

THE SPECIFIC IDEOLOGY OF REALIST DISCOURSE, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NOVELISTIC WORLD

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Realism, a specific stylistic formation, upgraded and developed the dominant concepts of romanticism, one of which is the novel as a «form of the world in a constant spiritual crisis. » (*apud* Žmegač, 1987: 164-165) In the epoch of realism, romantic strive for historicism and mythological/transcendental preoccupations, were noted as pointing back to the fields of the playful, and unserious manner of representation, so the novel cultivated this implicit aspiration. What was meant to be an ideal was Stendhal's investment in explaining the rule of representation: «The novel is a mirror» (*apud* Žmegač, 1987: 168), carried as one walks and perceives things around him. This metaphor does not bring about the obvious, since it is not only the historic, and private life that are represented, but also their manifestation as re-presentation. This statement opens up a wide argument, considering mirror as a symbol of reflection, which at the same time signifies a change and distortion. The mirror is again something which points out to the forms of artistic creation as well.

If we observe the characteristic elements of realism belonging to various European traditions, we can note deep discrepancies among them. This can be fully seen through Auerbach's description of mimesis as a form of representation. This notion also concerns the novelistic reality, so what is held to be true in this analysis should lead us closer to our preoccupation with realistic ideology. In order to understand Auerbach's statements, it is helpful to underline Said's explanation of the central Auerbach's concepts, namely the "figure", and the "mixture of styles". Comparing the process of "figuration" in the Old, and the New Testament, Said says: «The first event or figure is "real and historical announcing something else that is also real and historical". » (Said, 2003: xxi) This leads us to the definition of figure as some kind of middle ground term, which highlights the historical and the truthful. Auerbach's goal is to perceive the reality in the texts as more than a simple imitation; it is an event of figuration, and

peaceful mingling of different accents. According to this, the differentiation of various concepts of realism in European literatures can be seen vividly.

In his description of Stendhal's novel *Le rouge et le noir*, Auerbach points out Stendhal's realism as a true example of a detailed account of the political, and the social situations in France just before the July revolution, and this is interwoven with the actual events in his life (first as a clerk in the Napoleonic administration, then as a consul in Civit  Vecchia). That is why Auerbach affirms the time perspective and the arbitrariness of the material as a crucial characteristic of Stendhal's artistic creation:

Finally, he sees the individual man far less as the product of his historical situation and as taking part in it, than as an atom within it; a man seems to have been thrown almost by chance into the milieu in which he lives; it is a resistance with which he can deal more or less successfully, not really a culture medium with which he is organically connected. (Auerbach, 2003: 464-465)

This kind of turn leads his analysis to Balzac, who is (together with Stendhal) one of the creators of "modern French realism". The connection between the moral and the physical atmosphere in the given time, forces Auerbach to call this realism "atmospheric" as well. The way the tragic and the existential are being combined, evidently marks the realistic ideology a serious representation of contemporary events:

In comparison of this type of presentation [of Flaubert] with those of Stendhal and Balzac, it is to be observed by way of introduction that here too the two distinguishing characteristics of modern realism are to be found; here too real everyday occurrences in a low social stratum, the provincial petty bourgeoisie, are taken very seriously (...); here too everyday occurrences are accurately and profoundly set in a definite period of contemporary history (the period of the bourgeois monarchy) – less obvious than in Stendhal or Balzac, but unmistakably. (Auerbach, 2003: 485)

It is undoubtedly true that the society as a specific subject (especially its low stratum) manifested itself in Goncourt's obsession with the pathological, the ugly and the morbid. This was also made visible into the constant writer's need to upset, and undermine the reader's frivolous appraisal.

Depicting the transformation of the realism through the second half of the 19th century, Auerbach's analysis turns to cultures that did not have much influence on the realism's beginning, but which determined its continuous results. The way Russian tradition and Christianity are perplexed with the ordinary life define the novel's «patriarchal concept of the creatural dignity of every human individual regardless of social rank and position (...). » (Auerbach, 2003: 521) That is the reason why, in the Russian realistic novels, the enlightened

bourgeoisie, as well as the patriarchal, higher aristocracy are two things that cannot be interrelated. Their coexistence is merely an ornament of a certain milieu (as in Tolstoy). The result of this ambiguity is the well-perceived nationalistic chronotope (kind of uniformity), and the transformation of characters: «The most essential characteristic of the inner movement documented in Russian realism is the unqualified, unlimited, and passionate intensity of experience in the characters portrayed. » (Auerbach, 2003: 522-523) This is actually Christian realism, a mixture of realism and tragedy. Although Auerbach considers character's evolution in the Russian novel to be under the influence of European ideas and ways of thinking (his unique perception of dialogue as a juxtaposition of unsettling differences), he still perceives the ultimate questions of the ethical, religious, and social living in this novel as an expelled Western notion, questions that found their ground in this polyvalent literature and culture. In our opinion, this is the most profound reckoning ever made in terms of Russian realism. The fact that Dostoevsky's novels are dialogical can also be found in Vittorio Strada's accounts, where he labeled these novels "hermeneutical" (*apud* Žmegač, 1987: 197-198).

