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THE RECEPTION OF DOSTOEVSKY IN ROMANIA AND THE INFLUENCE OF SOVIET MARXIST CRITICISM

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The Reception of Dostoevsky in Romania and the Influence of Soviet Marxist Criticism

Mihai VACARIU[1]

Abstract

The paper addresses the way in which Dostoevsky's works have been published and interpreted in Romania during the communist regime, particularly in the period 1945-1970. Using content analysis and comparative analysis, the attempt is to identify the main constitutive elements of the Marxist-Leninist paradigm through which the texts of the Russian writer were approached by the literary Romanian critics and to investigate the influence of the Soviet literary critics. In the early years of the communist regime, Dostoevsky's novels were often accompanied by exegetical texts of the Soviet critics and the premise is that the Romanian critics used similar elements in their approach.

Keywords:

Dostoevsky, censorship, Soviet criticism, Romanian criticism, Marxist-Leninist paradigm.

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Introduction

After the instauration of the communist regime in Romania, the literary changed completely. The communist censorship begun to interfere dramatically in the literary process, particularly in the first two decades, the communication of ideas, messages and concepts being distorted, in various ways, by the communist censorship for ideologically reasons. In this period, it is well known the Soviet Union influence in every domain of activity, from politics, to economics, literature and arts. As it happened in the Soviet Union, in Romania the publishing and the reception of Dostoevsky novels fluctuated considerably, from being almost forbidden to being (mis)interpreted strictly from a Marxist-Leninist perspective and only some short periods of time to be approached in a more relaxed way.

In the first decade, immediately after 1945, we can note that Dostoevsky's novels were published sporadically and we also lack exegetical texts on his works. Due to some political specific circumstance, after 1956, the commemoration of 75 years from his death, some of his novels were translated and numerous texts have been published in journals or literary magazines. However, most of these texts were highly ideological, many of them being translations from the Soviet literary critics, L. Rozemblum, B. Riurikov, V. Ermilov, G. M. Friedlander. Using the content analysis and comparative, the investigations revealed the main constitutive elements of the Marxist approach of Dostoevsky's works. Interestingly, some of these elements are present in a critical texts of C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea, a Romanian literary critic who published in 1985 an exegetical text about Dostoevsky's novels. As Dinu Pillat pointed out, the relatively modest merit of Dobrogeanu-Gherea is that at that time this was the first public mention of Dostoevsky's value on the behalf of a Romanian writer and it was an „act of receptivity most honourable" (Pillat, 1976, p. 11). Characteristic for a socialist approach of Dostoevsky there is the insistence in mentioning the writer's involvement in the socialist movement of Petrashevsky, the conviction, the imprisonment and the exile in Siberia, and the accent on the psychological and social aspects of Dostoevsky's novels. The Romanian critic expressed also his disapproval vis-a-vis of the controversial novel *The Demons*, considering it a "caricature written by a prejudiced man, out after contra-revolutionaries" (Dobrogeanu-Gherea, 1967). He disagrees in principle with Dostoevsky's social, political and religious ideas, but emphasizes the humanist aspects of his works.

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The constitutive elements of the Marxist-Leninist approach of Dostoevsky's works

The paradigmatic socialist approach of Dostoevsky's oeuvre was extremely well outlined and homogenous, certain elements being constantly present in the texts of both Soviet and Romanian critics. The list of these elements presented and analyzed here is not exhaustive, and some of them are not sharply delineated one from another. It is obvious that these elements have a strong ideological component, the authors using numerous expressions characteristic for a true "class struggle" and it is often highlighted the need for such an approach in order to reconsider and reinterpret „in a correct manner" the work of the great Russian writer. All these elements of this peculiar paradigm can be regarded as the outcome of the constraints imposed by the censorship, rarely being the real convictions and beliefs of the authors.

The central element of this sort of interpretation is the dialectical method used by the Marxist critics to reveal the "contradictions" of the life and the literary work of Dostoevsky. It is a typical practice through which the critics struggle to legitimate the publication of the novels, considered ideologically sensitive texts, but also, in some cases, an attempt to manipulate the reader. It is arguable the efficiency of such an endeavor, particularly if we consider the second aim. Nevertheless, the method was largely used by the communist officials and ideologues in all fields, not only literary, but also in history, politics, economics, and so on.

