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TRANSLATING THE DIARIES OF DOSTOEVSKY AND TOLSTOY IN COMMUNIST ROMANIA

Abstract: My paper will discuss the critical grounds that preceded the translation of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy's diaries into Romanian, published by Univers Publishing House in 1974 and 1975-1976 respectively, focusing on the *Prefaces* written by Ion Ianoși. Relying on both historical studies and relevant documents of the 1947-1989 period, I will start by generally describing, on the one hand, the process of the Russian and Soviet translations into post-War Romania and, on the other hand, the Communist regime's views and practices in translating and publishing autobiographical literature. Leftist intellectual who fulfilled his academic education in USSR and worked in the Central Committee for almost nine years, Ion Ianoși is a key-figure in analyzing the incipient reception perspective of the two *Diaries*; collating the 70s *Prefaces* with their post-Communism republications and Ianoși's *Memoirs*, I will dwell on the position the scholar takes in the foreignization-domestication binary, as discussed by Sean Cotter following two of Lawrence Venuti's concepts.

Keywords: Russian translation, Communism, Ion Ianoși, diaries, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy

In his article "The Soviet Translation: Romanian Literary Translators after World War Two", published in the 2008 issue of *Meta: Translators' Journal*, Sean Cotter discussed about the literary translation phenomenon in the Communist Romania, starting from the fact that the post-War period was characterized by a major translation activity: "the number and quality of literary translations produced from a variety of

languages makes this period a kind of golden age of Romanian literary translation” (846). The same idea is claimed by Gelu Ionescu, a Romanian critic who published a study on Romanian literary translation in the early 80s: “in the last 30-35 year, the Romanian translations were more and better than in all the previous periods put together”¹ (7). Both scholars bring evidence to the fact that Romanian Communism had different ways of expressing itself in its two major periods: the Stalinist one and Nicolae Ceaușescu’s national-communism. Whilst Gelu Ionescu only slightly mentions the differences of the translation process between the two - “the translations from contemporary world literature are made only after 1960 (except for the ones from Soviet literature, which was massively translated a decade before)” [36]²-, Sean Cotter emphasizes the ideological role that translation had especially until 1964. Having as premises the Stalinization as a colonizing process³ and using Lawrence Venuti’s term, Cotter discusses translation as a “policy of foreignizing Romania” (841). In other words, in the late 40s and especially in the 50s, Soviet literature translation had not (only) a cultural goal, but it was itself a means of importing “the *soul of the new socialist*, to move the Romanian reader from his domestic subjectivity to one in line with the ideology of the Soviet Union” (842).

Even though since the 1960’s things became more relaxed, as the relationship with the Soviet Union was on a regressive path, ideology was still present in the editorial field. Gelu Ionescu said that the Soviet Union was not any longer the only space which provided books for translation. In this respect, the newly created publishing house (Univers) and the literary magazine (Secolul 20) had a wide editorial programme which included important Western authors, thus filling the gaps of the last decades⁴. Still,

¹ My translation. Original: “În ultimii 30-35 de ani s-a tradus în românește mai mult și mai bine decât în toate epocile anterioare la un loc”.

² My translation. Original: “abia după 1960 încep traducerea din literatura universală contemporană (cu excepția celei sovietice, din care se traduseseră masiv un deceniu înainte)”.

³ This statement is debatable, but, since it does not enter the sphere of this paper, I will not dwell on it, but approach it only as part of Cotter’s demonstration. Several Romanian literary critics (Bogdan Ștefănescu, Anca Băicoianu, Andrei Terian, Mircea Martin, Ion Bogdan Lefter) analyzed the parallel between Stalinism/Communism and colonialism and their pro and con arguments should be included in a discussion regarding the Romanian situation.

⁴ In his latest work, *Critica de export*, Andrei Terian makes a relevant analysis of the editorial plan of the translation of criticism and literary theory, identifying as “a remarkable event” the initiation of “Studii” series, focused on translating into Romanian the most important works of contemporary criticism: “During two decades this series included more than 100 titles belonging to authors like Roland Barthes, Gérard Genette, Tzvetan Todorov, Jean Starobinski, Georges Poulet, Jean-Pierre Richard, A.-J. Greimas,