The point Auerbach made, concerning the realism as a mixture of styles, is something that has become common knowledge in the history of literary criticism, but its application on various texts is still circumscribed on his examples. However, describing Auerbach's notion of realism, F. R. Ankersmit developed an interesting analysis based on Leibniz's monadology. This monadism is a kind of break point, through which subjective idealism came into being, but it is also a good explanation for verisimilitude in the artistic world. Ankersmit goes through several notions of Auerbach; one of them is "figure" as an interrelation between two poles, although they are temporally separated. Ankersmit concludes: « (...) one cannot fail to be struck by the similarity of *figura* to what Louis O. Mink referred to as "configurational comprehension". Mink had in mind here an aspect of historical writing that he considered to be the essence of all historical understanding. » (Ankersmit, 2001: 203) Having this in mind, it is not hard to differentiate these two terms according to the ontological status of the term "figure". This also means that there is not a necessary requirement for historical phenomena in the essence of this mixture of styles, since it is the internal confrontation between voices, points of view, and plot structures that define this conflation. The third problem Ankersmit stumbles upon is Hegel's notion of «"concrete universal", in which the categories of the individual and the universal are transcended. » (Ankersmit, 2001: 206) This is the kind of similarity also observed through the

political implications Auerbach gave to the term realism, rendering it a proper style of democracy. These philosophical correlations raised the fourth concept in Ankersmit's analysis that is similar to Auerbach's "figure" – "Kantian sublime" as a reenactment between reason and understanding. The four elements are then summarized into a fifth component, according to Leibniz's monadology, where God versus monads is the observer (not the creator) of the objective reality. This idea is made strikingly obvious through the statement of God's equation (as non-monadic subject) with the reader, and the author:

On the basis of this analysis, the writer or reader of the modernist novel is on a par with God rather than with the monad, since both of them do not participate in the world within the novel. (...) Reality does not *precede* from but *derives* from the point of view, without becoming an "idealist" construction of the point of view. (Ankersmit, 2001: 214-215)

It is undoubtedly true that often the most insignificant event in the novel can be a carrier of a significant character's point of view, which can then define the whole novelistic universe.

The complexity of the task related to the depiction of the novelistic discourse, and its specific world, can be realized through an analysis of a concrete text, namely *The Brothers Karamazov* as a perfect example of the realistic, and the stylistic heterogeneity. Again, this account cannot overcome the inspiring monadic universe (and does not aspire to do so), since it explains the nature of novelistic (and discursive) reality as a properly demarked subject. That is why we feel it is totally justified firstly to raise the question of narrative sequence, and then the narrator as a part of the monadic point of view.

Dostoevsky begins his novel with a certain paratext (according to Genette's formulation), entitled "author's note" that complicates the position of the author as an alleged narrator, and also as a possible reader:

Starting out the biography of this hero of mine, Aleksey Fyodorovitch Karamazov, I am found in a sort of a doubt.

Namely, although I consider Aleksey Fyodorovitch my hero, I know that he is not a great man, and therefore I anticipate the inevitable questions, such as: What is the importance of this Aleksey Fyodorovitch, since he impelled you to choose him as your hero? What did he do? What is he famous for? Why should I, the reader, waste so much time in getting to know the facts of his life? (...) The thing is that he is, if you will, an activist, but an undetermined, unexplained activist. After all, it would be most awkward in this time of ours to ask of people to be visible. Still, one thing is certain: he is an extraordinary man, an eccentric. (Достоевски, 1971: 5)

This excerpt demonstrates the way the alleged author passed the boundary between him and the narrator, and then again affirmed himself as a character, whose point of view is of a great importance to the following story (he is actually present at the court in the final scenes). The

signified time of the story (in the first novel it is situated thirty years before the events in the second, and by this fact we can observe the phrases “the present time”, ”present moment”) yields the penetration of the so-called reality into the novel, rendered insignificant (as well as the whole novel). The question of the narrator also points out to the simulated transcendence/omnipresence, which is constantly being portrayed by his assumed discussion with the reader. Again, this is underlined by the fact that what is being written is a biography, but one which is more similar to a novel. Generic qualification of this text is a problem of its own, since the alleged omnipresent narrator is part of the story, and plays with his own position.