Along the highlighting of these contradictions, there are included, almost constantly, quotes from the Marxist-Leninist classics (Marx, Engels, and Lenin) or belonging to some cultural socialist or communist personalities (Gorki, Dobrogeanu-Gherea). The acerb critique of the novel *The Demons* and the numerous tendentious interpretations of important characters and events from novels are other prominent elements of the mentioned paradigm.

In the case of Dobrogeanu-Gherea's approach, there was no any sort of censorship or political pressure which would force him to position himself within a Marxist paradigm in respect to Dostoevsky's oeuvre. Rather, there is a habitus developed by the Romanian critic in time, in Pierre Bourdieu's[2] sense, which has generated certain perceptions and

[2] See: Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a Theory of Practice*: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford: Stanford University Press; Bourdieu, P. (2012). *Regulile artei-geneza şi structura câmpului literar* (trad. L. Albulescu şi B. Ghiu, Ediţia a II-a). Bucureşti: Grupul Editorial Art.

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expectations, a specific behavior and also a particular positioning within the literary camp of that time in opposition with other agents who, for example, endorsed Dostoevsky's views and ideas. Many of the elements of this sort of approach will be present in the texts of the Romanian critics during the communist period, Dobrogeanu-Gherea being often quoted, particularly in the first decades after the instauration of the communist regime.

During the communist period, the exegetical texts contained ideological references, some in a lesser extent, and others in a greater extent. The density of these references depended on several factors: the date when the text was published, the political context, the people responsible for censorship, the official policies vis-a-vis of the Dostoevsky's work or of literature and art in general, or even of the background and the positioning of the literary critic within the literary and political landscape of each distinct period. In spite of the fact that there is an evolution of the way on which censorship acted upon the reception of work of the Russian writer, from severe interference to a more relaxed approach towards the end of the communist period, it is possible an identification of some common elements of the Marxist paradigm. This is true particularly for the more ideological texts, which were dominant in the first three decades, but also present later in the texts of the Romanian critics who were more biased towards a political and ideological interpretation. There is, as well, a similitude between the way in which Dostoevsky's texts were approached in the Soviet Union and Romania, mainly in the first decades. Several of these characteristics are presented below along with a corresponding analysis between the approaches in the both distinct geographical spaces.

The express mention of the need for a Marxist-Leninist approach of Dostoevsky's works and the use of strong ideological expressions

Many of the exegetes and literary critics have mentioned in their studies commentaries that it is necessary a new approach of dostoevskian creation, from within a Marxist-Leninist perspective, which should lead towards a new understanding of his works taking into account the new political and social conditions. This was one of the ways through which the authors legitimated the need for publishing the work of the Russian writer, but had also a didactic aim: the readers were warned of the direction of the interpretation and it was induced the necessity of assimilating by the reader of this sort of approach. After a first decade of

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"silence", Dostoevsky's novels started to appear in the public space, accompanied most often by the commentaries of Soviet critics. For example, in 1956, an article of V. Ermilov, a prominent Soviet critic of that era, was published in translation in *Gazeta Literară* (Ermilov, 1956). The author begins by quoting Maxim Gorki, comparing Dostoevsky with Shakespeare and mentions the fight of the novelist for the "real ways of fighting for the liberation of the humanity from the burden of humiliation and abasement". The author contraposes the two societies, capitalist and socialist, emphasizing the superiority of the second over the first. Dostoevsky is accused that he chose the "morality of the slaves" against the "morality of the rulers". Through his struggle against the revolution, Dostoevsky actually rises against utopian socialism and revolutionary democracy. The entire commentary of the author continues in the same note, being highly ideological the aim being to promote the values of Marxism-Leninism.