Russian literature was not avoided, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy's diaries being published in the mid-70s. Aware of the fact that Cotter's use of *foreignizing-domestication* binary is not fully applicable on these diaries, my paper will discuss the manner in which both of them were delivered to the public, how the introductory studies (written by Ion Ianoși) prepared the reader's conscience for the meeting with the two classical authors' confessions. Literary translation was no longer a means of translating the Romanian spirit itself into the *soviet soul*. Nevertheless it will be relevant to dwell on Ianoși's discursive position within the binary discussed above. As Dostoevsky and Tolstoy are influent cultural figures, their diaries could not just be innocently offered to the readers without a controlled 'manual' of interpretation. Not only did those texts belong to subjective literature (a still problematic genre of the time), but they represented a period that closely preceded and supposedly justified the Soviet Revolution, the phenomenon which was the core of the Communist regime, no matter in which of its appearances (Stalinist, national-communist). In order to have a more complex perspective on the way Ianoși possibly instrumentalized his *Prefaces* and on the importance of these translations, I will shortly take a look on the regime's views on both autobiographical literature and on its translation policy. Becoming an important part of the propaganda project, the Romanian literature of the late 40s and the 50s which received the publication approval suffered a major turn, visible both in its form and content. The Proletcultist requirements coated the interwar literary achievements and new genres were encouraged. In the introductory study on an anthology of autobiographical texts published in 1996, Ion Manolescu points out the fact that memoirs and diaries were replaced by reportages in the 50s. Indeed, the first period of Romanian Communism was not a proper ground for subjective literature, as it could not reflect the reality which was under construction and the only one which had to be represented. Very few diaries and memoirs (both original or translations) were published in the 1950's; if we analyze the meaning of Communism in that period, we can say that autobiographical literature was replaced by self-denunciation and prison cell critique. In a vague but allusive manner, Mihai Zamfir describes this phenomenon in his 1980 study, *Cealaltă față a*

Umberto Eco, Hans-Robert Jauss, Wayne C. Booth, Northrop Frye and many others. In this way, the Romanian intellectuals had access to several of the fundamental texts of contemporary literary studies, and the Romanian literary criticism could go closer to the Western model [m.t.]” (183).

prozei: “the publication of diaries does not exclusively depend on their authors, but on the possibilities of their distribution, thus the context before 1960 was not a propitious one for personal narrative, confession and, even more, for intimate cultural experience”⁵ (131). Indeed, after 1960, due to the apparent cultural liberalization started by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and continued by Nicolae Ceaușescu, autobiographical literature re-entered the public sphere, several memoirs and diaries being published and translated. Still, contemporary subjective literature was not easily accepted unless the authors showed sympathy with the regime or at least did not mean to express any critical ideas. Despite the above mentioned liberalization, censorship and self-censorship were common practices, especially after 1971, when Ceaușescu adopted the so-called July Theses⁶. Wanting to reassure literature’s strong role in the socialist project, the Theses rejected “the artistic works impregnated with the moral principles of the bourgeoisie” which did not lead to “the rise of the political consciousness of the authors” (Berindei, Dobrințu, and Goșu, 643)⁷ or readers. Obviously, the personal narratives of those who were not yet initiated in the socialist faith could not be published. Nor were the memoirs of the old communists. Tiberiu Avramescu, former editor at the State Publishing House for Literature and Art and coordinator of “Biblioteca pentru toți” series, recalls an amusing experience from the 80s:

“We received peculiar directives from the Second Office of the Communist Party, where the First Lady, the world-wide known scientist, used to interfere more and more insistently and incompetently in the cultural matters. Once she ordered the elimination of all autobiographical texts, both in Romanian and in translation, from our editorial programme, without offering any explanation. But the reason was simple: there were rumors that communists from the old guard (Valter Roman, Ștefan Voicu) were writing their memoirs, in which they may have revealed the insignificant role played by Nicolae Ceaușescu and, what is more, by

⁵ My translation. Original: “apariția unor jurnale nu depinde exclusiv de autorii lor, ci de posibilitățile difuzării, or împrejurările de până în jurul anului 1960 sunt ostile notației individuale, confesiunilor și cu atât mai mult evenimentului cultural intim”.

⁶ In a study published in 2008 issue of *Central Europe* review, Dennis Deletant relevantly describes them: “Although couched in terms of ‘Socialist Humanism’, they in fact constituted a return to the method of Socialist Realism, and were therefore a reaffirmation of an ideological basis for literature that had, in theory, hardly been abandoned by the Party” (145).

⁷ My translation. Original: “producțiile impregnate de spiritul concepțiilor moralei burgheze”, which did not lead to „ridicarea conștiințe politice a creatorilor”.

his wife in the illegal communist activity. As results of these fears, elimination threats were set upon periodical publications of the Romanian Academy, such as *Memorials of the History Department* or *Memorials of the Science Department*; the assurance that these works are not exactly memoirs were not really taken too serious. Still, her orders led to the exclusion of Saint-Simon's memoirs from our editorial plan, probably another potential enemy of Romanian Communist regime."⁸ (Avramescu 425).

