected. We anticipate normalcy unreflectively” (30). Even if Miusov and Fyodor Pavlovich are not familiar with what is “habitual” in the monastery, it is obvious that Miusov to a large extent anticipates the monastery’s normalcy, and is troubled because Fyodor Pavlovich does not. The narrator is also concerned with this relationship between Fyodor Pavlovich’s behavior and the “normalcy” of the place. It is clearly important that the reader is made aware of the “normalcy” of the space so that the effect of “changes in what is routine” is assured:

What was taking place in the cell was really incredible. For forty or fifty years past, from the times of former elders, no visitors had entered that cell without
feelings of the profoundest veneration. Almost everyone admitted to the cell felt that a great favour was being shown him. Many remained kneeling during the whole visit (Dostoevsky, 34).

The rupture with the expected is explicitly emphasized by the narrator: “So that the buffoonery shown by Fyodor Pavlovich, the lack of reverence for the place he was in, amazed and bewildered the spectators…” (35). The emotional drama in the current scene is not due just to the fool’s buffoonery alone, nor just to the clash between the different emotional natures of those present, but to a high degree also to the rupture with the “normalcy” of the emotionally encoded room. There is good reason to assume that this is a generally valid characteristic of affective narratology.

Performative and Analytical Emotionality

Another prototypical feature of the scene is the relationship between a performative emotional layer in the text and a parallel analytical emotional layer. As we have seen, Fyodor Pavlovich behaves completely disrespectfully and apparently shamelessly face to face with the gathered group of people and as a guest in Zosima’s cell. He takes over and conquers the room, filling it with his uninhibited personality, his tomfoolery and his emotionality. His torrent of speech is unstoppable; he barely lets anyone get a word in edgewise and, as the narrator expresses it, he “was playing a part again” (37). But as already mentioned his brazenness is analyzed and exposed by Zosima as driven by feelings of shame. In this way, a discrepancy arises – a direct contrast between the emotional play presented on the stage and the analysis of it. In and of itself, the observation of a clear emotional layer and a corresponding latent layer in a literary text is commonplace. This is a normal situation in texts of literary quality, and constitutes one of the reasons that there exists an analytical and interpretative literary field of study. In texts after Romanticism, it is customary for the analytical layer to be unrepresented in the text, but left to the reader or interpreter. It is precisely the discrepancy between a performative emotional layer in the text and a latent layer that has made possible the mobilization of a multitude of psychological theorists in interpretation of literary texts. Especially in Dostoevsky’s novels the occurrence of compound and apparently paradoxical emotions are a basic feature. In the first place, it is mentioned here so that the relationship can be included in what I call an affective narratology. I generally regard it to be an important aspect in that sense. Secondly, I think it can be part of explaining why the author in the current instance has
placed the Karamazov family’s council in the Elder’s cell. It has obviously been a point that the analytical emotional layer should be represented *in* the text. The Elder Zosima has, as the representative of judgement and wisdom, received the role of the analyst or the psychologist. He is clearly capable of “reading people’s insides.” It is conspicuous that during the entire visit to his cell, he behaves much more like a clever psychologist than as a Christian guide. When Fyodor Pavlovich suddenly asks, “what must I do to gain eternal life?” he receives the utmost conventional answer: “You have known for a long time what you must do. You have sense enough: don’t give way to drunkenness and incontinence of speech; don’t give way to sensual lust; and above all, to the love of money. And close your taverns” (36). Such advice really appears to be religious clichés, but the ability to read the inner man takes one by surprise, is unusual and gives new perspectives to the text. Zosima’s conduct as a psychological analyst recurs in the next conversation, in which the Elder pronounces a comparable penetrating analysis of Ivan’s emotional state. In that case the conversation deals with an article that Ivan has written pertaining to the relationship between the church and the state, as well as viewpoints he has advanced about the relationship between godlessness and the dissolution of ethical norms. Ivan, who both on this occasion and elsewhere in the novel, appears mostly as a philosophical atheist, is now suddenly made a subject of the Elder’s emotional analysis:

“The question [There is no virtue if there is no immortality] is still fretting your heart, and not answered. But the martyr likes sometimes to divert himself with his despair, as it were driven to it by despair itself. Meanwhile, in your despair, you, too, divert yourself with magazine articles, and discussions in society, though you don’t believe your own arguments, and with an aching heart mock at them inwardly . . . That question you have not answered, and it is your great grief, for it clamors for an answer” (61).

After this analysis Ivan rises and respectfully accepts the Elder’s blessing.

**Emotional Trigger Figures**

We should call attention to an additional prototype in the current scene, namely the use of *emotional trigger figures.* Miüsov’s function in the first conversational sequence serves as an example. He participates in the scene in a way, but he primarily occupies a position of observation. Later, especially in the conversation with Ivan, it is clear that he attempts to obtain a status as participant, but does not quite
succeed. He is obviously a supporting character in all the scenes where he appears, and he never manages to be seen with as much authority and consideration as he himself clearly wishes to be. All the same, it is striking how often he is mentioned in the text. This is because he takes care of a definite function in the affective narratology. He is a trigger figure who is influenced by place, people and events that happen. He is, so to speak, a thermometer for the emotional charges in the text; he gives responses to situations, and becomes a narrative marker for the text's increasing emotional tension. We constantly hear how agitated he is, that he can no longer manage to control himself, that he will wash his hands of being lumped together with Fyodor Pavlovich, etc. etc. He rarely contributes input that changes the course of the text or reveals new information. He functions quite simply as an emotional dipstick. Alyosha also acts several times in the current scene as a similar emotional trigger figure. Narratively they function as sequentially placed elements in the text where explicit information about its emotional temperature is given. An important point is that the sequential series demonstrates a degree of escalation, and in this way contributes to increasing the level of tension in the text. It is obvious, in fact, that such trigger figures function as mirroring characters for the reader. Miúsov’s reactions to Fyodor Pavlovich’s behavior represents a “normal” indisposition and indignation to the situation. The readers will easily identify with these reactions, and themselves “feel” the trigger figure’s indignant hostility. There is reason to assume that this technique is also a widespread method of shaping emotional tension in an affective narratology. At any rate, Dostoevsky utilizes it often. In some instances, the narrator himself can act as an emotional trigger figure. An emotional trigger figure will most often have feelings or reactions where there is little doubt about who the object of the feelings are – in contrast to other literary characters that can be complex, and who often have feelings that they themselves don’t know the cause of. In the current case, Miúsov is partially triggered by monastery life, but of course primarily by Fyodor Pavlovich’s behavior. The object for Alyosha’s trigger feelings is only Fyodor Pavlovich.

“Low-road Reactions”

The fourth conversation in Book II, the argument between Fyodor Pavlovich and Dmitri in Chapter VI, is emotionally more intense than the preceding ones; here

13. Emotional trigger figures are literary characters, most often minor characters, who give situational responses to actions and function as thermometers for the emotional charge of the text. Most often such trigger figures also function as mirror characters for an implied reader in the sense that they signal how the text expects the reader to react to the narrative.
the chief rivals oppose each other in a direct quarrel. Dmitri comes an hour late to “the unfortunate gathering,” but after he arrives in the Elder’s cell, it does not take long before the tension is released in a veritable verbal battle. The quarrel almost ends in a physical fight. “If you were not my son I would challenge you this instant to a duel... with pistols, at three paces!...” howls Fyodor Pavlovich (64). However, narratologically we observe several of the same functions as in the earlier conversations. Here too what is said is accompanied by reactions from emotional trigger figures among the minor characters. This time both Father Iosif, Kalganov and Miúsov function as trigger figures. At one time, “ ‘This is unendurable!’ was heard on all sides in the cell” (65). Yet in this chapter, there is less need for such trigger figures because the two troublemakers trigger each other to such a high degree that no one can be in doubt about the level of the emotional intensity.

In this connection we see that the author uses a new device in his affective narratology. It is not completely new, certainly; we have already seen it with Alyosha a few times earlier. I am thinking of purely physical reactions that are not controlled by consciousness or by intellectual deliberations. In the conversation discussed earlier, we heard that Alyosha became blood red in the face and that he was on the verge of tears. It has also been the case previously that the use of the voice has characterized emotional agitation. Fyodor Pavlovich does not “speak” or “say” things, he “yells” and “roars.” In the quarrel with Dmitri he “cried... hysterically, squeezing out a tear” (63). But we also hear about other physical reactions: Dmitri is “breathless” when Fyodor Pavlovich brings Katerina Ivanovna into the matter. Right afterwards, we learn that Dmitri was “trembling with rage.” He has to stop his own speech because his body reacts on its own: “He could not go on. His eyes were glittering and he breathed with difficulty” (63). At a time when he is “beside himself with rage” we hear that he “looked almost deformed” (65).