Similarly, in the afterword of the novel *Crime and Punishment*, published in 1957, B. Riurikov presents through the words of M. Gorki, the way in which the readers should related to the dostoevskian oeuvre: that it should be fought against "the reactionary tendencies of Dostoevsky". The text ends with some of Lenin's remarks and with the urge of A. V. Lunacearski who claims that "for the new man, born in revolution and who contributes to its victory, it is almost shameful not to know a giant of Dostoevsky's stature, but would be even more shameful and as if to say harmful socially to fall under his influence." (Riurikov, 1957, p. 525). Further, the Soviet critic reminds us that the "soviet people" know to discern the evil of falsehood, the light from dark, everything that is truly artistic from what is false.

The Romanian exegetes include the same arguments in their analyses. The starting point remains the same pleading for the need of reconsidering Dostoevsky's works from a Marxist perspective, which, in their views, would lead to a proper reception of the Russian works. The well-known critic, Tudor Vianu, could not avoid certain ideological concessions in his writings on Dostoevsky. Thus, he mentions the "limits" of the Russian novelist reminding the "triumph of October Revolution" specifying that all the traditional values of Russian literature were re-evaluated, Dostoevsky being eclipsed because the "Revolution could never associate him with its aspirations of transforming man and society." (Vianu, 1957, p. 7). We note again the antithesis between the new society and the capitalist society and the fact that this genial moralist was not able

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to understand socialism and that he favored the spread of a sickly mysticism (p. 8).

A renowned dostoevskian critic like Tamara Gane had to pay her tribute to the communist censorship, including numerous ideological references, particularly in the early texts. In spite of that, the commentaries and the analysis of Gane have substance and literature value and, in time, the ideological references are fewer and fewer. However, from the beginning of her foreword of the novel *Poor Folks*, the author reveals the main aim of the study, that is, the need to reconsider with "full care and attention" Dostoevsky's works and from the "Marxist-Leninist aesthetics perspectives." (Gane, 1955, p. 5). The objective is quite precise: a scientific, objective interpretation which would ensure a 'fair, dialectical revalorization' of Dostoevsky's creation, in which there is a mixture between positive and negative aspects". The analysis of the "Marxist-Leninist advanced aesthetics" will allow the choice of "the wheat from the chaff" and the repudiation of the "hostile theory" of humility and reconciliation among classes and, in the end, the appreciation of what is realistic in his work.

Using almost the same words, Radu Popescu draws the attention to who should be interpreted and received the work of Dostoevsky and he signals the danger of reactionary theses. Nevertheless, with the help of the scientific aesthetics we are able to discover in Dostoevsky his healthy, positive side: "we should carefully cleave, with severity and also piety, the wheat from the chaff." (Popescu, 1956). Similar remarks are present in the works of other literary critics such as Mihai Novicov (Novicov, 1956) or Nicolae Zega (Zega, 1956).

Out of their own conviction or, most likely, as an outcome of the coercion of the literary and political fields, the specification of the need for reconsidering Dostoevsky's oeuvre from a Marxist-Leninist perspective is one of the common elements of the general approach of the critics of that time.

The biographical elements relevant for a Marxist ideological approach

One of the preferred aspects highlighted by the Marxist critics was some important moments in the life of Dostoevsky which would cast a favorable light, from an ideological point of view, on the activity of the Russian writer. Specifically, there were mentioned the dramatic events of the Dostoevsky's involvement in the socialist Petrashevski circle, the sentencing to death, the farce of the execution, the exile and

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imprisonment in Siberia and the difficult period after the liberation. All of these elements were situated within the context of the critics of the capitalist society, of the struggle between the revolutionary democrats and the Tsarist government which was exploiting the poor people.

Very often, Dostoevsky's ideological shift is attributed to the detention and the harsh condition in which he lived immediately after the release from prison. The mystification of the events goes so far that the Soviet critic V. Ermilov claims bluntly that Russian cultural personalities such as Pushkin, Lermontov and Gogol were the victims of the Tsarist regime (Ermilov, 1956). On a similar line of approach, Friedlander presents in detail Dostoevsky's activity in the first years of his literary career, the influence of Gogol and Bielinski, his animosity against the serfdom system and the participation in the Petrashevski circle with all of the tragic consequences for the writer (Friedlander, 1959a). B. Riurikov (Riurikov, 1957) and L. Rozemblum (Rozenblum, 1955) follow closely a similar line of argumentation.

