

The Names of the Principal Characters

Russian middle names are not given names, but patronymics -- derivatives of the first name of the person's father. Hence all siblings will have the same patronymic. The masculine and feminine forms differ slightly. Alternate forms of the names are enclosed in parenthesis.

A guide to the masculine and feminine forms is as follows:

Masculine: Raskolnikov
Femine: Raskolnikova

Masculine: Ivanov
Femine: Ivanovna

It is to be generally accepted that the feminine form of address would be the Christian name followed by the patronymic; only rarely, and that most customarily to the most senior member of the family, will the married surname be used as a general term of reference.

Example:

Husband: Semen (Christian name)
Zakhárovich (patronymic)
Marmeládov (surname)

His wife: Katerína (Christian name)
Ivánovna (patronymic)
Marmeládova (surname--but never used in the book)

Throughout the entire story, she is referred to as Katerína Ivanovna.

The daughter of the above character is named, therefore:

Sófyá (Christian name)
Sémenovna (feminine form of the patronymic)
Marmeládova (would be the correct surname if ever used)

The Principal Characters now follow.

- Raskolnikov, Ródion Románovich
(diminutives: Ródya, Ródenka, Ródka)
- _____ " Púkhéria, Alexandrovna
(his mother)
- _____ " Avdotya Románova
(diminutives: Dunya Dúnechka -- his sister)
- Razumíkhin, Dmitri Prokofich, his friend
- Aléna (Alyóna) Ivánovna, moneylender
- Lizavéta Ivanovna, her sister
- Marmeladov, Semen (Semyan) Zakhoverich
(co-governments clerk)

Lizavéta Ivanovna, her sister

Marmeládov, Semén (Semyón) Zakhoverich
(ex-government clerk)

Katerína Ivanovna (his wife)

Sófya Seménovna (Semyanova) (Sonya & sometimes Sónchka)

Other children are:

Polína Mikháylovna (diminutives: Pólya, Pólenka, Pólechka)

Léna (Lyóna) or sometimes Lída and Lídochka

Kólya (Kólka)

Svidrigáylov, Arkády Ivánovich, landlord, Dúnya's former employer

Márfa Petrovna, his wife

Lúzhin, Peter Petrovich, Dunya's fiancé

Lebezyátnikov, Andréy Semyonovich (Semyonovich sometimes,) his friend

Lippewéchsel, Amália Ivánovna, Marmeladov's landlady, (She calls herself Ivanóvna but Mrs. Marmeladova calls her Amália Lúdwigovna, which annoys her, since the patronymic calls attention to her German origin.)

Zasímov, a doctor

Zamétov (Zamyotov), Alexander Grigarevich, chief police clerk

Porfíry, Petrovich, examiner

Significant Roots of Characters Names.

Raskolnikov: raskol = schism, split.

Raskolniki are the members of religious sects, some of which date back to the great seventeenth century Russian Orthodox schism.

Razumikhin: razum = reason, good sense.

Lebezyatnikov: lebezit = to fawn on someone, cringe, ingratiate oneself. (It might also bear reference originally to lebed "swan")
Always agrees if its good for him

Marmeládov: marmelad = jam, jelly (marmalade: origin, French, story connected with Mary, Queen of Scots.)

Sonya: for Sofya (Greek "Wisdom")

Lippewechsel: a blatantly German name, which, like her German accent and broken Russian, might have struck Dostoevsky's public as slightly comic.

Comment

The Russian word for "crime" in the title of the novel and elsewhere, is prestuplenie, from pre (across, trans-) and stuplenie (a stepping), so that etymologically it is similar to the English "transgression". The root meanings of "stepping across" some barrier, as both essential and analogous to the criminal, are played on in the text in a manner which is lost sight of in the translation, since our word "crime" does not have the same deviation.

deviation

Hubert: Бодя (Christian name)

Бодякович (patronymic)

Бодяков (surname)

His wife: Катерина (Christian name)

Катериновна (patronymic)

Бодяковна (surname—but never used in the book)

Throughout the entire story, she is referred to as Катерина Ивановна.

The daughter of the above character is named, therefore:

Саша (Christian name)

Сашенина (patronymic form of the patronymic)

Бодяковна (would be the correct surname if ever used)

The Principal Characters are:

Бодяков, Родион Родионович
(distinctives: Бодя, Бодяков, Бодя)

_____ Бодяков, Александрович
(his father)

_____ Авдотья Родионовна
(distinctives: Саша Бодяковна -- his sister)

Бодяков, Дмитрий Прокофьевич, his friend

Алена (Альона) Ивановна, housekeeper

Катерина Ивановна, her sister

Бодяков, Борис (Степан) Константинович