Here we are confronted with a type of emotional reaction which is discussed in this book’s introduction, and one with which most psychologists have been occupied. It is a question of Darwin’s “snake reaction,” the Stoics “first movement,” Joseph Ledoux’s low road of senses directly to the body, without going through the cortex. These are reactive emotions that occur when something happens that does not have a place in our “assumed world.” These are emotions that quite clearly “give life its urgency” (Oatley, 4). It is stressed in several places in Dostoevsky’s text that Dmitri had expected something entirely different in the meeting with the Elder Zosima. “I had come to forgive him if he held out his hand; to forgive him, and ask forgiveness!” (Dostoevsky, 63). But Fyodor Pavlovich’s behavior confronts him with something quite different than “the assumed world.” The reactions are not only strong and emotional; they are physical and beyond the control of the will. In
line with Joseph LeDoux’s concepts, I choose to call them low-road reactions. They are an important part of Dostoevsky’s affective narratology, and there is no doubt that such physical responses indicate an especially high emotional level of tension. In Dostoevsky’s authorship one can to some extent find a distribution of statements pertaining to emotional reactions and forms of reaction. If we make use of Keith Oatley’s concepts and differentiate between reactive emotion on the one hand and mood, sentiment and preference on the other, the latter (which can be understood as more permanent traits of personality or individual emotional tendencies) is often discussed by the narrator in connection with introducing personal characteristics (telling) while reactive emotions are depicted theatrically (showing).

An interesting question implicit in Dostoevsky’s narrative is to what extent physical emotional reactions must necessarily be regarded as authentic. If they pass directly from the senses to the rest of the brain and body, without cognitive input, one would suppose them to be authentic emotions, in other words, it should not be germane to imagine the possibility that someone could feign or fake reactions along the low road. Dostoevsky, or at least his narrator in The Brothers Karamazov, appears to have a different viewpoint. “‘A duel!’ yelled the old wretch again, breathless and spluttering at each syllable” (64). This is how one of Fyodor Pavlovich’s outbursts in the course of his quarrel with Dmitri is depicted. The narrator appears to mean that certain people by means of self entrancement can enter a state in which the body reacts as if to low-road events:

With old liars who have been acting all their lives there are moments when they enter so completely into their part that they tremble or shed tears of emotion in earnest, although at that very moment, or a second later, they are able to whisper to themselves, “You know you are lying, you shameless old sinner! You’re acting now, in spite of your ‘holy’ wrath and your ‘holy’ moment of wrath.” (64)

To what extent this viewpoint is relative to modern psychology and the division between the physical low-road reactions and the cognitive high-road reactions is, as far as I can see, unsettled. Independent of what the answer may be to this question, I assume that the description of what I here have called “low-road” reactions be included as a standard element in a general affective narratology.

Scripts and Causal Attribution

The conclusion to the quarrel scene is enigmatic. Towards both Fyodor Pavlovich and Ivan, Zosima has behaved as an emotional analyst, really even as a psycho-
logical therapist. But towards Dmitri he retains his role as a religious figure. The entire séance ends when the Elder rises, goes over to Dmitri and falls on his knees in front of him. Dmitri stood “for a few moments in amazement” before he “hid his face in his hands, and rushed out of the room” (65).

Why Zosima performs this gesture is enigmatic, and Dmitri’s reaction is equally so. Fyodor Pavlovich’s defamatory attack on Dmitri has provoked a fight-reaction, a “stay and fight back” reaction: “But as he has just this minute insulted not only me, but an honorable young lady . . . I have made up my mind to show up his game, though he is my father!” (63). Nowhere in the novel does Dmitri evince timidity, quite the opposite. But to the Elder’s humble gesture he exhibits a reaction that resembles an instinctive response to danger. Both LeDoux and Oatley call attention to “freeze” or “escape” reactions as automated physical reactions to fear among all mammals. It’s a matter of “low-road” reactions in LeDoux’s conceptual vocabulary, or “first movement” reactions in Oatley’s. Such basic emotions arise in the limbic system, according to Oatley, preceding processing in the cortex. Why Zosima’s humble, non-threatening action provokes an instinctive danger reaction in Dmitri is and remains a mystery in the novel.

Such enigmas are important elements in Dostoevsky’s narrative art, and perhaps in most novels of superior quality. They reveal something about the complex and complicated emotionality of the literary characters. At the same time, riddles of this type always create a desire for interpretation in the reader. We wonder: What exactly is happening here? Even if one does not find an unambiguous answer, the question creates suspense, and in the act of reading it contributes to an accumulating uncertainty that seeks a solution in further reading. Connected to the discussion of an affective narratology, this type of riddle directs attention to at least two general questions: The first has to do with the sequence of emotions, or script-problematics, the other concerns what Hogan calls causal attribution.

The concept that emotions enlist entire sets of responses that, so to say, come in “packages,” in which emotions and reactions are tied together in scripts that form narrative sequences has occupied a number of psychologists.14 There are typical forms of reaction in which emotions and responses appear in expected patterns. There also exist more individual life scripts with divergent patterns that can be due to particular personal experiences. Dmitri’s typical freeze and escape reaction is part of a very fundamental script which is common to most mammals; it is an instinctive response which follows immediately upon the perception of danger. When the reaction in Dmitri’s case apparently appears without an existing danger,

---

it is natural that the question arises: What kind of individual experiences or deviating mind responds to peaceful gestures of humility with a reaction as if of danger? What kind of script can we imagine for Dmitri’s emotions? One can raise the same question in connection with Zosima’s action. What kind of script can one imagine for a holy monk who falls on his knees before an irascible trouble-maker after quite unseemly conduct?

Such questions are connected to what Patrick Colm Hogan calls causal attribution. He explains the phenomenon in this way:

When we experience an emotional spike, our cognitive response is partially automatic. Crucially, we shift our attentional focus. But just what do we shift our attentional focus to? It is relatively simple – causes, or possible causes. Almost immediately upon experiencing an emotion, we begin to attribute a cause. More precisely, we narrow our attentional focus to candidate causes, attributing a cause very quickly. This is crucial because causal attribution is a necessary prerequisite for any actional outcome. (Hogan 2011, 34).

So causal attribution is something we deal with all the time in daily life. For the most part, we have a good chance of discerning tolerably well. That is why social life functions as well as it does. But difficult situations exist where the chances of making a mistake are great. Creating hypotheses about the causes of other people’s feelings is, in any case, an activity that we are engaged in all the time. “We never directly know these causes. We must always infer them” Hogan writes. “Most often, however, we do not realize that we have to do this. We think that we know” (Hogan, 34–35). When it is a question of novels and narrative portrayals, as readers we most often find ourselves in the same situation as the fictional characters. The reader must, in common with the rest of the people who participate in the narrative universe, ask questions and form hypotheses about the causes of the feelings and behavior of the active characters. This is precisely what Fyodor Pavlovich does immediately after Zosima has kneeled in front of Dmitri: “What did it mean, falling at his feet like that? Was it symbolic or what?” said Fyodor Pavlovich, suddenly quieted and trying to reopen conversation . . .” (Dostoevsky, 65)

No one answers him, however. The same is probably the case with most readers at this point in the story. We ask the question about what the meaning could have been, probably without finding a clear answer. The reader’s causal attribution comes to a standstill, and the text remains enigmatic. From a general narratological perspective, there is good reason to believe that such places in the narrative where common causal attributions come to a standstill are important narratolog-
ical events. They build the indeterminacy of the text, and this vagueness becomes the reader’s challenge, especially indetermination tied to emotions and reactions. An affective narratological analysis should therefore be directed towards localizing places in the story where the automatic causal attribution does not work for the reader or for the participants in the story’s universe. The same holds true for feelings that break with common scripts or sequences where certain feelings usually form a part of a fixed pattern.

Among the most revealing of the other examples in *The Brothers Karamazov* are Katerina Ivanovna and Dmitri’s feelings and reactions in their relationship to each other. This finds expression especially towards the end of the novel. During the court case, Katerina Ivanovna initially gives a positive and humble deposition which is to Dmitri’s advantage. From the reader’s point of view, there is a quite spontaneous causal attribution that the reason for the testimony is Katerina’s deep love for Dmitri. She still loves him, despite the insults he has subjected her to. However, just after this she insists on giving another deposition. This time she produces a letter from Dmitri that puts the nail in his coffin, so to speak. In other words, Katerina Ivanovna’s second deposition is decisive to Dmitri’s guilty verdict, and his sentence of many years in a Siberian labor camp. The quite natural causal attribution on the reader’s side must be that she hates him intensely. The two depositions, and the reader’s natural causal attribution of emotions behind the different behaviors create a glaring contrast. The only possible interpretation from the reader’s side is that here we are confronted with an ambivalence of such a fundamental nature that the person involved has no control over it at all. The emotional division is so deep-seated in the personality that the executor lacks the reflexive insight and control of the actions. Katerina Ivanovna suffers from such a fundamental love/hate relationship that she must be regarded as a martyr to her own feelings; she does not have mastery over herself at all. It comes clearly to light during the second deposition, when she appears as a person entirely in the power of her feelings. She is described by the narrator as “the raving, hysterical woman” (656). She screams “shrieking loudly” at Mitya that he is a monster (653). The disintegration rips her to pieces to the extent that, after giving her two depositions, she collapses sobbing on the floor and has to be carried out of the courtroom.