The Romanian critics highlighted as well these aspects of the writers' life. Dobrogeanu-Gherea's exegetical text reprinted in 1945 presents circumstantially these details accentuating the impact of detention on Dostoevsky. After specifying the difficult and revolutionary international context of that time, A. Atanasiu recalls the same biographical details and refers to the ideological shift of Dostoevsky, to the his fight within him between reflecting the reality and the "tendency of deforming it for preconceived purposes" (Atanasiu, 1956).

In a probably the most tendentious article about Dostoevsky, Moraru-Slivna argues that in his youth, the writer adhered to the socialist ideals and that he remained a socialist for all of his life, even if he "always hided himself under the folds of autocracy and Orthodoxy" (Moraru-Slivna, 1945).

Most of the authors mention these ideologically convenient details about Dostoevsky's life as an argument for reconsidering and recuperating Dostoevsky within the new political and social context. This was possible because, claim some of these exegetes, the Russian writer was one of them, he embraced the socialist ideas, at least at the beginning of his career. As his recuperation was necessary, not only for literature purposes, but for political reasons as well, the argument became part of the critics' discourse.

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References to the classics of Marxist-Leninist theory (Marx, Engels, Lenin) or Marxist literary critics (Gorky, Dobrogeanu-Gherea)

One of the general rules of that period was the presence in the text of quotes from the classics of Marxist-Leninist theory (Marx, Engels, and Lenin) and/or from writers and literary critics with socialist views (Gorki, Dobrogeanu-Gherea). Both, Soviet and Romanian critics, included this sort of references very often without any critical analysis, proper for a solid and rigorous argument.

V. Ermilov, for example, starts his study quoting Gorki and Lenin, both of them criticizing Dostoevsky, the later one claiming that the writer represented the sick consciousness of the Russian people (Ermilov, 1956). In a similar context, B. Riurikov reiterates the same charges of the same personalities, mentioning the words of Gorki who considers that Dostoevski painted man "helpless in the chaos of the dark forces." (Riurikov, 1957). In the analysis of *Notes from the Underground*, Rozemblum quotes Gorki's opinion that in this text "there is in germ the main ideas of all of his later works." (Rozenblum, 1957, p. 7).

In those times, the argument of authority worked, more or less, in any debates of ideas. Invoking the Marxist classics in a literary and artistic analysis, as well as economic, social or political, was not just a custom of those years, but an obligation. By quoting them, the text was gaining a sort of 'weight', an ideological significance which would be important in the eyes of the censorship. In the last two decades of the Romanian communist era, quoting Ceauşescu in these sort of texts was also compulsory. However, in the later exegeses references to Lenin were sporadic, but Engels, and prevalently Marx, who continued to be quoted mostly by the truly Marxist authors[3].

Right at the beginning of his paper, Radu Popescu agrees with the way Gorki labelled Dostoevsky affirming that "neither before nor later was something more definitive said about Dostoevsky." (Popescu, 1956, p. 1). Even later, in the 1970s and 1980s, we can find studies with these sort of references. In one of the very few articles with ideological accents from the special volume of the literary journal *The 20th Century* (1967) dedicated to Dostoevsky, V. Nemoianu reminds the "Hegelians" who quarreled the novelist: Bielinski, Chernyshevsky, Dobroliuvov, Strasov and Plekhanov, that is, those who will inexorably walk on the path of continuous development of the materialist and advanced thought, towards

[3] Two prominent examples: the realist critic Mihai Novicov and the veritable Marxist literary critic Ion Ianoşi.

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the creative assimilation of Marxism and his hatch in Lenin." (Nemoianu, 1969, p. 215). In the same period, T. L. Birăescu undertakes a research on the European modern novel using the methods of sociological and literary critics. In spite of this technical theme and of the scientific approach used, the critic feels obliged to insert a quote from Lenin about the social environment portrayed by Dostoevsky, of the uprooting characteristic to all of his heroes (Birăescu, 1971). These two studies, among other similar ones, have a clear literary value, the inclusion of these sort of ideological references was just a tactic of the author "to put to sleep" the communist censorship.