Ideological interference in cultural matters was visible in the translation process too. Sean Cotter pointed out that “the translation project was the cultural counterpart of power consolidation and national modernization” (842). Even though in the first decades of Communism the project was more visible, its implications continued after 1960 as well.

In an article published in 2009, Lucia Dragomir talks about the authors' political mission inside “popular democracies” and emphasizes the role the Soviet translations had in consolidating cultural propaganda. In 1944, The Russian Book Publishing House was created, with the aim, as Lucia Dragomir says, of “making the Soviet culture popular and easy to reach”⁹ (195). Another important aspect of this plan was the price of these cultural objects. As the free-market principles were no longer functioning and, according to the 1948 Law for book editing and distribution, only state-controlled publishing houses were allowed to publish, the editorial plans followed the “many cheap books” slogan. Therefore, more than two million copies of Soviet and Russian translations were published during 1944-1948. Among these, Mikhail Sholokhov's *The Quiet Don* had a 10.000 print-run and Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel Was*

⁸ My translation. Original: “De la Cabinetul II al Partidului Comunist, de unde prima doamnă a țării, cunoscutul „savant de renume mondial”, se amesteca din ce în ce mai insistent și mai incompetent în problemele culturii, veneau indicații aberante ca, de pildă, eliminarea din planurile editoriale a tuturor lucrărilor de memorialistică, române sau străine, fără alte precizări. Explicația era însă foarte simplă: se zvonise că își scriau memoriile comuniștii din vechea gardă (Valter Roman, Ștefan Voicu) care, în aceste amintiri, s-ar fi putut referi la rolul cu totul minor pe care Nicolae Ceaușescu și mai ales consoarta sa l-au jucat în ilegalitatea comunistă. Potrivit acestor temeri, erau vizate cu eliminarea din planurile editoriale publicațiile periodice ale Academiei Române de tipul *Memoriile secției istorice* sau *Memoriile secției științifice*; asigurările că acest tip de lucrări nu sunt totuși niște amintiri n-au prea fost luate în seamă la cel mai înalt nivel. Aceste indicații au dus, de pildă, la eliminarea din plan a memoriilor lui Saint-Simon, probabil un alt potențial dușman al regimului comunist din România”.

⁹ My translation. Original: “a face cunoscută și a populariza cultura sovietică”.

Tempered was initially printed in 16.000 copies (Dragomir 195). Nevertheless, these print-runs seemed not to be enough for “the popularization of Soviet ideology and socialist education of workers”¹⁰ (335) as it was written in the files studied by Liliana Corobca and discussed in *Controlul cărții*. One of the critiques noted down in the files accused the fact that Ostrovsky’s novel was published only in 89.000 copies in seven years and another of Sholokhov’s books, *Virgin Soil Upturned*, had only 116.000 copies, completely insufficient. As a proof that these Soviet translations had a *positive* impact on the readers, a censor’s commitment from 1950 contained the following objective: “the improvement of professional and political level by reading Kemenov’s brochure and Maxim Gorky’s *The Mother*”¹¹ (Corobca, *Instituția cenzurii comuniste în România* 213).

As far as Western authors were concerned, the situation varied according to many factors. The titles published by Univers Publishing House between 1969 and 1989 tend to express a permissive policy concerning translation. Still, this freedom was carefully controlled and the reader was not allowed to pass beyond these borders. Otherwise he could face Augustin Buzura’s experience, whose books were confiscated during an airport checking. Among the titles he was trying to bring home in 1975 after his research trip there were Vladimir Nabokov’s *Lolita*, Boris Pasternak’s *Doctor Zhivago*, and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s *Gulag Archipelago* (Corobca, *Controlul cărții* 314). After the books finally received the translation approval, they had to pass through the censorship procedures, where the censors decided which part did not obey the regime’s views. A line from Tennessee Williams’s *Orpheus Descending* had to be eliminated because it could have been too allusive (Mocanu 195). *Orpheus Descending* is one of the plays which received the imprimatur, but there were others which could not pass the censor’s vigilance: *Marat/Sade* by Peter Weiss (translated by Gellu Naum for Univers Publishing House) was not approved, one of the arguments being that its content, with reference to the French Revolution, could have suggested “The revolution’s general impossibility of achieving its great goals”¹² (Mocanu 346).

As I mentioned above, the publication of a translation depended on many factors, one of them being the translator’s or the coordinator’s influence. It is the case of Ion

¹⁰ My translation. Original: “propagarea ideologiei sovietice și educarea socialistă a oamenilor muncii”.