Yet again, before making any kind of judgments on the question of genre, the monadic universe should be properly investigated. We take the popular episode in the monastery as an example, and the meeting of Father Zossima with Madame Hohlakov. The old Russian custom – asceticism – is described as a “relatively new” (existing approximately 100 years), but this national stigma attached to novelistic reality characterizes it as mythological, ancient, religiously idle, more like a scene where the actions take place, an ornament (opposite to vivid and changeable reality). Here the discursive heterogeneity can also be observed, and its existence, highlighted by the mixture of the Western and the Eastern wisdom, which gives this reality a character of quasi-determination. It is the conflict between the present and the past, and the eternal being of “the truth” that renders this reality immobile:

Be aware of your lies, and gaze upon them every hour, every minute. Also, avoid disgust – for the others, and yourself: the thing that you observe in you as odious cleans itself by the fact that you have noticed it. Be aware of fear, although fear is just a consequence of each lie. Never be afraid of your faint-heartedness in achieving love, or of your bad deeds. I am sorry I cannot tell you anything more comforting, because active love compared with the fancy one, appears to be cruel and frightening. (Достоевски, 1971: 77)

This episode brings about the intense experience of the characters, the way reality represents itself as a product of that experience, and thus the determinations of this quasi-historic moment lose their temporal significance. The act of internal quest begins when one loses himself, and reciprocally reality renews itself by diminishing its own characterizations. This statement also underscores the factual dialogic nature of Dostoevsky’s realism.

Mikhail Bakhtin examines (through his inspiring aesthetic and poetic works) the sociological, and the philosophical frames of genre theory, especially when it comes to the novel as such. It is the novel that endows the old genres with new spirit and active transformation, most notably tragedy and the epic, which are most antiquated:

All these genres, or in any case their defining features, are considerably older than written language and the book, and to the present day they retain their ancient oral and auditory characteristics. Of all the major genres only the novel is younger than writing and the book: it alone is organically receptive to new forms of mute perception, that is, to reading.” (Bakhtin, 2010: 70)

This statement can also be affirmed by the fact that the novel is the only genre that avoids its own systematization into a well-defined generic order, and is always accepting new genres into its structure, thus gaining constant attention. By the same token, we feel it is not incidentally that Dostoevsky chose this form of Aleksey’s biography, since the novel is the most vivid genre receptive to all the other genres, especially to the ones that subvert the question of existing/non-existing subjectivity (fictional games), and the ways of its description. *The Brothers Karamazov* is a mixture of biographical, autobiographical, and detective story elements, combined with character raising (effects of the so-called “Bildungsroman”), and the medieval miracle play. The way the narrator retells the story of Father Zossima and Aleksey’s Christian quests for his identity effectuate hagiographical and apocryphal elements.

The hybrid nature of the novel results into a specific dialogization, a term coined by M. M. Bakhtin. It is the plurality of styles and accents that is accepted as a definition of this notion, but this concept refers to the characters as well:

That particular gift Dostoevsky had, to hear and understand the voices all together and at the same time, equal to Dante’s ability, was actually the thing that enabled him to create the polyphonic novel. (Bahtin, 2000: 32); Dostoevsky categorically refuse the statement that he is a psychologist (...) because he always depicts the man *on the threshold* of a fateful decision, in the moment of *crisis* and the unfinished – and *unpredictable* – twist of his soul. (Bahtin, 2000: 60)

Bakhtin claims that the specific ideology of characters can be seen as a system of ideas, polyvalent in its own nature, undetermined, which is also explained by the fact that he (similarly to Hegel) envisions the truth as a manifestation of the contact between the two consciousnesses, rendering them active. The unique, monologic consciousness is unequivocally determined by the uniqueness of the represented world, so, in accordance with it, the dialogic one exists in a hybrid world and lives in a perfect relation with the destroyed ideology. The narrative turn, when Alyosha meets Ivan in the tavern, and they get to know each other for the first time, is followed by the poem “The Grand Inquisitor”, a sort of Menippean satire founded on biblical grounds. As in the episode where Ivan speaks to the devil, here again we have the polyvalence of voices and ideologies, since what we hear is a combination of four different consciousnesses (not two) – on the one hand the deeply religious, orthodox but also human nature of Alyosha, and on the other

the cynical, but conciliatory voice of Ivan. That is the moment when reality disintegrates into several elements: the level of the Christian point of view is perplexed with the reporter's voice, constantly criticizing, and then they are fused into a dialogue of a universal significance. The fact that also underscores this dialogue is the mixture of generic elements that duplicate the voice of the authority (of God or man) as wanted and unwanted, the miracle as an affirmation and contradiction, and the secret as a sacral taboo and misused knowledge:

We corrected your achievement, and we founded it on *the miracle, the secret, and the authority*. And people were happy to be driven again as a herd, and their hearts were relieved from the terrible gift that brought them so much pain. Were we right, teaching and doing that? Did we love humanity when we calmly acknowledged their weakness, when we lightened their burden with love, and when we let their powerless nature to make mistakes only by our permission? And why have you come to bother us? (...) Get angry, I do not want your love, because I do not love you either. (Достоевски, 1971: 132)

