

Public Abstract

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Time and space as artistic conventions in Chekhov and Dostoyevsky

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There are certain conventions accepted for different genres in terms of time and space organization. Thus, drama should have a unity of action which predetermines the unity of time and space.

An epic has no limit in time. It may start in an undeterminate past and go backwards and forwards freely, actions may take place at the same time. It is not confined in space.

Arrangement of time and space in Chekhov's plays is determined by the nature of conflict. As opposed to classical drama, there is no direct confrontation between the characters. The only conflict is between them and contemporary life. To show this "life as a whole" Chekhov expands the time and space frames significantly.

Dostoyevsky's novels lack the main feature of an epic – his characters are not shown in life-long development. Their ideas are expressed in dramatic confrontations, through dialogues. Time and space arrangement of Dostoyevsky's novels is not typical of a novel. The space often plays the role of scenic decorations, and time frames are very narrow.

It is concluded, that time and space arrangements play important but secondary role in defining the genre.

Chekhov's drama has epic features because of the nature of conflict while temporal and spatial organization strengthens this position.

Dostoyevsky's goal was to show the inner world of his characters. Temporal and spatial arrangements used by Dostoyevsky make his novels close to drama.