¹¹ My translation. Original: “Ridicarea nivelului profesional și politic prin citirea broșurii Kemenov și romanul *Mama* de Maxim Gorki”.

¹² My translation. Original: “imposibilitatea în general a revoluției de a realiza marile ei deziderate”.

Ianoși, who prefaced the diaries of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, both published by Univers, in 1974 and 1975-1976. Romanian scholar of Jewish Hungarian origins, Ianoși studied at the Faculty of Philosophy at Jdanov University in Leningrad (Sankt-Petersburg). After he returned to Romania he worked at a Hungarian magazine (*Elöre*) and then he received a job as instructor at the Central Committee, where he worked for almost nine years. Even though for him Romanian was a foreign language, he also started a prolific career as professor of Philosophy and he also was a literary critic, who published important studies both on Aesthetics and world literature (especially the German and Russian ones). Influenced by his family (as he confesses in his memoirs *Internaționala mea*), he grew up having strong socialist beliefs, which were intensified during his stay in Russia. Convinced that the Bolshevik Revolution was the solution for the world's inequities, Ianoși remained loyal to Marxist-Leninist principles, even after his disillusion caused by Stalin, Gheorghiu-Dej and Ceaușescu's wrong ways of practicing them¹³. His overtly expressed leftist opinions brought him enough influence and trust, so he was in charge with writing the prefaces for Dostoevsky and Tolstoy's diaries, the latter one being translated by his wife, Janina Ianoși.

Leo Tolstoy was one of the privileged authors of the first period of Communism, many of his works being considered educative for the masses and therefore printed in large print-runs. In the same file cited by Liliana Corobca, the activist noted that *Resurrection* had had only one print-run, again insufficient (Corobca, *Controlul cărții* 335). This observation was made in 1952, so it took another twenty years to publish Tolstoy's diary. Ion Ianoși mentions this in his memoirs, talking about how they had access to the 13 volumes *Diary* of the Russian *Complete Works* (90 volumes), and how they "selected the most representative fragments, but which also kept the dominant perspective of his meditations, including the inconvenient ones, with anti-Marxist and antisocialist critiques"¹⁴ (Ianoși 540). In the editor's note of the *Diary*, the choice is motivated more in the light of the time it was translated: "it was made in the perspective of the most relevant components of the developing of this overwhelming and

¹³ The accusation oriented towards the "real Communism" (its put-into-practice form) while still believing in the pure, theoretical principles of Marxism is a common behavior of the communist intellectuals who published memoirs and diaries after 1990, with a more or less justificatory perspective.

¹⁴ My translation. Original: "am ales fragmentele cele mai semnificative și care să păstreze toate dominantele meditațiilor, inclusiv pe cele incomode, cu tăiș antimarxist și antisocialist".

contradictory personality, of course keeping in mind the interests of the Romanian readers”¹⁵ (Tolstoy 1975 IV). It is hard to say whether these “interests” are related to those “inconvenient” parts Ianoși talks about in his 2012 memoirs or to the interest the regime had regarding the readers’ *education*. What is for sure is that beside his carefully edited preface, the censors eliminated several paragraphs from the second volume, but “its vision remained the same, due to other fragments”¹⁶ (Ianoși 540).

Tolstoy’s diary was republished in 2000 by Elit Publishing House, and its third edition appeared in 2011 at Ideea Europeană Publishing House – the definitive edition which puts together the two previous volumes and the two prefaces. As Ianoși mentions in the 2011 editor’s note, for the second and third editions they also used a 1985 Russian edition of *Works in twenty-two volumes*, where he found many omissions, especially of more intimate fragments related to the author’s sexual life, health or illness, or paragraphs which could contain negative allusion to the Red Revolution, Marxism or Socialism (Tolstoy 2011, 5). The 1975-1976 Romanian edition of the *Diary* included these fragments, proving, as Ianoși suggests, a more liberal atmosphere than in the Soviet Union. The idea is supported by the text itself, but gaining this controlled freedom was possible by framing the confession with a paratext which placed it in a safe ideological ground.

The aim of the introductory text (“Tolstoy and Tolstoyism”) is specified in the editor’s note: “to facilitate the understanding of the text covering the respective period and its connections with the author’s literary journalistic and theoretical works”¹⁷ (Tolstoy 1975 IV). This goal is achieved both for the first and the second volume (which continues under the same title), Ianoși dividing the diary into relevant periods and making punctual notes for each of them, relating the personal narrative with Tolstoy’s works. A common approach of this study and of the one that precedes Dostoevsky’s *Diary of a Writer* presupposes reading the literary work through the lenses of the author’s confessions. The other possible way is to fill the gaps of the diaries with information supposedly transmitted by the novels. This mixed perspective of both

¹⁵ My translation. Original: “s-a efectuat în perspectiva celor mai de seamă componente ale devenirii acestei atât de copleșitoare și contradictorii personalități, ținându-se, evident, seama de interesele publicului cititor românesc”.