Katerina Ivanovna’s ambivalent feelings parallel Dmitri’s. Throughout a large part of the novel, we have learned how he has betrayed, rejected and humiliated her. He used her money to seduce another woman, and he did so quite openly, so that Katerina Ivanovna was disgraced. He is erotically obsessed with Grushenka, and rejects his fiancée. Time and again he has uttered statements full of distain. So
when she takes revenge on him in her second disposition in court, sending him to Siberia, one would expect that her hate and fateful, hostile action would trigger reactions in Dmitri corresponding to an expected script: Hate and antagonism should presumably release anger, rage, despair, and reciprocal hate as well. Dmitri reacts completely differently. As pointed out before, it is absolutely urgent for him to meet her for a last time before he is transported to Siberia. She resists, but does come. When they meet under these very somber circumstances they display a mutual, deep and reciprocal, but hopeless, love. Not only that: Dmitri even says that he also loved her during the trial when she saw to it that he would be convicted:

“I shall love you, and . . . do you know, Katya,” Mitja began, drawing a deep breath at each word, “do you know, five days ago, that same evening, I loved you. . . . when you fell down and were carried out . . . All my life! So it will be, so it will always be . . .” (726)

DMITRI YEVGEYEVICH

It is hardly original to describe Dmitri as a man of emotions. In his massive Dostoevsky biography Leonid Grossman calls Dmitri, among other things “…a man of impulses and enthusiasms” (Grossman 1974, 580). Richard Peace writes about the three brothers: “in Alesha we have the soul; in Dmitrij the emotions; in Ivan the intellect” (229) Konstantin Mochulsky writes that “the principle of reason is embodied in Ivan: he is a logician and rationalist, an innate sceptic and negator; the principle of feeling is represented by Dmitry: in him is the ‘sensuality of insects’ and the inspiration of eros; the principle of will, realizing itself in active love as an ideal, is presented in Alyosha” (Mochulsky 1967, 597–98). Joseph Frank writes about Books VIII and IX: “The narrator takes great pains to explain all the twists and turns of Dmitry’s agitated emotions” (Frank 2002, 646).

In addition to the expected introduction in Book I, Dmitri is described particularly in the three “confessions” in Book III (Chapters III–V), in the attack on his father in Book III (IX) plus in Book VIII, which has the title “Mitya.” Of course, he also plays an important part in the investigation and the judicial process, and in the Epilogue. It is characteristic of descriptions of him that he almost always finds himself in an intense affective state of one kind or another. Neutral or harmonious calmness appears almost non-existent in his emotional repertoire, and the three “confessions” have been given the title “The Confession of an Ardent Heart” (Italics mine). Alyosha encounters him while he is guarding his father’s house, in
order to prevent Grushenka from seeking out Fyodor Pavlovich. The “confes-
sions” take place in a dilapidated gazebo, and even in the beginning Alyosha is
aware of his brother’s “exhilarated condition” (93).

In this episode we again notice what Hogan calls “the emotional geography.”
The confessions take place in a ramshackle old gazebo in a back garden where
Dmitri is concealing himself. Alyosha meets him by chance because he is taking a
shortcut through town. This shortcut is described in detail, and it involves “skirting
fences, climbing over wattle-fences, and crossing other people’s backyards” on the
sly (91). Dmitri calls it “the back-way” (94). Along the way, Alyosha walks
through a garden, and suddenly sees Dmitri beckoning violently to him. He does
dare shout, but is whispering because “I am guarding a secret.” No one must
know that he is there. Alyosha needs assistance climbing over yet another fence
before finding himself in the garden. Dimitri leads him to a secluded corner of the
garden where “… in a thicket of lime trees and old bushes of black current, elder,
snowball tree, and lilac, there stood a tumbledown green gazebo, blackened with
age.” The gazebo is fifty years old, and “was all in decay … the woodwork smelled
musty” (92). Dmitri, incognito, is in the fifth day of keeping a secret watch on his
father’s house. And here he gives his confession, in a place halfway between
delight and decay, halfway between civilization and nature, in a place one must go
the “back-way” to find. It is not difficult to see that this place functions in several
ways as an emblematic expression of Dimitri’s life and personality. The main
heading of Book III is “The Sensualists” – but it is clearly a question of sensuality
in decline. As we know, according to Hogan, “the baseline from which emotions
arise” is normalcy (Hogan, 30). In the gathering in the monastery, the Karamazov
clan found themselves in a place where a strictly established normalcy existed. The
scandalous scenes arose because of the rupture of the normalcy of the location. In
the decayed and deserted gazebo, we find ourselves in a place that no longer has
an established normalcy. In many ways, it is a valid expression of Dimitri’s condi-
tion. He is living alongside the normalcy of social life. At one time the gazebo was
likely a place for the romantic trysts of lovers. But it is an entirely different kind
of love, and a totally different kind of meeting of lovers, that Dimitri is keeping
watch for now. The rivalry is a decaying struggle of love, it smells of mold.

Dmitri’s confession comes in three phases, and in all three Alyosha works as a
listening trigger figure. Initially it is the love of life that Dmitri wants to impart,
but the joy in life is mingled with desperation over disgrace and humiliation. He
finds expression for these feelings in world literature, which he apparently has
been learning by heart. He quotes both from Schiller’s “Das Eleusische Fest” and
“An die Freude.” It all begins euphorically:
I could take you in my arms, Alyosha, and press you to my bosom till I crush you, for in the whole world – in reality – (can you take it in?) I love no one but you!” He uttered the last words in a sort of exaltation. (Dostoevsky, 93)

But just afterwards, he is on the edge of despair: “Mitya broke into sobs and seized Alyosha’s hand. ‘My dear, my dear, in degradation, in degradation now, too’” (95). According to Dmitri, all the Karamazovs share a family characteristic; they are all insects and “that insect lives in you, too, and will stir up a tempest in your blood” (96). He says that the heart of man is a battlefield where “God and the devil are fighting” (97). But what torments him the most is finding himself in the crushing predicament between the two women. His guilty conscience over Katerina Ivanovna is weighing him down, but the desire for Grushenka is overpowering. He would marry her in a moment if she would have him, but, if not, he is prepared for the greatest humiliations only to be close to her. He says he will be her farm hand and will clean the dirt from her lovers’ galoshes if she is untrue to him. Dmitri Karamazov’s emotions have no “average” temperature.

It is important in this context to note that it is precisely Dmitri’s emotions that are the cause of his dilemma. On the one hand, he is deeply distressed about violating a woman’s honor; on the other, he is ravaged by a desire that has complete power over him. This very conflict is the motivation in Dmitri’s pattern of action. If he could have ratcheted down the fervor of his emotions, the entire situation of his life would have changed, and his tragedy would have been unthinkable. It is simply the intensity of Dmitri’s emotions that shape his world. Desire becomes greater than all the other elements of existence combined, and this ground-shattering desire is also the prime mover of the book. Uncontrollable emotion is at the center of the story.

A conspicuous feature of Dmitri’s emotionality is expressed in the meeting with Alyosha. The transition between ecstatic euphoria and sobbing despair transpires without outer impetus. Nothing happens in the environment where the two are sitting that would call for a drastic emotional turnaround. Dmitri’s emotionality is self-induced. The changes come by surprise, instantly, and they come from within. This contributes to making the causal attribution difficult for the rest of the characters in the novel, as well as for the reader. Dmitri is an unpredictable, capricious “drama king” with exaggerated intense emotions that continually cause him to act in a way that creates conformity between his emotions and surroundings. There is not necessarily a viable reason for Dimitri’s feelings, but with his emotionally based way of acting and reacting, he brings about situations where his feelings fit
in. In other words: Emotions create events; it is not events that create emotional responses. Emotions are the narrative incentive for the story.

An example of this is the attack on Fyodor Pavlovich in his home in Book III, Chapter IX. The main point here is that what could possibly have been the reason for Dmitri’s behavior, has not happened. He has guarded Fyodor Pavlovich’s house for a long time to make sure that Grushenka does not visit him. Now he suspects that she is in the house. He has not seen her, but jealousy and suspicion are more than good enough reasons for him to crash into his father’s house and wield brutish violence against both the servant Grigory, who had cared for him when he was a small child, and his father, whom he not only strikes down, but also kicks in the face. This results in total chaos in the house and everyone becomes involved in preventing an even greater calamity. Dmitri’s baseless suspicions and jealousy shape a situation to match his feelings. Grushenka is not there. But Dmitri’s emotions shape the world to fit his feelings. And by means of violent behavior this world also becomes a world in which all other persons must conduct themselves and act in accordance. The explicit invasion of Dmitri’s behavior in this scene shows how people with “free floating” emotions and lack of impulse control influence others. 15 In the current situation Grigory, Smerdyakov, Alyosha and Ivan must all let themselves be guided by and act in accordance with Dmitri’s emotionally constructed, imagined world.

What is almost comical in the situation in this case is that Dmitri’s suspicion immediately infects the old man. They are cut from the same cloth. As the chapter heading says: They are two “sensualists.” Fyodor Pavlovich is also suddenly convinced that Grushenka is in the house, and he completely loses his head, just like his son: “He was choking. He was not expecting Grushenka at the time, and the sudden news that she was here made him beside himself. He was trembling all over. He seemed frantic” (127).