However, other authors, referred extensively to the classics of Marxism, such as the socialist realist Mihai Novicov, who quotes from Gorki, Lenin, Marx, Engels or other Soviet literary critics T. Motîliova and B. A. Bialik.

Highlighting dostoevskian realism

From a literary perspective, Dostoevsky's realism is often highlighted by the Marxist critics. Nevertheless, the idea of realism as it was regarded by them is different from what Dostoevsky had in mind when he claimed that he is a realist in the highest sense of the word[4]. The pirouette of the socialist critics consists in underlying the external reality, the "heavy odds" of the bourgeois society of the times when the writer lived. We deal here again with a typical case of attempt to manipulate the readers, as the aim of the Russian writer was not to point a finger at the capitalist regime. Rather, Dostoevsky would focus on revealing the inner reality of his characters, the contradictions and the convulsions of their souls.

The references to Dostoevsky's realism are numerous in the exegetical texts of both Soviet and Romanian critics. Ermilov, Riurikov, Rozemblum, Friedlander emphasize the elements in such a way to be in line with the ideology they were defending. Suffice to give the example of Ermilov who praises Dostoevsky's inclination to reveal the "unparalleled sufferings of oppressed and humiliated mankind in the society based on exploitation and the terrible pain caused by these sufferings" (Ermilov, 1956).

In Romania, the highlight of realism was the cornerstone of the attempt to promote the positive aspects of Dostoevsky's works. Tudor

[4] "I am called a psychologist. Not true. I am only a realist in a higher sense" [as quoted inf Sekirin, P. (1997). *The Dostoevsky Archive*. Jefferson: McFarland].

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Vianu, for example, focuses his analysis on the psychological and social realism of the novels, situating Dostoevsky within the "Russian and European realism" movement (Vianu, 1966). Similarly, Popescu (Popescu, 1956), Ianoşi (Ianoşi, 1967), Novicov (Novicov, 1972), Heinrich (Heinrich, 1973) regard Dostoevsky's realism as the principal reason for reconsidering and reevaluating him: his oeuvre save itself due to the "consistent realism of the author" and because in the "conflict between the reactionary ideologue and the realist writer, the victory was won by the latter." (Novicov, 1972, p. 239).

In this respect, the essence of the whole debate was ideological, the Marxist critics defending the idea that external reality in general, and social reality in particular, determines human behavior, while for Dostoevsky the inner reality prevails.

The critique of capitalist society

Dostoevsky's negative comments vis-à-vis the West, especially after his visits in England, France and Germania have provided arguments for the Marxist critics in their ideological fight. Dostoevsky himself had ambivalent views towards Occident, being either skeptical or enthusiastic about the "old Europe". The novelist's resentments against the capitalist system were often presented out of context, the critics attempting to construct a propagandistic argument, specific to the class struggle without any real affinity with Dostoevsky's intentions. Riurikov mentions his visits in West affirming that the writer could better observe the "antihuman nature of bourgeois civilization" and the "cynicism of capitalism, the inhumanity of State officials, the falsehood and corruption of bourgeois art." (Riurikov, 1957, p. 505).

The anti-Occidental discourse of the Russian writer was emphasized by the Romanian critics as well, the "contradictions" of the capitalist society, its materialism, individualism and the difficulties of certain social strata being the preferred themes of the Marxist interpreters. In his analysis of the novel *The Idiot*, the aesthetician Ion Ianoşi recalls the negative remarks of the writer towards Occident, this "splendid cemetery" (Ianoşi, 1969), and in the study of *The Man from Underground*, published in 1968, he presents in detail Dostoevsky's remarks using pronounced ideological expressions: the "sunset of capitalism was revealed to the writer as another "House of death", "this hell was calm, groomed, luscious, well-organized", "Après moi le deluge", the slogan of bourgeois becomes "the alpha and omega of underground man". In Dostoevsky's

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eyes, considers the critic, "bourgeoism" "is and remains the quintessential of contemporary deformation", as the writer "lived and expressed the collapse of all values of the nineteenth century Europe" (Ianoşi, 1968).