¹⁶ My translation. Original: ”orientarea a rămas intactă datorită altor fragmente”.

¹⁷ My translation. Original: “să faciliteze înțelegerea textului perioadei date și conexiunile lui cu opera literară și publicistic-teoretică”.

genetic and social criticism has double results: on the one hand it is a concentrated interpretation of the authors' most important literary works and, on the other hand, it is a slightly superficial interpretation of the diary itself, as it focuses more on how the authors' ideas, emotions and meditations are reflected or transposed in their literature and less on their importance in their individual evolution, avoiding to comment on the autobiographical techniques and strategies they used.

The preface of the first volume summarizes Tolstoy's dilemmas and inner tensions, only shortly commenting on his obsessions, confessed vices and perpetual oscillations between faith and rebellion. Only after several pages does Ianoși give his definition of Tolstoyism: "a vision intolerant with the unjust walks of life and the medieval-capitalist state's position, rejecting both civilization and intellectual activity, science and progress, a vision which is critical and regressive at the same time, which opposes to the inhumanity which is intellectually institutionalized and theologically haloed the apology of a rural patriarchal simplicity"¹⁸ (Tolstoy 1975 XX). This will be the frame inside which Ianoși will discuss Tolstoy's self-oriented discourse and his literary, theoretical, and journalistic works, finding his alter-ego in Levin, the character from *Anna Karenina*, whose transformations and problems of conscience are similar to Tolstoy's behavior.

If the narrative techniques and the relation between autobiographical discourse and memories, or between fact and fictional intrusion do not enter Ianoși's interpretation, instead, the critic pays attention to Tolstoy's perspective on the peasants' problem (especially after his "second birth" from 1881, revealed in his short work *A Confession*). Later on, his commentaries stop on the author's professional crisis and his socio-political meditations against the Church, the state, the Army, the land property, the factories and the vices. As these are all critical issues which can be directly connected to the communist ideology, Ianoși makes sure he accompanies each of Tolstoy's deviations from the Marxist principles with an explanation which stresses that Tolstoy's position is either based on a misunderstanding or it is only an inaccurate vision of the world; the final goal seems to be to avoid the readers associated Tolstoy's

¹⁸ My translation. Original: "o viziune intolerantă față de nedreptele stări sociale și statale medieval-capitaliste, repudiind totodată civilizația și intelectul, știința și progresul, o viziune concomitent critică și regresivă, care opune inumanității elitar intituționalizate și teologic aureolate apologia unei simplități țărănești patriarhale".

figure with an anti-Marxist point of view. Even though it does not directly reflect the foreignizing procedure Sean Cotter discusses, this way of framing Tolstoy's diary is a means of foreignizing its interpretation, leading the readers to a ground familiar with the Communist ideology. Setting the Marxist mirror in front of Tolstoy's beliefs, explaining their reflection on this mirror and not their meaning as they are, connected with the pre-Soviet time, is, using Cotter's keywords, a method of translating the reader's consciousness into the Communist ideology.

The first occurrence of this *translation* refers to Tolstoy's general understanding of Marxism. Starting from the author's critique of the entities mentioned above, Ianoși explains: "*The social-Marxist perspective* does not seem acceptable to him because it is favorable to the *improving of our civilization*, which he, Tolstoy, disapproves as generating luxury, corruption, oppression. *The capitalist accumulations* are profoundly vicious to him only because he shares the *illusion* [my underlining] of their spreading by all socialist programme of sanitation"¹⁹ (Tolstoy 1975 XXVIII-XXIX). Using internal focalization, Ianoși already gives a verdict to Tolstoy's beliefs: his equivalence between the effects of capitalism and socialism is just an *illusion*. Ianoși wants to be sure that the reader will understand from the beginning Tolstoy's misconception and that he will not validate it through the authority given by his symbolic capital²⁰. This idea is proved by the stylistic turn this sentence was given in the post-communism edition: in 2011 Ianoși no longer uses the term "illusion", but a less connoted phrase – "*The capitalist accumulations* are profoundly vicious to him only because, *in his opinion* [my underlining], they would be spread by all socialist programme of sanitation"²¹ (Tolstoy 2011 32). Ianoși no longer judges the author's ideological beliefs, but just objectively describes them.