Another example of Dmitri’s free floating emotions is the attack and humiliation of staff captain Snegiryov. The episode is recounted several times in the novel. Katerina Ivanovna tells Alyosha about it, and the background is plainly diffuse and emotional: “Dmitri Fyodorovich somehow lost his temper with this captain…” (176). He drags him into the street by his beard while the captain’s little son watches and runs after them, begging for his father. He is crying and asks everyone to defend his father, but they only laugh. Katerina Ivanovna is clear in her judgement: “...one of those actions of which only Dmitri Fyodorovich would be capable in his anger... and in his passions!” (176–77). In the quarrel with his

15. Free floating feelings are “completely unattached to any particular thing, situation or idea.” See Oatley 2004, 65.
father, Dimitri himself admitted that “I behaved like a brute to that captain,” but the reason, according to Dmitri was that Fyodor Pavlovich had used the captain as a messenger to Grushenka. So from his own point of view, Dmitri’s action is certainly not without cause, but the violence and humiliation he subjects the captain to is totally out of proportion to the cause he gives. His feelings got the upper hand: “… and I regret it now, and I’m disgusted with myself for my brutal rage” (63). From Katerina Ivanovna’s reaction, we understand that this is typical for Dmitri; he is the only one who would think up something like this; he is not capable of controlling his feelings. We encounter both the staff captain and the little boy later in Book X “The Boys.” The little boy is Ilyusha, who dies towards the end of the novel, and for whom Alyosha holds a memorial speech on the novel’s last pages.

In the two days leading up to the murder of Fyodor Pavlovich, Dmitri behaves so totally out of his mind that he himself in retrospect admits that he “might easily have fallen ill with brain fever.” The narrator says he was “in a condition of feverish agitation” and “literally rushing in all directions” (342). Later, during the trial, no fewer than two doctors testify that he must have been ill. The local physician Herzenstube declares that “the abnormality of the defendant’s mental faculties was self evident,” and the specialist summoned from Moscow considers “the defendant’s mental condition abnormal to ‘the highest degree.’ He uses concepts like ‘aberration’ and ‘mania,’ … ‘condition of aberration for several days…’” (637–38). (A third physician says something entirely different, emphasizing Dostoevsky’s obvious parody of the medical profession.) Dimitri’s state of mind is characterized by his feeling that he must salvage his honor vis-à-vis Katerina Ivanovna and pay back the 3000 rubles he has acquired from her. At the same time, he must have the money ready in case Grushenka comes to him; they would then run far away together to begin a new life. He rushes about and seeks out various people to give him the 3000, first Kuzma, then the “bird dog” and finally Madame Khokhlakov. Each time he manages to goad himself to believe in his plan. There is hardly sense in his intention, but Dmitri has no problem in abandoning himself wholly to the belief that he will succeed; he seems just as enthusiastic every time. He is in the power of his feelings, and they shape for him a world in which things are assumed to happen as he wishes them to. It is an imaginary world created by strong emotions and a trusting mind. None of those he visits, and scarcely any readers, would think of taking him seriously. The events in the novel are at this point in time solely Dmitri’s overwrought emotions. He is propelled from impulse to impulse, “…he felt suddenly convinced that she would not refuse…” without rational reflection (360). The events in the novel do not
evoke emotional responses in the protagonist, rather the opposite: Emotions cause the narrative incidents.

Home again after the unsuccessful effort to collect money, jealousy gets the upper hand once more, and Dimitri rushes to Fyodor Pavlovich’s house to check if Grushenka is there. It is here that Dostoevsky reveals himself as a true crime fiction author. At all decisive points in the circumstances surrounding the crime case, he uses narrative ellipses which contribute to maintaining the suspense, and which are not filled in until the elucidation of the case during the judicial proceedings. Everything we have come to know earlier in the novel bears a part in making Dimitri the likely culprit. Now the author places him at the scene of the crime with a potential murder weapon in his hand, and has him think the following: “Perhaps I shall not kill him, perhaps I shall. I’m afraid he’ll suddenly be so loathsome to me at that moment, with that face of his.” The paragraph closes in this way, “This personal repulsion was growing unendurable. Mitya was beside himself. He suddenly pulled the brass pestle out of his pocket.” A lacuna in the action marked by the strategic placement of a wider than normal paragraph spacing follows this sentence, and the suspense is not greatly lessened when the next paragraph begins, “God was watching over me then” (370). Just as strategically placed, but less clearly marked in the text is an ellipsis which appears a few pages later. For several paragraphs we have heard how desperate Dimitri is in his search for money. He has had to borrow small sums to travel around to possible lenders. The descriptions have been detailed and exhaustive. Then suddenly: “Pyotr Ilyich grew more and more surprised; he suddenly caught sight of a bundle of bills in Mitya’s hand …” (374). Neither Pyotr nor the reader receives any explanation. This is an episode that will play a decisive role during the trial, where two different explanations are given. For the time being, the reader remains in uncertainty.

The reader (and Alyosha) have by this time learned that Grushenka has left for the neighboring town to meet her old Polish flame from five years earlier. As soon as Dmitri learns this, the action moves rapidly and the increase in suspense toward a narrative climax begins. Joseph Frank appears to believe that from the moment he learns that Grushenka has left to meet her former lover, Dimitri undergoes a character transformation. Instead of jealousy of his father, a code of honor goes into effect which causes Dmitri to “step aside” to avoid ruining the chosen woman’s happiness (Frank 2002, 650ff). To me this interpretation seems surprising, especially in the light of what Dimitri actually does in the ensuing hours. It is true that he several times thinks “I won’t stand in her way. I’ll step aside, I know how to step aside” (Dostoevsky, 374). It is also emphasized that he feels not the least jealousy towards his new rival. The narrator places Mitya’s thoughts in quo-
tation marks; he thinks, amongst other thoughts “Step aside, Mitya, and make way!” But then the narrator writes “These words would roughly have expressed his feelings, if he had been capable of reasoning. But he could not reason at that moment.” In other words, it is the narrator and not Dimitri who is thinking these thoughts. Dimitri is in chaos, “…confusion in his soul, an agonizing confusion” (387). He is still in the power of his feelings, and when he says he knows how to step aside, it concerns a spontaneous resolution to take his own life. What a peculiar way to “step aside” when what he actually does is to set off after Grushenka with a team of horses at full gallop in the middle of the night. He loads up enough wares for an entire orgy, a repetition of the big party he and Grushenka had when they met the first time – there in Mokroe. There is no doubt that Dimitri at this moment has decided to commit suicide, but that his conduct in the ensuing hours would be a way of leaving the lovers alone in their happiness, makes little sense. Dimitri is just as impetuous and just as chaotic in his feelings as he has always been. His actions are those of desperation. He turns up with all his wine and champagne and invades the lovers’ company, invites singers and dancers, and initiates the wildest orgy. It becomes apparent that during the night he outstrips his rival and wins Grushenka back. He abandons the idea of taking his life.

The entire orgy should be understood in light of a very specific passionate emotion in Dimitri, perhaps the core emotion in his personality: the love of life. “I love life. I’ve loved life too much, shamefully much” (383). One could say from a mythical perspective that we are faced with a Dionysus motif. Both the first and second of Dimitri’s orgies are a type of Dionysian celebration of worshipping, celebrating and abandoning oneself to life’s vital forces, beyond morality and reason.16 These vital forces appeal strongly to Grushenka, as she is depicted in the novel as more or less a representative of these very life forces, often without moral scruples. This is above all what Grushenka, Dmitri and Fyodor Pavlovich have in common. They are in the power of life’s vital forces; they love sensuality, eroticism, power, conflict and violence and do not let themselves be controlled by the inhibiting power of morality, social considerations or politeness. They love life, its vital forces, primeval urges that cannot be socialized. I do not believe that Dimitri’s actions this last night before he is arrested represents a transformation of his personality. He is not a noble lover who “steps aside” for his conquering rival because of a romantic code of honor. He is a lover of life in the power of feelings,

who wishes to burn his life out in one night, in a boundless Dionysian fest and then take his leave.

People with strong Dionysian urges will naturally enough always be in conflict with the well regulated social community, such as Fyodor Pavlovich, Dmitri and Grushenka are. In order for a society to function, uninhibited vitality must be channeled, regulated and brought under social control. Fyodor Pavlovich will not accept this, and therefore the community calls him a “buffoon” and a “fool.” He loses his head and becomes violent if anyone denies him the expression of his vitality. Grushenka, who loves putting her sexuality in play, is also referred to in her surroundings by means of insults. We have seen too that Dimitri fails in finding a balance between strong desire, uncontrolled emotions and eruptive vitality on the one hand, and society’s rules of the game on the other. But he obviously has an understanding of what the surrounding social community expects of him. He realizes that these are expectations that he is incapable of complying with. Therefore he passes judgment on himself, his life: “I punish myself for my whole life, my whole life I punish!” he writes in his suicide note (380). Here he allows the Apollonian and societal standards to judge his life, his vitality. From this perspective, it makes sense that Dimitri on the whole is depicted as a person in the power of his feelings, all the time in conflict or vexatious contact with the social community. Emotions are the expression of Dionysian urges; emotions are physical, bodily, sensual expressions of life. They are not guided by reflection or reason. Their driving force is a burning, consuming and primordial love of all of life. So it makes good sense that in Dostoevsky’s novel, this primary emotionality is not just dealt with as a theme among others. It is integrated in the novel’s style as a narrative force. Emotions are the story’s primary motivations. Emotions are not just responses or additions to the social world; emotions shape the world for Dimitri; they initiate action, and do not function merely as reactions to events.

