

Crime and Punishment Code in E. Vodolazkin's Novels of the Last Decade

Anna Stankeviča¹, Inna Dvorecka²

Daugavpils University, Latvia

annastankevica@inbox.lv

Abstract

E. Vodolazkin's novels from the last decade (*Laurus* (2012), *The Aviator* (2017), *Brisbane* (2019)) are a notable phenomenon of contemporary Russian literature. The novels, devoted to different historical eras and different types of people, are often viewed as some kind of metatext. Similar narrative strategies are the most important components that allow to combine novels with different plots into an artistic whole; genre hybridity, based on a play with fragmentation, is a two-sphere model of chronotope. Regardless that fact that one of the starting points for the plot development of each novel is commission of crime (death of a man), the centre of the repeatedly coded artistic world of all the three novels is enigmatic rather than detective intrigue. Crime and punishment code (traditional for Russian literature starting from the works by F. Dostoevsky) is one of the most important codes for E. Vodolazkin. The artistic world of the novels is built in such a way that it is known from the beginning who is to blame and what the motives of the crime are, but the events of the external world are secondary in comparison with what happens in the space of the inner world of the main character. In each of the novels, the writer takes the protagonist through a number of intellectual, emotional and moral insights that lead him to self-condemnation: this severe self-condemnation denotes physical death, though, at the same time, there is a shred of spiritual forgiveness in the face of Eternity.

Keywords: chronotope; enigmatic plot; E. Vodolazkin; metatext