

SYMMETRY, DISSYMMETRY AND ANTISYMMETRY IN DOSTOEVSKY'S CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

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The concept of symmetry has been widely applied to the analysis of poetry, but it has so far not been fully established in studies of prose. The works of Dostoevsky provide a rich material for application of symmetry theory since, as some researchers have already noticed, they contain many oppositions of characters, compositional cycles, and contrasting thoughts. Some Dostoevsky's works have been therefore analyzed earlier in terms of duality.

The organization and structure of his novels, as this paper claims, can be better understood if we apply concepts of the symmetry theory to the analysis. The paper concentrates on the novel *Crime and Punishment*, one of the most famous works by Dostoevsky, where the theme of duality is less obvious than in works where it has already attracted researchers' attention, like "the Double", "Karamazov Brothers", or the "Idiot".

The paper demonstrates that symmetry and antisymmetry are the major structural elements in the novel which are manifested at the levels of characters (Raskol'nikov - Razumikhin - Svidrigailov, Raskol'nikov - Dunya, Sonya - Dunya, Elizaveta - the old woman, the crin@nal-double, the investigators-doubles); important objects (Sonya's crosses, the axes: the planned and accidentally found weapons of murder), ideas (the idea of murdering the old woman is simultaneously born in the mind of Raskol'nikov and in the mind of a stranger; Raskol'nikov's ideas of crime and benefaction); the real world and the world of Raskol'nikov's dreams; sanity and insanity; the whirls of Raskol'nikov's thoughts and emotions; the twists and turns of the major compositional line of the investigation.