Another commentary that helps foreignizing the interpretation of the diary refers to Tolstoy's mystical crisis; he no longer resonates with the Church's practices, yet he but

¹⁹ My translation. Original: "*Concepția socialist marxistă* nu i se pare acceptabilă deoarece ea favorizează *perfecționările civilizației noastre*, pe care el, Tolstoi, le dezavuează ca generatoare de lux, depravare, asuprire. *Concentrările capitaliste* sunt pentru el profund vicioase numai că împărtășește iluzia extinderii lor prin orice program socialist de asanare".

²⁰ The risks of perverting the readers' consciousness was a real one, as the print-runs of these diaries were a lot larger than the ones we are used to nowadays: Tolstoy's diary was published in 7130 copies each volume, and Dostoyesky's volume in 5360 copies.

²¹ My translation. Original: "*Concentrările capitaliste* sunt pentru el profund vicioase numai că, după părerea sa, ele ar fi extinse prin orice program socialist de asanare".

is not able to imagine a better way of experiencing faith either; therefore he decides to remain with the purest conception of Christianity, Jesus's teaching. Nevertheless, "Tolstoy puts in opposition *the eternal ideal* of the Sermon on the Mount with both *the existing order of our upper classes* and with *the positivist, communist, socialist brotherhood* – with the last because it only advocates love for the siblings and not for God too"²² (Tolstoy 1975 XXXIII). Whilst Tolstoy finds no fundamental difference in the existing social system and the one promised by the Communism, as none of them could follow Jesus's teachings of equality and justice, Ianoși emphasizes a hierarchy of the two social systems based on a fallacious assumption. The only problem with "the positivist, communist, socialist brotherhood" is that, in Ianoși's, not in Tolstoy's words, it does not substantiate its ideology on God's love too, but only on love shared among people. It is not even necessary to recall the tragic effects of Communism to contradict this false hypothesis; a simple look at its core principle – class struggle – reveals the foreignizing strategy. The 2011 edition maintains the same structure, proving the author's Marxist beliefs, implying his atheism, confessed and explained in his memoirs: "after the War, I began to share the Communist ideal and never since have I felt the necessity of a religious contact, as a ritual I have been reading and re-reading the *Old* and the *New Testament* as a man of culture"²³ (Ianoși 107).

Whilst in the *Preface* of the first volume Ianoși's Marxist commentaries are more allusive, in the second volume (the one which needed the censor's intervention) the critic makes no use of subversive language, but overtly criticizes Tolstoy's position against Marxism. He cites Tolstoy:

"The revolutions from the 30s, from '48 did not succeed because they had no ideals and found their resources in the remains of the great revolution. The ones

²² My translation. Original: "opune *idealul veșnic* al Predicii de pe munte atât *ordinii existente, a claselor noastre de sus, cât și frăției pozitivistice, comuniste, sociale* – celei din urmă deoarece ea preconizează numai dragostea față de oameni, nu și față de Dumnezeu".

²³ My translation. Original: „după război m-am atașat idealului comunist, niciodată de atunci nu am simțit nevoia vreunui contact cu religia, în sens de cult. Am citit și recitit *Vechiul și Noul Testament*, ca om de cultură” (107).

who are making the Russian revolution now have none of these: the economic ideals are not ideals”²⁴ (25).

Right afterwards, he annotates:

“The observation of the regression of 1830 and 1848 in comparison with 1789 is correct and involuntarily conformable to Marx’s analysis, while his opposition between economy and morality, reality and ideal is false and deliberately set against Marxism”²⁵ (Tolstoy II 25).

In other words, Tolstoy seems to be an unconscious advocate of Marxism, but who could not find the proper means of appropriating and expressing it. Nevertheless, taking into consideration Ianoși’s loyalty to Marxism, this might also be a unidimensional polemical argumentation, a personal opinion that he supports against Tolstoy’s.

The ideologically oriented discourse is visible again when Ianoși uses his death as an instrument to construct his *post festum* adhesion to Marxism:

“death reaches him in the middle of his struggle, on November 7 (old rite), just seven years before the revolution which he would have not accepted but in whose preparation he had involuntarily participated. The workers and the peasants understood this. The proof is in the workers’ solidarity postcards”²⁶ (Tolstoy 1976 28).

This fragment is completely modified in the third edition of the *Diary*. No connections with the great events of Soviet Revolution were needed anymore, the target of the translation were no longer the masses who had to be instructed: “death reaches him in

²⁴ My translation. Original: “Revoluțiile din anii 30 și 48 n-au reușit pentru că n-au avut idealuri și se însuflețeau din rămășițele marii revoluții. Cei care fac acum revoluția rusă n-au de niciun fel: idealurile economice nu sunt idealuri”.

