

Russian 345
Dostoevsky Presentations (and papers)

Themes and musings

For Tuesday 30 October

1. Utilitarianism (John Stuart Mill) and positivism. Fourier socialism, phalansteries. Philosophical winds from the West.
 2. the mathematics of sociology (a certain percentage...)
 3. archetypal symbology. "Kiss the earth you've defiled." The hero's redemption and rebirth. Prometheus lost. Lazarus. Rebirth.
 4. Moral and legal authorities. Porfiry as a moral gadfly. "Moral permission to kill is so much greater than legal authority." Svidrigailov as amoral, beyond morality. Inner morality vs. outer, social/legal morality.
 5. Dynamics of sacrifice, love, and forgiveness. "Ye drunkards, come forward, for you did not deem yourselves worthy of this." Ecce homo. How do Sonya, Kat. Iv. and Raskolnikov achieve forgiveness.
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6. The game of Hamlet. Madness, the estrangement theme. Square yard of space.
 7. Inner family dynamics. The landlady's daughter and Pulcheria Ivanovna. "He would step over any obstacle. He never considered me..." The figure of the daughter. The father figure. The watch from the father. Raskolnikov and his sister. Love. Good love and bad love.
 8. Sonia as heroine. Her speech and language. Her dress. Her roles.
 9. Aural symbolism in C&P.
 10. The Petersburg background.
 11. Clothing and its role.
 12. Money. "It wasn't for the money that I killed her."
 13. Notion of suffering, of taking your suffering (Nikolai). Marmeladov.
 14. Symbol clusters: the stone, water and blood and the canals, wet snow. Square yard of space.

15. The psychological tete-a-tete. Svidrigailov and Raskolnikov, or Porfiry and Raskolnikov, or Raskolnikov and Sonia. The interview a deux. What does it do and how does it work?

Any other...