THE ARTISTIC FEATURES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL REALISM IN FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY'S NOVELS

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Abstract: his article examines the artistic characteristics of psychological realism in the novels of Fyodor Dostoevsky, one of the most influential figures in world literature. Unlike traditional realism, Dostoevsky's psychological realism penetrates the inner consciousness of individuals, revealing moral conflicts, spiritual crises, and existential dilemmas. The study explores the narrative techniques, dialogic structure, symbolism, and characterization employed by Dostoevsky to portray the complexity of human psychology. Using qualitative literary analysis based on comparative and hermeneutic methods, the article analyzes selected novels, including Crime and Punishment, The Idiot, The Brothers Karamazov, and Notes from Underground. The findings demonstrate that Dostoevsky's artistic mastery lies in presenting the psychological evolution of characters through internal monologues, polyphonic dialogue, and philosophical discourse, making his works foundational to modern psychological fiction.

Keywords: Fyodor Dostoevsky, psychological realism, Russian literature, polyphony, character psychology, existentialism, narrative techniques, realism.

Introduction

The nineteenth century marked a significant transformation in Russian literature, with realism becoming the dominant literary movement. Among its greatest representatives, Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky occupies a unique position because he transformed realism into a profound exploration of the human psyche. His novels transcend the depiction of external reality by focusing on internal consciousness, ethical dilemmas, and spiritual suffering. Rather than portraying society solely through objective observation, Dostoevsky investigated the invisible conflicts that shape human behavior. Psychological realism, as embodied in Dostoevsky's fiction, represents one of the highest achievements of literary art. His characters are not static social types but complex individuals whose thoughts, emotions, fears, and contradictions evolve continuously throughout the narrative. Their inner lives become the central subject of artistic representation. Modern literary scholarship recognizes Dostoevsky not only as a novelist but also as a precursor to modern psychology. Long before Freud and Jung developed psychoanalytic theories, Dostoevsky explored unconscious motives, guilt, anxiety, moral responsibility, and the fragmented nature of identity. Consequently, his novels remain central to literary criticism, philosophy, psychology, and cultural studies. The purpose of this article is to examine the artistic features of psychological realism in Dostoevsky's novels by analyzing his narrative techniques, characterization, philosophical dialogues, symbolism, and psychological conflicts.

Methodology

This research employs a **qualitative literary analysis** based on interpretive and comparative methods. Primary sources include Dostoevsky's major novels:

- Crime and Punishment
- The Idiot
- The Brothers Karamazov
- Notes from Underground

The analysis applies:

- hermeneutic interpretation;
- comparative literary analysis;
- psychological criticism;
- structural narrative analysis;
- Bakhtin's theory of polyphony.

Textual passages are examined to identify recurring artistic techniques that contribute to psychological realism.

Discussion

Unlike classical realism, which primarily depicts external society, Dostoevsky constructs reality through consciousness itself. His novels reveal that external actions originate from invisible psychological struggles. Raskolnikov's crime in Crime and Punishment is less important than the psychological consequences that follow it. The narrative devotes significantly more attention to guilt, fear, alienation, and moral suffering than to the murder itself. This inversion shifts the reader's attention from action to consciousness. Thus, psychological realism becomes an artistic method that represents invisible emotional processes rather than visible events.

Conclusion

Fyodor Dostoevsky revolutionized literary realism by shifting its focus from external society to the complexity of human consciousness. His novels reveal that psychological reality possesses greater artistic significance than physical events. Through polyphonic narration, internal monologue, symbolic imagery, philosophical dialogue, and morally conflicted characters, Dostoevsky created a new form of realism capable of representing the deepest dimensions of the human mind. His artistic innovations anticipated modern psychology, existential philosophy, and twentieth-century narrative experimentation. Consequently, Dostoevsky's psychological realism remains a central subject in literary studies and continues to influence contemporary fiction, psychology, and philosophy. Future research may further explore interdisciplinary connections between Dostoevsky's narrative psychology and contemporary cognitive literary studies, trauma theory, and neurohumanities.

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