

Schriftsteller kenntlich gemacht: “*The Double* and *Notes from Underground* are threshold works in the oeuvre of Dostoevsky: the first inaugurates his important motif of the ‘double’ and projects his concept of the underground and an underground social type; the second work, *Notes from Underground*, lays out the basic social, moral-philosophical and religious positions that Dostoevsky will develop in the five great novels [...]. *Notes from Underground*, however, is not only an arresting and profound introduction to these works, but to the twentieth century, which recognizes as its own the problems of reason and irrationality, freedom and self-will, human dignity and degradation” (S. xiii). Kurzum: einer neuen Generation von Dostojewskij-Lesern wird diese Edition in der Reihe “Penguin Classics” eine willkommene Einführung in das Gesamtwerk des Meisters aus Russland sein. Aber nicht nur das: Robert Louis Jacksons Interpretationen der beiden Texte kombinieren Kulturphilosophie und Poetologie auf natürliche Weise. Es wird dabei deutlich, dass Dostojewskij sein ganzes Leben immer im Lichte des „allgemeinen Weltzustands“ (Hegel) poetologisch verwertet hat.

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Horst-Jürgen Gerigk / Rudolf Neuhäuser: *Dostojewskij im Kreuzverhör. Ein Klassiker der Weltliteratur oder Ideologe des neuen Russland? Zwei Abhandlungen*. Heidelberg: Mattes Verlag 2009. 119 Seiten.

The book contains two separate treatises on Dostoevsky. The first is a study by professor Horst-Jürgen Gerigk on the meaning of the “phenomenon” of a classical author and his international influence (*Was ist ein Klassiker? Dostojewskijs internationale Wirkung in systematischer Perspektive*), the other one is by professor Rudolf Neuhäuser about the historical roots and present interpretations of Russian mentality (*F. M. Dostojewskij: Eine Studie zur russischen Mentalität einst und heute. Historische Wurzeln und Interpretationen*). In the preface the authors explain the title „Kreuzverhör” (‘cross-examination’): ever since his death, Dostoevsky has been named in support of very different ideological streams and statements (orthodoxy, slavophile tendencies, prophecies about the future of Russia, East-West confrontations, decline of the West, etc.). The ideological and philosophical themes of his works, the suggestive character of his ideas and style made (and still make) this “utilization” possible: Dynamic meanings of Dostoevsky’s figures,

motifs, symbols and ideas are excerpted from (or: taken out of) their context becoming monologue-like declarations or judgements serving the aims of the interpretators.

The first version of both studies with their topics expanded and elaborated in greater detail for this book were read at the XIIIth Symposium of the International Dostoevsky Society (July 2007) in Budapest. And both works emphasize: the *artist* Dostoevsky belongs to the „cultural heritage” of world literature, he is not only a patriotic prophet of a new Russia.

H.-J. Gerigk’s study consists of two main parts. In the first part (*Warum ist Dostojewskij ein Klassiker?*), the author deals with several questions. He defines what the difference is between true/real dialogue and pseudo-dialogue in Dostoevsky’s works, and presents how these dialogues function with respect to the author and within their context in his novels. Then he explains why Dostoevsky is to be considered a classical writer.

He talks of the author as being a hidden Socrates, then he traces the difference between Platonic dialogues and Dostoevsky’s dialogues (*Dostojewskij als verborgener Sokrates. Der Unterschied zwischen einem Roman Dostojewskijs und einem platonischen Dialog*).

One of the most remarkable thoughts of these chapters is the polemics with Bakhtin’s concept of the polyphonic nature of Dostoevsky’s novels. Gerigk emphasizes the analogy to Socrates’ method of bringing the reader to truth, i.e. the maieutic character (Hebammenkunst) of the Russian writer’s dialogues. According to the author of the study, the so called polyphony is nothing but a literary device (Ru. ’priem’) used in order to make the reader witness the birth of truth. Gerigk quotes Dostoevsky’s favourite line from Tiutchev’s *Silentium!* („Mysl’ izrechennaia est’ lozh” – *A thought once uttered is a lie*) as an illustration of the problem of inexpressible depths of thought of the human soul. Accepting the essence of his opinion, we can add that Bakhtin’s theory of polyphony touched the Socratic (maieutic) character of Dostoevsky’s dialogues as well. In the second half of the 20th century many scholars have been concerned with the same question (Piama Gajdenko, Christopher Pike, Michael Holquist, Alex Fryszman). Analyzing the similarity between Kierkegaard and Dostoevsky in their technique of expressing philosophical ideas through characters, they recognized how close Bakhtin had come to existentialist thinking.

But truly, Dostoevsky's interpretators often neglect the importance of multiple points of view, and the so called Socratic method of revealing truth. This is why Gerigk's thoughts help to clarify this theme.