Narratologically, it must be possible to establish concepts for Dimitri’s affective pattern. Distinctions pertaining to the affective sources of stimuli, temporality, and patterns of progression must be included in such an inventory of concepts. In Affective Narratology, Patrick Colm Hogan utilizes four distinctive concepts in the scope of narrative happenings, namely incidents, events, episodes and stories. It appears that the concepts are meant to describe the extent of time or duration of a happening, not the dimensions of discourse. It is also clear that the descriptions concern epic occurrences, not emotional incidents. Epic and emotional events are construed by Hogan as tightly intertwined in such a way that the first evokes the second. This makes sense as long as the literary reference is the psychological portrayals in Tolstoy. However, Dostoevsky’s psychology is more complex than Tolstoy’s, and
therefore there is a need for other angles of thought and ideas, including a use for concepts that can depict affective events that lack any obvious epic impetus.

With regard to the sources of impulses or stimuli, it is necessary to distinguish between an outer, epic type and an inner variant. Inner sources of stimuli can be of differing kinds, for example, memories, fantasies, dreams, hysteria, hallucinations, expectations, schemes and projects, and perhaps one should also include ideologies. Not all of these possible variants are represented in Dostoevsky, but Dimitri demonstrates on several occasions that he is affectively guided by inner sources of stimuli such as fantasies and schemes. Sometimes his reactions assume an almost pathological character. We see this also in other characters in the novel. Hysteria is an often occurring impetus source, especially for female characters. To be sure, hysterical attacks can often have an outer, instigating cause, as, for example, in the meeting between Katerina Ivanovna and Grushenka in Book III. But when a hysterical attack is initially released, the inner emotional burden will usually cause the affective course to be self perpetuating. Another favorite Dostoevsky phenomenon is the “fever fantasy.” The phenomenon is often described in a way that makes it difficult to decide to what extent it is a matter of a fever that evokes fantasies, or if it is tense emotional anxiety that leads to fever. A dramatic example in The Brothers Karamazov of a pathological condition in which the inner source of stimulus breaks out in powerful affective hallucinations is Ivan’s breakdown in Book XI, where he is visited by the Devil.

In addition to distinctions with respect to sources of stimuli, it is necessary to differentiate between variants of duration. Here other concepts than Hogan’s are needed, since purely affective events are to be described. Whether the impulse is of outer or inner nature, one could imagine the following concepts for differing degrees of duration: reaction, feeling, mood, temperament, attitude to life – and it could also be appropriate at this time to incorporate ideology as a variant of attitude to life. Dimitri’s attitude is to a high degree guided by desire and sensuality, that is to say by changeable affects of short – albeit recurring – duration. When it’s a matter of patterns of progression, many emotional segments and many changes are involved. The intensity is most often high, and the typical pattern of development is escalation, usually towards a scandal, a crisis or a catastrophe. Organic muting is rare. Flickering or oscillating between emotions is more common than ambivalence. In toto, one can say that Dimitri is guided just as much by inner as by outer stimulus sources. He is lacking in types of affects with high duration. Instead, he is to a great degree impelled by reactions, feelings and moods. Of course one could say that this is so common that it constitutes a temperament, and accordingly that a lack of stability is precisely a durable personality feature.
Ivan Fyodorovich

Ivan Fyodorovich is mainly described in Book V (III, IV, V), in Book XI, which has the title “Brother Ivan Fyodorovich,” and in Book XII, in the subdivision “A Sudden Catastrophe” (V). The three chapters in Book V are, as several scholars have called attention to, obvious parallels to Book III (III, IV, V). In Book III Dimitri speaks with Alyosha and pronounces his “confession of an ardent heart;” in Book V Ivan does the same. What is special about Ivan’s contribution is that two of the three sections have gained an autonomous standing in world literature, almost separate from the novel as a whole, namely Ivan’s rebellion against God and “The Grand Inquisitor.” Therefore they appear in some literary research as more of Dostoevsky’s creation than as Ivan’s ideas. Leonid Grossman asserts for that matter that Ivan is the only one of Dostoevsky’s characters who could have written his work (Grossman 1974, 582). It is striking that these special contributions to world literature were presented at a tavern, “The Metropolis” in the marketplace, while “Waiters were continually darting to and fro” and there was “the usual bustle going on…there were shouts for the waiters, the sound of bottles being opened, the click of billiard balls, the drone of the organ” (Dostoevsky, 210).

A surprising aspect of literary research about Ivan is the wide-spread conception that he represents rationality, logic and cool intellectual reason. I have already mentioned Richard Peace, who writes that in Ivan [we have] “the intellect” (Peace 1971, 229) and Konstantin Mochulsky who states that “the principle of reason is embodied in Ivan: he is a logician and rationalist …” (Mochulsky 1967, 597–98). Leonid Grossman also accentuates Ivan’s “brilliant and creative intellect” (Grossman 1974, 578). Joseph Frank places Ivan amongst Dostoevsky’s “young intellectuals” and calls him “the coldly conceptual and distant Ivan” even though he also attaches importance to the inner conflict in Ivan’s mind between an ardent thirst for life and cold intellectualism. (Frank 2002, 576, 601). Peace reinforces his viewpoint by calling Ivan’s mind “a mind which is essentially mathematical and ‘Euclidian’, and the logic of his ‘Rebellion’ is that a minus cancels out a plus; that the negative evidence of human suffering is stronger than the most positive sign of human happiness” (Peace 1971, 276). Mochulsky goes the farthest in his characterization:

In Ivan we find completed the age-old development of the philosophy of reason from Plato to Kant … “Man is a rational being” – this axiom has entered his flesh and blood. Ivan is proud of his reason and for him it is easier to renounce God’s world than reason. If the world is not justified by reason, it is
impossible to accept it. The rationalist does not want to be reconciled with a kind of “nonsense.” Here begins the tragedy: rational consciousness finds no meaning in the world-order. In the world there is an irrational principle, evil and suffering, which is impervious to reason. (Mochulsky 1973, 615)

Ivan’s self-image is completely different. When he introduces himself to Alyosha in the chapter, “The Brothers get Acquainted,” he identifies himself most closely with the irrational and vital thirst for life: “I have a longing for life, and I go on living in spite of logic” (Dostoevsky, 211. Italics mine) and continues:

Though I may not believe in the order of the universe, yet I love the sticky little leaves as they open in spring. I love the blue sky. I love some people, whom one loves you know sometimes without knowing why. I love some great deeds done by men, though I’ve long ceased perhaps to have faith in them, yet from old habit one’s heart prizes them. (211)

Ivan describes his thirst for life as “a feature of the Karamazovs.” “It’s not a matter of intellect or logic, it’s loving with one’s inside.” Ivan is clear that this is only one side of himself. He believes that his thirst for life is so strong because he is still in “the first strength of one’s youth” (212). When he turns thirty, he reckons that destructive forces will have the upper hand:

17. The most peculiar image of Ivan is advanced by Victor Terras in his otherwise useful book A Karamazov Companion. Commentary on the Genesis. Language and Style of Dostoevsky’s Novel (1981). He does not produce an effort to understand the character, but rather a total condemnation of him based on, as far as I can see, a Christian ideological basis. Ivan is identified most closely with the Devil figure he is visited by in his hallucinations while ill. In his zeal to overcome what Ivan represents in the novel, Terras undermines the very approach to the problem that Ivan introduces, and by which the entire history of the reception of the novel has been conducted, a history of reception that starts with the little brother Alyosha. Ivan’s rebellion against God on behalf of the innocent suffering children, is brushed aside by Terras with the following: “Its pathos seems sincere, but there are telltale signs that Ivan does not really care about the children whose sufferings he describes so eloquently” (91). What these “signs” might be, we are not enlightened. Terras is not shaken, as his ideal character Alyosha is. Terras also offhandedly rejects one of the masterpieces of world literature, the legend of “The Grand Inquisitor”: “The point, missed by many critics, is that ‘The Grand Inquisitor’ is not a good poem, and when everything is said and done, not very good rhetoric either” (92). Sigmund Freud wrote about the same text: “The Brothers Karamazov is the most magnificent novel ever written; the episode of the Grand Inquisitor, one of the peaks in the literature of the world, can hardly be valued too highly” (Freud, Sigmund. 1962. “Dostoevsky and Parricide” in Dostoevsky: A Collection of Critical Essays. René Wellek, ed. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice Hall, 98).
...that if I didn’t believe in life, if I lost faith in the woman I love, lost faith in the order of things, were convinced in fact that everything is a disorderly, damnable, and perhaps devil-ridden chaos, if I were struck by every horror of man’s disillusionment — still I should want to live and, having once tasted of the cup, I would not turn away from it till I had drained it! At thirty, though, I shall be sure to leave the cup, even if I’ve not emptied it, and turn away — where I don’t know. But till I am thirty, I know that my youth will triumph over everything — every disillusionment, every disgust with life. I’ve asked myself many times whether there is in the world any despair that would overcome this frantic and perhaps unseemly thirst for life in me, and I’ve come to the conclusion that there isn’t, that is till I am thirty, and then I shall lose it of myself, I fancy. (211)

I do not think it is reasonable to identify Ivan’s inclination to self-destruction as rational, logical or sensible either. Ivan is more than anything else an ambivalent character with strong urges in diametrically opposite directions; he is characterized by a thirst for life and a death drive. It is clearly a question of relatively durable emotional states. They are both present at the same time, and they become part of a sequence or a *script*, as Ivan himself observes: The thirst for life belongs to youth, the death drive becomes dominant later. Temporality in Ivan’s emotional pattern is therefore appreciably differentiated from Dimitri’s. Types of emotion with a high degree of duration are dominant in Ivan. He is more stable than his brother and has greater control over emotional impulses. However this changes dramatically towards the end of the novel’s plot when Ivan’s personality disintegrates, to which we shall return.