"Contradictions" of Dostoevsky's work

Revealing the so-called "contradictions" of Dostoevsky's work and life is, probably, the most frequent aspect present in the exegetical texts published in the communist period. It is true that Dostoevsky's writings and his life as well could be characterized, under some circumstances, as contradictory, or at least antinomic, the writer living almost constantly in uncertain and extreme conditions, from being socialist and revolutionary, condemned to death, detained and exiled then being the most fervent defender of the monarchy, fiercely accusing Socialist revolutionaries, passionately playing roulette, permanently pursued by creditors, tormented by thoughts of faith and unbelief and finally receiving the full glory after the famous speech made in Pushkin's commemoration. A life and a work which offers, somehow legitimately, the possibility for a "pro and contra" dialectical interpretation. Nonetheless, once again, the Marxist critics proceeded to unnatural and forced interpretations and situating the arguments in biased and subjective contexts.

These "contradictions" are the main elements on which Ermilov's study focuses, the Soviet critic considering that Dostoevsky's life and literary creation represents a true tragedy, an example of an attempt to "suppress and mutilate eh human soul by a hostile reality to the genius, freedom, art and beauty." (Ermilov, 1956). Riurikov, on his turn, claims that the reactionary features of Dostoevsky and the difficulties of detention caused him to lost his belief in revolution and "precisely therein lies the greatest tragedy, the greatest misfortune of his life." (Riurikov, 1957). The opposition of the deep compassion for the "unfortunate fate of the oppressed" and the "categorical condemnation of any protest (apart from the moral one) is expressed by the other authors as well, such as Rozemblum (Rozenblum, 1957) or Friedlander (Friedlander, 1959b).

Tamara Gane and Ion Ianoşi were among the Romanian critics who analyzed more rigorously these "contradictions" trying confer a certain coherence to the entire argument. From a Marxist perspective they intended to debunk Dostoevsky's theses, within the larger framework of the ideological fight between the dialectic materialism and proletcult tendency specific to the communist era and the idealism, mysticism and

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individualism of writer's conceptions. Gane's dialectical approach emphasizes the "contrary arguments", "pro and contra", which would constitute the intimate substance of Dostoesvky's work: the Russian writer did not understood the mechanisms for solving the problems of the old society, the real and efficient solutions being found and enforced by communist society (Gane, 1966). In this debate, Ion Ianoşi brings an interesting argument accusing Dostoevsky of "willful confusion" of bourgeoism with the revolutionary spirit, a "serious confusion of addresses" which finds its integral expression in the novel *The Demons*.

The critique of the novel "The Demons"

During the life of the writer, the novel *The Demons* sparked fierce controversies due mainly the pronounced political and ideological substrate. As a matter of fact, the book was censored since its first appearance, the editor refusing to publish the chapter with Stavroghin's confession, while the communist authorities completely banned the book for a while. All the important Soviet critics criticized the novel sustaining that Dostoevsky in fact described some sort of pseudo-revolutionary, anarchists who would not represent the true socialists.

Again, Ion Ianoşi argued more subtle that Dostoevsky amalgamates socialism with "bourgeoism", traditional liberalism with landlords' pseudo-liberalism, altogether with all most diverse characters (Ianoşi, 1970).

The mystification of interpretations of characters and events in Dostoevsky's novels

The tendentious and partisan commentaries accomplished from a Marxist perspective do not refer only to Dostoevsky's general philosophical, political, social and aesthetic conceptions, expressed more or less obviously in his novels. The biased and mystifying approach targeted also the characters and the events in which they are involved, which, for some critics in West, have become true symbols, often used in the ideological fight against communist propaganda. Ordinov, the main character in *Notes from Underground*, Prince Myshkin, from *The Idiot*, Raskolnikov from *Crime and Punishment*, Ivan, Aliosha, father Zosima from *Karamazov Brothers*, Ippolit and Stavroghin from *The Demons*, all have become within this perspective the exponents of religious and political reactionary movements which would contradict flagrantly the communist ideology. Characters, dialogues, narrative elements, descriptions and so on

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have been interpreted in various ways, often just for serving ideological purposes or for discrediting a certain conception.