In the second part (*Zeitwelten*) several other matters are investigated: The problems of Dostoevsky research; the interesting examples of Dostoevsky's playful attitude towards the reader (*Dostojewskijs Spiel mit dem Leser: Verstecken und Offenlegen*); the so called poetological reconstruction (poetologische Rekonstruktion); the connection of different branches of science (ie. psychology, theology, philosophy, philology, law, medical sciences) to Dostoevsky's oeuvre (*Dostojewskij und die Wissenschaften*).

The author pays attention to the arbitrariness of some interpretations referring strictly to one or another scientific field (or: area). Thus novels of the Russian writer often become misread, misinterpreted, owing to the pseudo-dialogue which the critics hold with Dostoevsky. The unity of writer–work–reader breaks down because the interpretators serve their own public. In such cases the work as such always suffers and plays a subordinated role (as „applied literature“). For example, narratology concentrates only on the devices (*priemy*), the whole work exists as it were merely as the sum of various (structural and thematic) elements; psychological interpretations on the other hand, focus only on their chosen special subject, etc. According to professor Gerigk, it is only the poetological reconstruction that can reveal the artistic intelligence (*künstlerische Intelligenz*) and render (or: comprise) the entire complexity of the work.

The other study of the book by professor Rudolf Neuhäuser deals with very topical questions of Dostoevsky's oeuvre. All through the five parts of it we can read about the following themes: Dostoevsky's reception today (considering the Russian film *The Idiot*, 2003, and the *Collected Ideas of Dostoevsky*, edited in Moscow, 2005), the romantic roots of Russian messianism, the origin and development of the Slavophile myth (*Die Geburt eines Mythos. Der Mythos in Aktion*), and the problematical nature of the Russian mentality (*Eine russische Mentalität?*). In the detailed analysis very important facts and questions of Russian and European history are revealed, as for example the theory of “Moscow the third Rome” mentioned in the epistle of the monk Filofej, 1524, and quoted later in orthodox church documents as the prophetic truth about Russian power. The author reconstructs the core of Dostoevsky's ideas: his opinion of the Russian people, its antecedents (the deliberations of Chaadaev and Belinsky on Russian character), the belief in the univer-

salism of the Russian people, etc. We find there a brief summary of Vladimir Solov'iev, with whom Dostoevsky had made friends in the 1870-ies, so much that they went on a pilgrimage to the Optina pustyn' monastery (1878). Soloviev's influence left his marks on the figure of Aliosha Karamazov (and not on Ivan, as on page 76 we can read, which must be a misprint) in the novel *The Brothers Karamazov*. It is interesting how Neuhäuser connects Dostoevsky's essay on Don Quijote-ism—ie. illusions instead of reality—(*Lozh' lozhiu spasaetsia*—“Lie justified by a lie”) with the same efforts of some contemporary Russian groups and national—cultural trends. The aim of his investigations is to purge (or: cleanse) Dostoevsky's art of the ideological misinterpretations, and to show its classical values.

In this short review I could only mention the main chapters and problems of these two important studies, pointing at the two authors' findings: the search for a true portrait of Dostoevsky's, the author's constant care for artistic quality, and lastly, the release of his ideas and novels altogether from any fashionable mode of abuse.

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*Nachbemerkung von Rudolf Neuhäuser:* Die Rezensentin hat festgestellt, dass im Kapitel über Wladimir Solowjow nicht *Aljoscha*, sondern *Iwan Karamasow* genannt wird, dem Dostojewskij einige Züge des jungen Philosophen mitgegeben haben soll. Es ist in der Dostojewskij – Literatur in der Tat allgemein bekannt, dass *Aljoscha* dem jungen Solowjow nachempfunden ist. Dies hat auch die Witwe Dostojewskijs, Anna Grigorjewna, bezeugt. Weniger bekannt ist allerdings, dass sie 1881 ihre Meinung geändert hat, indem sie feststellte: „Net, net, Fedor Michajlovič videl v lice Vladimira Solovjova ne Alešu, a Ivana Karamazova!“ Der wissenschaftliche Kommentar zum Roman *Brat'ja Karamazovy* sieht jedenfalls auch in Iwan Züge des Philosophen Solowjow: „Romanist usmatrival v nem [Solovjov] čerty, rodnivšie ego molodogo druga ne tol'ko s sozidatelem zemnogo bratstva Alešej, no i s otricatelem i razrušitelem – Ivanom.“ Dies entspricht dem, was Anna Grigorjewna festgestellt hat. Durch einen Fehler am PC fiel Aljoscha aus meinem Text heraus! Hat *sie* da vielleicht eingegriffen und den Text im Sinne ihrer Aussage von 1881 geändert? (Vgl. F. M. Dostojewskij: PSS, 30 Bde. Leningrad: „Nauka“ 1972-1990, Bd. 15, S. 471-472.)