Equally compelling question is the way realism is bond with its truthfulness, and the kind of truth novelistic reality reveals. Michael Riffaterre stumbles upon the aspect of verisimilitude as liberation from the chains of fictionality, and fictional truth that is totally depended on semiosis:

Whatever the text represents, whatever its mimesis reflects, will, by the agency of cumulative semiosis, be changed into a series of similarly modified representations. Thus mimesis – based on verisimilitude, differences, and successivity – gives way to representation, based on repetition and equivalences adhering to one single rule. (Riffaterre, 1990: 13-14)

Riffaterre mainly reckons the repetitive, tautological nature of spatio-temporal and nominal signifiers, which allude to fictionality in respective verisimilitude. The verisimilar description (for example the history of the Karamazov family) magnifies diegesis, but it also points out to the fictionality as a common ground. Riffaterre investigates the signs of fictionality in the text (author's/narrator's commentary, humor, parody, sub/meta-text, emblematic names, description which is unimportant or too realistic, etc.), and these are the signals through which fictionality can be noted in Dostoevsky's novel. His anti-psychologist stance is observed through the incorporated detective story, where the present administrative and legally objective accent is being undermined by the constant irony – the prosecutor's speech affirms the actual status of metaphorically announced notion "Karamazovshtina" – it is the need to outlive the father, to diminish the progressive yearning, and to destroy everything that comes on its way. The defender's speech is also trivialized, and again this underscores the subversive power of Dostoevsky's narration, which consists of several events: the meaningless court process and the psychological analysis (depicted as a kind of argument). These effects of irony show the meta-

critical attributes in this discourse, and its need to throw away any interpretation mainly grounded on psychological and author's reports. It is a criticism turned upside down, transformed and dissolved into its own existence. This aspect of the novel underline the dialogical nature of almost all Dostoevsky's novels (and short stories), but it is a kind of dispute in which nobody has the ultimate word, not even the author. That is why discourse presents itself as continually active and new. The urge for an endless dialogue is the reason why this novel looks unfinished, without firm plot structure or outcome.

It seems that writing about Russian realism and expecting firm scientific results is an unavailing attempt (especially if we take into account the novels of the so-called high Russian realism, such as Tolstoy's and Dostoevsky's). However, the constant stimulus for rewriting and reexamining this period is actually of a different kind. Critics feel obliged to make judgments about the socially analytic function of this literature, but it is actually the possibility to neglect it that is shedding some new light on these one-sided analyses. As author, Dostoevsky has a most individual style that is «constantly deconstructing the realistic literary models. » (Flaker, 1975: 323) If there is any kind of ideology that Dostoevsky can be “accused” of, it is only the indomitable one, always confronting stereotypes, schematized ways of reading, writing and interpretation, stigmatized analyses of peoples and societies, unchanging cultures. His “ideology” only highlights the discernible elements of a continuous dialogue, which should be seen under a different scope.

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The Specific Ideology of Realist Discourse, and the Construction of the Novelistic World (Abstract)

The way realism developed its dominant form (the novel) highlights novel's peculiarities – different speeches (heteroglossia), ideology transformed into two common "parties" (the artistic element of the novel as achievement of the pervasive realism versus romanticism), mimesis as a form of reflection (in the mirror, according to the Stendhal's parabola), transcendent narrator, related externally to the story and discourse, psychologically motivated characters, etc. In order to describe the ideology of novelistic discourse, we will analyze the specific heteroglossia, and generic transformations that Fyodor M. Dostoevsky developed in his novel "The Brothers Karamazov". Ever since the progressive scientific and scholar investigations of literature and aesthetics provided by Mikhail M. Bakhtin, terms like polyphony, carnivalesque, and heteroglossia have been used colloquially. However, to demonstrate the way ideology is inscribed into the deeper novelistic structure requires more than a single methodology. Bakhtin uses the term ideology in a sense of "system of ideas". Regarding aesthetic ideology as something that occupied the ideas and terms of Ingarden's phenomenology (aesthetic value characters), it is indubitable that these are some of the points to which our investigation can lead to. The analysis strives to provide a rumination of discourse in Foucauldian sense (the way discourse as a non-subjective form provides a specific realist/artistic world, due to mimesis, which is more than a single imitation). In order to explain the mimetic qualities of the realist novel, we will call our attention upon the ontological side of fiction as representation (more than "Darstellung"). The inspection of Dostoevsky's novel is important since its demonstrative power, which depicts the peculiar ideology of realism, allows us to name it polyphonic. These assertions also require explication of the verisimilitude of the novelistic truth. We foresee the breach between the classical and contemporary understanding of mimesis, as well as the psychology turned into receptive theory, foisted unconsciously upon the reader.

Keywords: realism, mimesis, polyphonic novel, novelistic truth, novelistic ideology