V. Ermilov, for instance, disregards prince Myshkin seeing him as a Don Quixote feeble and incapable of helping anyone and showing that the characters' ideas and conceptions are very particularly near and dear to the writer himself. Friedlander claims that the psychological drama of Nastasya Filipovna is due to the environment in which she lives and because she realizes her superiority to "most people in the landlord-bourgeois stratum." (Friedlander, 1959a).

T. Vianu skids from his literary analysis and proposes strange interpretations of some characters, such as the comment at the novella *The meek one*, specifying that the heroine was not a mystic, the novella expressing in essence the clash with "atrocious acrimony" of man, the "barbarous prejudices with respect to woman's situation, cultivated within bourgeois society" (Vianu, 1957, p. 199).

From a similar paradoxically perspective, the other renowned literary critic, G. Călinescu, suggests that the old pawnbroker woman is a symbol of capitalist society and even if Raskolnikov suppressed her, he did not abolish the evil that resides in the "class difference": "A new pawnbroker took the place of the killed one". Raskolnikov, the critic notes, should "suppress the exploiting class", something that is possible not through assassinate, but by revolution or by "systematic fight of the proletariat". Raskolnikov would have put himself in the service of organized struggle to overthrow the feudal-bourgeois order, "he would have been a hero of the working class." (Călinescu, 1969, p. 21). Before commenting Călinescu's ideas it is necessary to mention that the critic was unjustly persecuted by the communist regime. These at least surprising comments in respect to Dostoevsky's works could be viewed as a concession he had to made for the censorship, or, most likely, the censor himself intervened altering the text.

Conclusion

One of the important characteristics present in almost all interpretations on the work of the Russian writer is the obvious intention of authors to promote and legitimate somehow his oeuvre in the eyes of officials, censors and readers. Many of the literary critics who wrote about his work were actually dostoevskyan exegetes, having numerous texts and volumes about him, the entire process being part of what we can call the attempt of "recuperating" Dostoevsky during the communist regime.

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Despite all the accusations which can be made against some aspects of the interpretative texts, of the ideological references, sometimes exaggerated or mystifying, overall it should be noted their effort to make accessible to the public the creation of the great Russian writer in a difficult social and political environment.

As showed above, the modality in which the Romanian exegetes related to Dostoevsky's work depended on external conditions: the situation in Soviet Union, the political and social situation in Romania, the official policy of censorship, the censors themselves, the directors the publishing houses or magazines, the situation of the authors as well. The real step forward in promoting Dostoevsky's creation took place after the death of Stalin. In spite of a relaxation regarding the reception of his work, it was possible to identify a certain pattern of approach, some common elements present in most of the texts situated within a Marxist perspective.

After the first decade of "silence", "the myth Dostoevsky" had to be re-evaluated and reconsidered in Soviet Union and Romania as well. The process presupposes, on one hand, the highlighting of the "positive" aspects of his work and life, that is, those features which would be in line with the communist ideology and, on the other hand, combating the negative ones, labeled as "reactionary".

In more detail, the identified constitutive elements of the Marxist paradigm included the expression of the need for a Marxist-Leninist interpretation of Dostoevsky's work, the highlight of the realism of his work, the insistence in presenting some of the details from the life of the writer, particularly the his involvement in the socialist movement, all of these along with quoting Marxist-Leninist classics or socialist recognized literary personalities. Other important components of this strategy was to reveal the positive aspects of his creation, that is, its realism, and also the negative elements of his creation, that is, the "contradictions" which pervade his entire oeuvre. Mentioning Dostoevsky's aversion vis-à-vis the Occidental society and fiercely criticizing the novel *The Demons* were other aspects of this paradigmatic approach. Finally, the tendentious and mystifying interpretations of the characters, in an ideologically convenient manner, complete the list of tactics involved in the process of "reconsidering" Dostoevsky.

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