The mixture of an appetite for life and the death drive is a clear common feature in the brothers Dimitri and Ivan, and both of these traits are affective in nature. I cannot see that it is especially pertinent to place these two characters in completely different categories by means of characteristics such as emotion vs. intellect, or sensuality vs. reason. Having said that, it is naturally appropriate to point out that there are also huge differences between the two brothers. The combination of thirst for life and a death drive shows itself in Dimitri primarily as wavering or oscillation, in Ivan as ambivalence. Temperamentally, Dimitri appears as a spontaneously reacting, eruptive personality type, quick tempered and having poor impulse control. Dimitri both reacts and acts before affects have a chance to come in contact with the cognitive layer of his personality. He travels along “the low road” a great deal. In Ivan there is a much tighter link between affect and cognition. His affects form a part of less spontaneous, more reflective connections with the rest of his personality. He travels more along “the high road.”
As I see it, Ivan is just as controlled by affects as Dimitri, even if his temperament and cognitive functions are different. His famous rebellion against God certainly does not depend on cool, logical rationality. At the root of his attitude to life, as it is expressed in his conversation with Alyosha, lies strong compassion. The motivation behind Ivan’s renunciation of God’s world is his pain over the suffering of children. It is misleading to regard the suffering of children as an intellectual argument in a logical train of thought leading to atheism, as Frank does (Frank 2002, 605). It is rather the case of an affect so strong that it sets everything else aside – even consideration of his own salvation. On this point, Albert Camus is clear: “Ivan incarnates the refusal of salvation” (Camus 1953, 51). Ivan refuses God's organization of the world because no future harmony can justify the suffering of children here and now. If it is the case that God’s world order and a forthcoming heavenly paradise are to be defrayed by innocent children’s suffering in the present, Ivan’s judgement is crystal clear. That is a world order that he cannot accept. It is not God’s existence per se that he is rejecting; it is God’s world order. Ivan judges God’s order of the world on an ethical basis, and he places ethics above divinity. What is radical about this, as Camus says, is that Ivan’s rejection holds even if he should be mistaken. He simply does not agree that people who have torn small children to pieces, impaled them with bayonets, let dogs hunt them and eat them, should be able to be forgiven. Camus says:

Ivan’s deepest scream, the one that opens the most overwhelming abysses under the rebel’s steps, is the same, even if: “My indignation would persist even if I were wrong.” It means that even if God existed, even if the mystery cloaked a truth, even if the Russian elder was right, Ivan would not accept that that truth was paid for by evil, suffering and death inflicted on the innocent.

(Camus 1951, n.p.)

It is fitting to point out Camus’ choice of words when he comments on this point in Ivan’s conversation with Alyosha. He calls it a scream that opens up overwhelming abysses. It centers around strong emotionally charged expressions.

We are encountering an affective ethics that is similar to Søren Kierkegaard’s fundamental question in what I shall in this book call an affective philosophy. In *Fear and Trembling* Kierkegaard asks: “Is there a teleological suspension of the ethical?”18 His answer is clearly “yes.” Ivan’s answer is just as clearly “no.” Characteristic for both of them is that the question is evaluated through the suffering of

---

18. See the chapter on Kierkegaard in this book.
innocent children. In the case of Kierkegaard, it is a question of Abraham’s sacrifice of his son Isaac. Abraham’s loyalty towards God’s world order is so total that he is willing to kill his own son. But Kierkegaard makes it easy on himself by responding to a mythical story. Abraham is spared from carrying out the killing because he shows such great fealty. Ivan, and Dostoevsky, relate documented accounts of actual acts of tyranny and murder of innocent children, children who were not spared. Therefore Ivan answers a resounding No to Kierkegaard’s question: There is no “teleological suspension” of assault against children.

Towards the end of the novel, Ivan is overtaken by his affective ethics. The rebellion against God has, as far as Ivan is concerned, led to a nihilistic ideological outlook. Without God, “everything is permitted,” he claims. He asserts this face-to-face with Smerdyakov who takes it to heart and murders Fyodor Pavlovich. In a series of meetings between Ivan and Smerdyakov it is revealed that Smerdyakov believes that he has simply carried out the murder for Ivan. Ivan is the actual guilty one. This explicit accusation corresponds with an inner self-accusation that Ivan has already struggled with for a long time, and that Alyosha has noticed almost clairvoyantly. Ivan’s ethical dilemma becomes a powerful contributory cause of the disintegration of his personality towards the end of the novel – it is a complete mental breakdown with great alterations in the affective pattern.

Over all, it is natural to interpret the breakdown as a result of the fundamental ambivalence in Ivan’s personality which Zosima had already called attention to in the beginning of the novel. As has been referred to earlier, Zosima claims that “you don’t believe your own arguments, and with an aching heart mock at them inwardly . . .” Ivan perpetually carries a “great grief” according to Zosima (Dostoevsky, 61). The burden of this oppressive grief becomes too much for Ivan.

When the breakdown begins, it expresses itself especially as changes in the affective pattern. Ivan loses more and more control over impulses, feelings and ideas. “He’s mad. Don’t you know that he’s mad? He is in a fever, nervous fever,” Katerina Ivanovna tells Alyosha (567). He has become irascible, the usual politeness slips away, and he assumes an aggressive disposition. He loses his self-control, and “All his restraint suddenly vanished” (569). The distinction between reality and fantasy disappears gradually. There are obvious affective signs: inner sources of stimuli take dominance to an abnormal degree. Perhaps at first it is a matter of “fever, nervous fever,” as Katerina Ivanovna says, but it soon develops to the stage of serious hallucinations. Ivan experiences prolonged visits from the Devil. In the sub-division’s English translation the chapter is called “The devil. Ivan Fyodorovich’s nightmare,” but it is not a question of a dream while asleep. According to the narrator, an experienced physician has already warned that
Ivan’s condition is prone to hallucinations. Ivan himself has an inkling of what is happening, but he has no possibility to take control of the situation. He is in the power of inner sources of stimuli.

In addition, he experiences “low road” reactions that manifest themselves physically without control. “Suddenly Ivan began trembling all over, and clutched Alyosha’s shoulder” (570). A little later: “Something seems to give way in his brain, and he shuddered all over with a cold shiver” (590). He experiences quivering so intense that he can hardly talk. When he is testifying during the trial, he gives such a confusing impression that no one takes him seriously, despite his producing the 3000 rubles Dimitri was to have stolen from his father when he ostensibly murdered him. He had gotten the money from Smerdyakov, the actual murderer. However, Ivan is not capable of conveying Smerdyakov’s confession in a comprehensible and reliable way. Smerdyakov confessed the same night he committed suicide, and the same night that Ivan was visited by the Devil. Ivan’s testimony ends when he knocks down the bailiff, and is removed by the police. His breakdown provokes an attack of hysterics from Katerina Ivanovna, and leads to her giving her second and crushing deposition. She is therefore one of the trigger figures in the portrayal of Ivan’s breakdown, together with Alyosha and Smerdyakov.

Alexey Fyodorovich

Alyosha is introduced in the novel, as are his brothers, in the introductory Book I, and is moreover discussed in his own Book VII, “Alyosha.” Nevertheless, Alyosha’s status in the novel is different than his brothers’. In the first place, his individual history is much less dramatic than his brothers’. Secondly, he is a vehicle for carrying much of the author’s message and, to a great extent, that centers around being devoted to others rather than himself. So the focus is often on other people when Alyosha is on the scene. In the third place, Alyosha functions narratologically as an assistant to the narrator. He flits here and there and is present at a series of events, so the narrator can use him as an escort to relate what happens in his company. The other characters trust him in a special way. They entrust their most candid thoughts and feelings to him. This happens in a series of pivotal dialogues in the novel, where Alyosha is almost always the one who listens. In a few cases this is quite explicitly the message in the text. When Dimitri reveals his confessions, he says: “You shall keep quiet and I’ll go on talking, for the time has come” (93). These dialogues give the narrator the opportunity to relate for the reader what is transpiring in the inner lives of the central characters. Alyosha is the novel’s – and the rest of the novel’s characters’ – model character, but his conduct almost always
turns away from himself, in the direction of empathy and insight into the lives of others. On the concrete plane of action he is a remarkable figure who more or less permanently runs errands for other characters in the novel, has meetings with them, receives their confidences, and then rushes on to the next encounter. He is the closest substitute one could have for the romantic “omniscient narrator.” Konstantin Mochulsky writes: “The youngest of the Karamazov brothers, Alyosha, is drawn more palely than the others. His personal theme is suppressed by Dmitry’s passionate pathos and Ivan’s ideational dialectics” (Mochulsky 1967, 626).

The depiction of Alyosha is also different from that of his brothers in the sense that the social plays a much more important role in his life experiences. Both Dmitri and Ivan have the tendency of being trapped in their own minds. Both have problems with, even lose, the connection to outer reality in powerful affective situations. They have a solipsistic predisposition in their personalities. Alyosha lives above all in the world, among people. To gain a correct impression of him, it is necessary to take seriously the fact that he is portrayed in social environments, first as a part of the monastery’s religious community, subsequently as the pivotal figure in the building of a youth organization outside of the monastery. Ivan says of himself that he has no friends. Dimitri is, per se, socially inclined, but he is portrayed primarily in surroundings of orgiastic carousals, populated with drunkards, hired choristers, dancers, and similarly disposed people. In everyday life he often behaves in a way that scares people away from him. He does not seem to have any close attachment relationships to anyone – definitely not to his fianceé or to his family. The exception is, as for most, Alyosha.