²⁵ My translation. Original: “constatarea regresului din 1830 și 1848 față de 1789 este corectă și involuntar conformă analizelor lui Marx, în schimb falsă și voit opusă marxismului opoziția dintre economie și morală, real și ideal”.

²⁶ My translation. Original: “moartea îl surprinde în toiul luptei, la 7 noiembrie (stil vechi), cu șapte ani înaintea revoluției pe care el nu ar fi acceptat-o, dar la pregătirea căreia participase de fapt fără voie. Muncitorii și țărani au înțeles asta. Dovadă telegramele de solidaritate ale muncitorilor”.

the middle of his struggle, on November 7 (old rite). Many mourned for him: the proof is in the postcards sent by so many *intellectuals* [my underlining] and workers”²⁷ (Tolstoy 2011 61). The intellectual was already permitted to re-enter the stage.

Not only his death was instrumentalized, but also his posterity, the propagandistic discourses claiming Tolstoy as a precursor of Communism. This idea is emphasized in the end of both the first and the second prefaces, where Ion Ianoși uses Lenin as his argument of authority:

“Leo Tolstoy was not able to solve the vicious issues he so profoundly felt. Or, as Lenin will say: in Tolstoy’s set of principles «the great people’s ocean stirred deep inside with all his weaknesses and all his positive parts reflected» in him”²⁸ (Tolstoy 1975 XXXVI).

It is a common trick of that period to include the texts into a visibly ideological frame, just to catch the censor’s eye and not giving him any interest in looking for *mistakes* deeply inside the text. This might be the case as well, but, again, aware of Ianoși’s socialist structure and correlating it with all the above mentioned strategies, Lenin’s presence could also be meant to enforce the proper reading of the diary, as, in Ianoși’s words, he is “the most astute critic” of Tolstoy’s work (Tolstoy 1976 41). As one would expect, the critical references to Lenin were eliminated from the 2011 edition.

Dostoevsky’s *Diary of a Writer* was translated by Leonida Teodorescu and published by Univers Publishing House a year earlier than Tolstoy’s diary, in 1974, being the eleventh volume of the *Works in 11 volumes* series dedicated to the Russian writer. Ion Ianoși is the author of this preface as well, there being many similarities between the two introductory texts. The title resembles the previous one – “Dostoevsky and Dostoevskyanism” – the critic dwelling on the writer’s experiences as depicted from his confessions and on his vision of the world which dominated both his life and his literature. Unlike the Tolstoy preface, here Ianoși pays more attention to the author’s

²⁷ My translation. Original: ”Moartea îl surprinde la 7 noiembrie (stil vechi). L-au plâns mulți; dovadă telegramele atâtor intelectuali și muncitori”.

²⁸ My translation. Original: “Lev Tolstoi nu putea soluționa viciile atât de pătrunzător intuite de el. Sau, cum va spune Lenin: în doctrina lui Tolstoi s-a reflectat «marele ocean popular răscolit până în adâncuri, cu toate slăbiciunile lui și cu toate laturile lui pozitive»”.

contradictory states of mind. He continues with making connections between the diary and his novels, but he seems more interested in explaining Dostoevsky's emotions inside his first person discourse:

“The sad and solemn symptoms of this *time of transition*, the chances of replacing his life on a more solid ethical ground (and religious too) – these are the supporting and coordinator pole of the *Diary*, as well as the *general idea* of Dostoevsky's novels, short stories and letters”²⁹ (Dostoevsky 10).

Sean Cotter talks about the importance of language in the process of cultural colonization: “culture, language, and power come together, creating unique forms of both domination and resistance”. A thing which draws the reader's attention in this preface and which was more subtle in the previous ones is the use of ideologically marked phrases: Dostoevsky was “initially supporting the revolutionaries of his time, and then he went along with the obscure and retrograde forces” (Dostoevsky 8). The adjectives “obscure” and “retrograde” are very common in the communist discourse, referring usually to the entities which come against the progressive ideology: bourgeoisie, religious commitment, and capitalistic order. After appealing to Lenin's authority to introduce Dostoevsky's figure (alongside with Tolstoy's, a more familiar author for the Romanian readers), Ianoși puts a stamp on his identity referring to his adherence to Orthodox Christianity. As the text continues, he seems to successively contradict this statement, constructing an image of Dostoevsky which is more compatible with the communist ideology.