With the role that Alyosha plays in the novel, as the confidant of most of the others, and with the qualities he demonstrates, unselfish humanitarianism, sincerity, and compassion, he functions as perhaps the most important trigger figure in the story. His empathy and his reactions to the condition of others give clear indications in many situations about the affective condition of pivotal characters, and thereby also give implicit “instructions” to the reader about how the conditions are supposed to be read. As a fundamental type in Dostoevsky’s gallery of persons he is reminiscent of Netochka in Netochka Nezvanova, and he has features in common with Prince Myshkin in The Idiot. Netochka was focused towards one or a few persons at a time, and became completely absorbed in their existence, situations in their lives, and well-being. Her own existence appeared quite subordinate, even to herself. Alyosha is a more mature and more richly endowed figure, but he too seems to become so intensely absorbed in the existence of others that it is difficult to see what kind of life of his own he has. At the beginning of the novel he is a novice in the monastery, and one must imagine that his life is concerned with
cloister routines and preparations for the life of a monk. In this phase the person he focuses on is the Elder Zosima. But Zosima believes that Alyosha’s mission is out in the world, and with Zosima’s death, Alyosha leaves the monastery. The number of pivotal persons then expands appreciatively, and it becomes even more difficult to ascertain Alyosha’s plan for his own life. His attentiveness and interest are to an even higher degree than before directed towards the lives of others and their situations. Only at the end of the novel, in the epilogue, when Alyosha speaks at Ilyusha’s funeral, can one suspect a new and personal life project for him. He tells the young boys that he is going to leave the town, perhaps for a long time. The “paleness” in the portrayal of Alyosha may be attributed to the fact that Dostoevsky had plans to write a sequel to *The Brothers Karamazov*, in which he would expand the role of his “hero,” Alyosha. Such a novel was never written, thus there is something “unfinished” in the characterization of Alyosha.

There are many examples of Alyosha’s function as an emotional trigger figure in the novel. The most striking is perhaps his reaction in connection with Ivan’s rebellion against God. Alyosha’s reaction to the affective intensity in the situation and the ethical power in Ivan’s explanation is indicated to the reader by the fact that the deep and sincerely devout monastery novice is swept along to the degree that he agrees with the religious rebel in his case against God. Even Alyosha cannot agree that humanity’s “eternal joy” can be bought for a price that includes torture, abuse and murder of innocent children. There is no doubt that Alyosha is seriously shaken by Ivan’s rejection of God. In the same way, he is shaken and moved by the circumstances of life and existential state of the other persons in the novel.

The event that most directly touches the course of Alyosha’s own life is the death of the Elder Zosima. The sorrow over his death is one thing, and it appears that Alyosha has been prepared for this and manages it well. The problem is the expectations of a miracle in connection with the death of the holy man, and the reaction in the milieu when the miracle fails to materialize. Many had believed that God’s pleasure with the Elder’s pious life would become apparent by the body’s resistance to the putrefaction of death. Instead, the Elder’s body begins to decompose quite quickly, and several people interpret the smell of the corpse as an expression of God’s displeasure. The Elder’s enemies in the monastery and the religious community take advantage of this. Alyosha perceives it as deeply unjust that God places this card in the hands of the Elder’s enemies, so to say, and his reaction is strongly affective. In the description of his reactions, Rakitin acts as the trigger figure:

> It had begun to get dusk when Rakitin, crossing the pine copse from the hermitage to the monastery, suddenly noticed Alyosha, lying face downwards on
the ground under a tree, not moving and apparently asleep. He went up and called him by his name. “You here, Alexey? Can you have …” he began wondering but broke off. He had meant to say, “Can you have come to this?” Alyosha did not look at him, but from a slight movement Rakitin at once saw that he heard and understood him . . . Alyosha raised his head, sat up and leaned his back against the tree. He was not crying but there was a look of suffering and irritability in his face. (319).

Alyosha’s reaction is so intense that he quite simply quotes Ivan and his formulation of the rebellion against God when he expresses his reactions: “I am not rebelling against my God; I simply ‘don’t accept His world.’ Alyosha suddenly smiled a forced smile” (319). Alyosha’s affective reaction appears to be of a different kind than Dmitri’s, perhaps it more closely resembles Ivan’s. In the case of both Ivan and Alyosha, reflexive consciousness is an essential and integrated part of the affects. The affects of Dmitri – and Fyodor Pavlovich – seem more spontaneous and immediate. However in all cases the affects are powerful ones.

The difference between these two dissimilar patterns of reaction can probably be described partly by means of a typological differentiation which Patrick Colm Hogan refers to in Affective Narratology. He discusses the “appraisal theory of emotion” (Keith Oatley is representative) vs. the “perception theory of emotion,” as associated with Joseph LeDoux. Hogan is concerned with attempting a synthesis of the two. He describes the appraisal theory like this: “Appraisal accounts of emotion begin from the fact that we do not respond emotionally to simple perceptual facts. Rather, we respond emotionally to facts with a certain meaning or significance, facts interpreted in a certain way” (Hogan 2011, 43).

And the perception theory is described thusly: “… we respond to certain perceptual experiences very quickly. Indeed, in at least some cases, our emotional responses appear to be governed by precisely those aspects of experience that we do not judge, evaluate, or appraise” (45). Hogan refers especially to LeDoux and his explanation of a neurological “low road” directly from the senses to the body. The perception theory allows for “three different modalities for emotion elicitation: current perceptions, recollection and imagination” (48). Hogan asserts that the contrast between a cognitively based theory (Oatley) and a perceptual theory (LeDoux) is a misguided dispute. In the first place because “even the most minimal innate sensitivity involves some shaping of experience by the neurocognitive architecture, even though it does not involve elaborate cortical processing,” and secondly, “even if the emotion activation is itself perceptual, not inferential, inferences and other forms of elaborative cognitive processing are perhaps the primary
means by which we experience imagined emotion triggers and emotion memories” (ibid.). Moreover, we are speaking of seconds or fractions of a second before a perception via the “low road” becomes processed by the cognitive system and brought onto the “high road.” It is tempting to add that Hogan himself does not give very convincing explanations of the perceptual theory’s rationale for why we react differently to current, actual sensory stimuli and to imaginative ones or memories. In a narratological context these are questions that are especially relevant on the reader’s side. It seems strange to exclude the cognitive system when one, on the one hand, wishes to explain why we react affectively to fictional narratives – and on the other hand, why the reactions nevertheless are separated from feelings in actual situations. “Crucially, in the perceptual model, the fictionality of the work is irrelevant,” writes Hogan. “Our desire is a real desire” (56). But, as Hogan himself asks, if we are watching a film and “a lion jumps out on the screen, why do we not run from the theater…?” (56). He gives an unsatisfactory answer to this. From a common sense perspective, it appears quite obvious that the reason must be because we know we are at the movies. We are emotionally affected, but we are still conscious of fiction.

The point in Alyosha’s case is that we encounter a type of affective reaction where the cognitive plays a completely decisive role. At the death of the Elder, it is not primarily a question of immediate reactions of grief; Alyosha’s entire religious consciousness is involved, his faith, “Indeed, all his trouble came from the fact that he was of great faith” (Dostoevsky, 316). In addition, the theological interpretations of Zosima’s death by his religious adversaries played a conclusive part. We are confronted with what Hogan calls “awareness of the way events interact with goals – often quite long-term goals – in the development of emotions” (Hogan, 42). Alyosha’s long-term goal in the current situation is “the higher justice” (Dostoevsky, 317) for Zosima’s entire mission in life. He had had aims and expectations of a miracle at Zosima’s bier because he believed in justice for his spiritual guide. That expectation was violated and Alyosha feels cut to the quick. His emotions are tightly linked to aims and expectations that to a high degree involve cognitive processes.

In conformity with Ivan’s affective reactions, Alyosha’s are more of the “appraisal” type than of the “perception” type. For Dimitri and Fyodor Pavlovich quite the opposite is the case, even if for these two “sensualists” there is also a clear objective involved in their otherwise quite impulsive patterns of reaction: they both want Grushenka.
Dostoevsky and Affective Narratology

Dostoevsky was an author with a wholly distinctive eye for affective patterns in his literary main characters. There is no doubt that he wrote from religious and ideological concerns, which can be read about especially in his journalistic writings. But there are clear traces of the author’s political, cultural and religious points of view in his novels as well. However, it is likely that Dostoevsky the writer would have been less well remembered today if his work were dependent on the ideas characteristic of his period, rather than on the rich narrative artistry, the unsurpassed characterizations, and the psychology and affective peculiarity of the literary figures, which make Dostoevsky one of the foremost contributors to world literature.

In this chapter, the affective and emotional aspects of *The Brothers Karamazov* have been placed in focus, and the way in which they appear in Dostoevsky’s narrative art have led to some narratological considerations that I hope have a certain general validity. As a contribution to interpretation of Dostoevsky’s masterpiece, the chapter is concerned especially with the main characters’ affective personality patterns. It is also the case that in parts of his text Dostoevsky worked with affective elements as primary motivations in the narratological plot of the novel. It is not always epic elements that create the initiative in Dostoevsky’s narrative art. This chapter has the distinctive concern of adjusting the established picture of Ivan Fyodorovich and his ostensibly rationalistic, logical and coldly intellectual attitude to life. An analysis with the emphasis on affective systems shows that Ivan is just as emotionally or affectively guided as his half-brother Dmitri, even if his temperament is different. To underestimate Ivan’s affective pattern of reactions is a misguided but widespread interpretation. Taken together, the three Karamazov brothers provide a rich and comprehensive repertoire of affective systems. The female main characters are not as richly depicted. They too have complex affective patterns of reactions. They compete and are controlled by jealousy, in the same manner as Dimitri and Fyodor Pavlovich. But Dostoevsky appears to have a distinctively feminine category ready to explain much of the unpredictability of Katerina Ivanovna’s behavior: hysteria. And the change that occurs with the *femme fatale* character Grushenka after Dimitri’s arrest does not appear as well substantiated as the portrayal of the masculine characters’ development.

With a background in text analysis it has been possible to incrementally establish several concepts for phenomena that perhaps can have relevance beyond the concrete interpretation of the text. Perhaps classical narratology requires supplementation by means of a “postclassical” expansion of the apparatus of analytical concepts, making way for and including affective and emotional aspects of the
complex art of narrative. At least that is what Patrick Colm Hogan advocates in his work *Affective Narratology*, to which I have referred several times in this article.

The standard narrative of narrative theory distinguishes between “classical” and “postclassical” narratology. Postclassical narratologists … have certainly begun to draw on affective science in certain respects. Nonetheless, many fundamentals of narratology were set out in the founding works of classical narratology, which were often Structuralist in orientation. Many main figures of classical narratology – Genette, Greimas, Barthes, Todorov – were setting out to use Saussurean linguistics to understand narrative structure. Though this work was enormously valuable, it was embedded in linguistic theories that had nothing to say about emotion. In and of itself, this is not necessarily a problem. However, it tended to orient research programs in narratology toward issues and explanations that had little to do with emotion.

(Hogan 2011, 15–16)

In this reading of Dostoevsky, I have also attempted to give attention to a theoretically methodical concern and thereby contribute some tentative concepts in support of such a narratological supplementation project. They must likely pass the test by being applied to other material.

The suggested concepts relate both to spatial and temporal aspects of an affective narratology, but also to aspects which do not necessarily allow themselves to be placed in the context of such a distinction, for example, situations that concern the patterns of narrative progression. Some of the concepts are taken from others and adapted to the current analytical purpose, including further development directly on Hogan’s contribution, together with the established insights of psychologists such as Oatley and LeDoux.

*The emotional space* is often important in Dostoevsky’s novels, and will likely also have relevance to the work of other authors. The designation covers the narratological phenomenon that place or space where specific episodes or narrative sequences take place emerge as emotionally coded in one sense or another. It is not just a neutral receptacle for the emotional display of the acting characters. There are both micro- and macro-geographies. They can encode everything from concrete rooms in which people find themselves, to nations in which specific values or qualities are localized. The coding of emotional spaces can therefore occur by psychological as well as by ideological means. In most cases, it will probably be the case that the person’s emotionality and the coding of the emotional space will conform.
But one can, of course, also imagine different degrees of contrast, as what we see in the Karamazov clan’s visit to Zosima’s monastery cell. It is also possible to imagine special cases in which the emotional space emerges as dominant, and casts the individual emotionality aside. Just one example would be a theater of war.

The division between performative and analytical emotionality can be useful in many cases. A discrepancy between these aspects is an oft-occurring narrative tension. One variant would be a display of performative emotionality where the relevant participant lacks or does not express self-understanding, but where this lack is compensated for by another character or the narrator acting as analyst and disclosing or revealing emotional insight either for the reader alone or for both the reader and the relevant literary participant. This is what occurs in the case of Dostoevsky. It is probable that the most common case in modernist novels is that only performative emotionality is represented in the text, and that the analytical work is entrusted to the reader, such as it occurs in Hamsun’s *Hunger* and later works. A variant that likely has been more common in newer literature is an inversion of the Dostoevsky model, which consists of the depiction of a person with an active analytical emotionality, that is to say, a figure who is engaged in self analysis, but where the analytical plane is subverted by the performative and appears as a false introspection. Thus, while in Dostoevsky the relationship between the two aspects was distributed so that the analytical had authority, the opposite can be true in newer literature.

Emotional trigger figures are narrative indicators for the emotional charge in certain episodes or narrative sequences. They give situational responses and function as a third instance of authority for the reader, that is, they prescribe an adequate reader reaction. Emotional trigger figures can behave as unilateral or reciprocal. In Dostoevsky Alyosha is often pretty much a unilateral trigger figure. He is present as a listener, and is triggered by his conversational partner. But trigger figures can also appear as more equal in specific episodes, and appear as trigger figures for each other, as Dmitri and Fyodor Pavlovich do in the major argument at the monastery. Dostoevsky utilizes an active and extensive use of emotional trigger figures. In Hamsun’s *Hunger* the use of trigger figures is so sparse and circumspect that the reader receives only a few glimpses of understanding of the hero’s emotional condition through the regulating of a third authority, something that has a part in determining the “difficult” position of the reader in modernist literature. Dostoevsky makes it much easier for his reader precisely because of his use of emotional trigger figures.

Scripts and causal attribution are concepts borrowed partly from established psychology, partly from Patrick Colm Hogan’s *Affective Narratology*. The idea of
causal attribution represents a function that in my view is not specific to reading of emotional or affective aspects of a text. It is a matter of implicit processes that are active for reading in general. Partly these are functions that involve reception theory’s ideas about supplementing “empty spaces” in narratives, but directed specifically at causal lacunas. In an affective narratology this concept can be important because it often represents functions that are mobilized by what we can call the story’s enigmas. Such enigmas are usually included in representations of complex psychology, and often it is a matter of hidden or indeterminate elements that the narrative derives power from, but does not define. The concept causal attribution should probably be considered more as a description of a reading process rather than a result of reading, since it is not certain that reading will lead to an elucidation or revelation of the narrative’s empowering enigmas. But it contributes to creating suspense and uneasiness in the reading experience – in itself an enigmatic phenomenon.

The necessity for causal attribution can be provoked especially by emotional reactions of literary figures in cases where the emotions break with a present situation’s normalcy, that is, by deviation from ordinary expectations. Reactions can, for example, follow a script that one would usually expect in completely different situations. Script is a well established psychological concept for customary combinations of impulses and corresponding reactions in definite situations, reactions to danger, for example. Dimitri’s flight reaction at Zosima’s blessing is a striking example in Dostoevsky. His deeply felt joy at the reunion with Katerina Ivanovna after she has seen to it that he is sentenced to twenty years’ hard labor in Siberia is another example. Should we once again refer to Hamsun for a modernist example, the Hunger hero’s feelings of philanthropy, which causes him to give away his last few coins, functions as a good example.

In an affective narratological analysis it will often be useful to distinguish between different sources of stimuli. Among other things, it will be relevant to differentiate outer and inner sources. The normalcy in traditionally realistic novels is that the outer, epic events lead to emotional reactions, but sometimes the sources for stimuli of emotional reactions are of an inner character. They can be caused by different strata or sides of the personality or mentality. Usual elements are memories, fantasies, imaginings, dreams, hallucinations, expectations, plans, projects, perhaps also ideological opinions. In Dostoevsky, as well as with many of his contemporaries, it can also be a matter of hysteria, especially in women. Such typological specifications can be of a relatively banal nature in connection with specific text analysis, but one of the main intentions in choosing Dostoevsky as an example in this chapter is that his narratological peculiarities imply, among other
things, that inner sources of stimuli in long stretches of the story often control or determine the narratological course. They have a dominant function – and also in relation to outer, epic impetuses.

It will often be useful to be able to distinguish different forms of *temporality* in connection with an affective narratology, such as is necessary with concepts for different degrees of emotional duration. There are already established concepts for this within psychology. Some of these are mentioned in the introduction to this book with reference to Keith Oatley. However, I have felt the need for specifications that make more allowances for the fact that in affective narratology, one operates in a *literary* universe. My tentative suggestion is to make use of the following concepts for emotions with increasing degrees of duration: reaction, feeling, mood, temperament, attitude to life and – an opening here for also including ideology among the more durable emotionally determined factors. Not all of these specifications have been used systematically in this analysis of the Dostoevsky text, but they can be presumed to be of use in cases where such specifications are analytically relevant.

In all narratological descriptions, *plot patterns* will have a place. It is also true for an affective narratology. Depictions of affective plots will be able to utilize ideas that resemble the usual plot descriptive concepts. Of course there will naturally be a variation in how many itemizations there are a need for, but I suggest the following variants: links, change-over, escalation, oscillation (waving), ambivalence and abatement. In addition, there will be a need for concepts such as segmentation and sequentiality. However, detailed analyses of these types of phenomena would be quite demanding in both time and space, so will in reality most often only appear in the form of intimation.

There is reason to believe that affective narratology has a relevant position as a supplement to classical narratology. My contribution here is meant simply as a modest and preliminary proposal for development of some aspects of such a sub-discipline.