This diary explicitly sums up, as Ianoși says, all Dostoevsky's obsessions, but it does not threaten the reader's socialist education, as it seems to approach the dialectical practice of discovering the truth:

“thus the Marxists remain loyal to Dostoevsky, loyal to themselves, in their decision to grasp this violent confrontations between heroes, inside each other's

²⁹ My translation. Original: “Simptomele triste și grave ale acestei *epoci de tranziție*, șansele reșezării vieții pe o mai solidă bază etică (și religioasă) – iată axa de susținere și ordonare a *Jurnalului*, ca și *ideea generală* a romanelor, povestirilor și scrisorilor lui Dostoyevsky”.

soul, in the conscience of the novelist himself, between him and his critics, between this whole contradictory universe and the contemporary ideals of socialist humanism”³⁰ (Dostoevsky 9).

The foreignizing interpretation is present here as well, because Ianoși continues to defend the Marxist principles against the author’s opinions, like he did in Tolstoy’s prefaces. He points out the error and delivers the reader the proper perspective:

“The fact that the lack of an ideal generates indifference, dehumanizes and leads to murder is an indisputable truth, proved by the history of modern individualism, by proofs that could be delivered by Dostoevsky himself; the fact that atheism would be equivalent to the mandatory lack of any *superior idea*, so it would be confused with bourgeois individualism is a severe misconception which the fights, sacrifices and ideal of the consistent revolutionaries have many time refuted”³¹ (Dostoevsky 18).

Dostoevsky’s more dilemmatic existence (therefore more difficult to subordinate to a posthumous ideology) required a special attention in introducing it to the Romanian public. That is why Ion Ianoși combined the interpretation of the reflexive discourse with discussing the connection between the author’s life experiences and his characters’ development, trying to *clarify* any opinion that might stir reactions against the Marxist ideology. Dostoevsky’s *Diary* was published again in three volumes by Polirom Publishing House (*Jurnal de scriitor*) in 1998. This new translation was made by Adriana Nicoară, Marina Vraciu, Leonte Ivanov, and coordinated by Emil Iordache. A later edition (2008) accompanied the text with a preface signed by Sorina Bălănescu.

³⁰ My translation. Original: “Marxiștii îi rămân în acest sens fideli lui Dostoyevsky, lor înșiși fideli, în hotărârea de a pătrunde aceste violente confruntări și înfruntări între eroi, în sufletul fiecăruia dintre ei, în conștiința romancierului însuși, între el și comentatorii săi, între acest întreg univers contradictoriu și idealurile contemporane ale umanismului socialist”.

³¹ My translation. Original: “Că lipsa idealului generează indiferențismul, dezumanizează și împinge la crime este un adevăr incontestabil, demonstrate de istoria individualismului modern, de probe pe care le furnizează Dostoyevski însuși; că atesimul ar echivala cu lipsa obligatorie a oricărei *idei superioare*, deci s-ar confunda cu individualismul burghez, este o gravă prejudecată, pe care luptele, jertfele, idealurile revoluționarilor consecvenți le-au infirmat în repetate rânduri”.

Since it has no connection with the 1974 edition, as it is a result of the post-communist age, I found no relevance in placing it along with my discussion on Ion Ianoși's prefaces.

Before reaching the conclusion of this paper, it is important to mention that, both in Dostoevsky and Tolstoy's cases, the translation itself does not bear major marks of the foreignizing process Sean Cotter discussed. Due to the two translators, a domestication practice is visible, that is an attempt to transpose the authors' discourse in a language familiar to Romanian readers³². The strategies of domination are common in the translations of the first decades of Communism, but they seem to have migrated in the paratextual space of the post-60s translations. Ion Ianoși infiltrated them in his critical discourse therefore making a shift from the linguistic foreignization to an interpretative one. This phenomenon also reflects the state's level of interference in the cultural matters: while in the 50s its intrusion was violent and easily visible, in the following period its activity became more subtle using softer mechanisms and strategies, from maintaining a continuous uncertain atmosphere to delivering a subversive *manual of interpretation* like these three prefaces.

A more general conclusion of my paper is related to the importance the context has in discussing translation related subjects, an issue Sean Cotter emphasizes in his study. In order to understand the strategies staged in the paratext, it was useful to have a general look at the regime's imposition regarding autobiographical literature and the translation policies. It was also important to know the professional and ideological background of the author of the paratexts and then to identify several key-words of that specific historical phenomenon that could reveal the meaning of the discourse that introduced to the Romanian readers the confessions of two iconic authors of Russian literature and Soviet propaganda.

³² Referring to this subject, in the 2011 editor's note, Ianoși mentions the changes that the translation process encountered from one edition to the other: "the main successive changes in translation concern its stylistic dimension. In thirty years, both language and its handler evolve. A certain too strict obedience towards the original needed to be tamed not bringing prejudice to the meaning, but improving it" (m.t) (Tolstoy 2011 6).

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