

On hate and the typology of the misfit in Dostoevsky's and Salinger's Works

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Abstract

As part of the death drive, hate, so prevalent in world literature as the natural state of so many characters, has led the creative spirits, preoccupied invariably with metamorphosis and ascension, to produce genuine masterpieces. Whether malignant or benign (socially justified), hate, along with its many shapes and forms, generates attitudes which characterize a fundamental concept in Dostoevsky's fiction, namely the antihero. Displaying typical features that are traceable throughout literature from the great Russian author on, the character dominated by hate withdraws from the world, thus fueling his alienation.

1. Introduction

The magnitude of American postmodernism cannot be fully understood unless one considers analysing the impact Dostoevsky had on the entire American literature. Archetypal characters and symbolic actions that are characteristic of Dostoevsky's writing have often been taken over as such by the American culture (and not only) or developed into frameworks and full-blown characters that are notable for their psychological authenticity. A writer like no other, Dostoevsky skillfully employs all the instruments underlying mimetic labour as he gradually builds a sense of time and of waiting by means of a personal experience, that of a death sentence that proved to be false. The Russian author, however, does not always proceed from the exterior towards the artistic filter; an equal number of examples shows he also proceeds from the interior, via introspection. Dostoevsky's first novel, *The Double*, which, to all appearances, brought him the greatest disappointment, clearly testifies (leaving aside Gogol's influence, which Dostoevsky openly acknowledged) to the profundity of an author who seems to be writing a treatise on inner splitting.

The Dostoevskian psychological typologies are genuine reference points in world literature which created an influence that is practically impossible to quantify. If we take into account but a few names, like Kafka, Faulkner, Hemingway, more recently, Salinger, Ellis or Pamuk, we can identify symbolic actions and human prototypes in which one can always recognize characters created by the Russian author. The "obsessive metaphor" which focuses on the alienation specific to a group of desk clerks can be identified as a leitmotif throughout world literature, after Gogol and Dostoevsky. Not only in Kafka's works, but also in those of Bret Easton Ellis, who almost equates group with alienation, do we find that collective framework which is so favourable to inner splitting. Whether we talk about *Glamorama* or about *American Psycho* (two of Easton Ellis's most critically acclaimed novels), a feeling of estrangement and identity loss appears almost instantly in case of urban (or simply social) agglomeration.

As a result, detachment does not represent a symbolic action, seen as an exclusive part of a scenario in which the protagonist tries to fit into a group or already belongs to a group, for the seeds of alienation can be found in each individual as well, not in the group only. Whether he belongs to an exclusive, nice, desirable group, based on fashion and obsession with looks, as put forward by Ellis in *Glamorama*, or to

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a group of successful young people who are, as depicted in *American Psycho*, at the height of a career in which finances are not even a topic of debate, the main character displays an unheard-of moral elasticity while borrowing from the group to which he belongs the most important features, usually characterised by superficiality. The difficulties that a given type of character with a tragic destiny has to face (such as the implacable feeling of underachievement and alienation, a kind of misfortune that, in Russian literature at least, is often correlated with the uninspired choices of people tormented by social integration) are very similar to the ones laid down by Gogol and Dostoevsky.

J.D. Salinger's character, Holden Caulfield, from Salinger's best-known novel, *The Catcher in the Rye*, is exemplary in this respect. The social element in alienation is preserved down to the minutest detail, as Holden, the teenager who recounts the events in the novel, is repeatedly expelled from school. Adolescent psychology, which lies at the very center of the novel, projects its protagonist onto a universal typology, comprising frustrated individuals, chronically incapable of achieving satisfaction, socially or personally speaking. On much the same trajectory, from a psychological point of view, Dostoevsky had, long before Salinger, done some genuine incursions into similar behavioral models. From Arkady Andreyevitch Makarovitch Dolgoruky from *The Raw Youth* to Alyosha Karamazov and Smerdyakov from *The Brothers Karamazov*, the Russian author kept a latent ingredient in devising young characters: a structural lack of steadiness, which comes in the shape of a pursuit, of an exploration on a mental or ideological level as well as on the more concrete level of corporeality.

Mention must be made at this point of the fact that the characters enumerated above seem animated by an irresolvable frustration which cannot be linked to a fixed, concrete scenario which generates an often conflictual discontentment. Despite the fact that the Romanian translation of Salinger's text that we analysed fails to render the conflictual nature of the protagonist, in the original text Salinger uses the word "hate" and other derived words over 50 times, usually in connection with Holden or the way he presents to the world various situations or the only feeling he could resort to. We are, therefore, considering here a type of hate which is perfectly anchored in adolescent psychology, and not a mere contempt for uncomfortable or unknown scenarios. This hate is recalled above all linguistically, therefore superficially, by a character that wishes to be perceived as older than he is, to be accepted and appreciated for some kind of worth he has not yet managed to prove, despite his hopes and expectations. The word and the feeling refers to hate as a fundamental emotion related to the death drive, but the hero's actions, with genuine anti-hero characteristics, show, in fact, that although the frustrated teenager chooses a tough word, *hate*, he does not seem to be aware of its content.

2. A universal psychological type

Arkady's mental instability and the fact that he is always ready to radically change his convictions and ideals can also be spotted in the way Alyosha and Smerdyakov are shown as captive in a permanent vacillation. The youngest Karamazov almost loses his faith when he runs away from the monastery, after abbot Zosima's body begins to decompose, something the boy saw as incompatible with the religious imagery he had built around the priest and confessor who had acted as a father figure to him. Moreover, caught between monastic life and social life, the young Alyosha feels more often than not attracted to group dynamics. Among children, for instance, much like Myshkin, yet another type of unstable young man (although the character in *The Idiot* is mostly characterised by an uncommon physical fragility), Alyosha becomes ensnared in events which will invariably lead him to his family and to moral corruption.

This Dostoevskian pattern is perfectly adapted by Salinger to fit Holden, as quick to change frameworks and as fond of rescuing the children's universe. Alyosha Karamazov, to a much more extent than Arkady Andreyevitch Makarovitch from *The Raw Youth*, but along prince Myshkin, seem to be genuine models for the typology of the one living in a Jungian psychology of the shadow, touched by a genuinely tragic destiny. We will here emphasize the way in which the protagonist of *The Idiot* recalled the time spent abroad, especially in the company of children: "I was among them just as an outsider, and I passed

all four years of my life there among them. I wished for nothing better" (Dostoevsky, 2018, p. 121), very similar to the way in which Alyosha is often described among children, coordinating them, finding himself in their ideology, which is uncomplicated and uncontaminated by the pettiness of group psychology. In addition, the ending of *The Brothers Karamazov*, leaving aside little Iliusha's death, focuses on both the bread archetype, with its allusions to regeneration, and the entire children's universe, with its specific naivety, with its unbeatable vitality. The last scene of the novel is eloquent in this respect: "«Well, let's go! And we go like this now, hand in hand. And eternally so, all our lives hand in hand! Hurrah for Karamazov!» Kolya cried once more ecstatically, and once more all the boys joined in his exclamation" (Dostoevsky, 1992, p. 659).

There is this image of the youngest brother in the Karamazov family: surrounded by children, re-filling through them his reservoir of authentic feelings, in the absence of reflexes specific to an individual accustomed with the "games" and plots of the social group, but also guiding the little ones towards a Christian way of life, hence preoccupied with the future of his micro- as well as macrocosm. This image can be sensed behind Holden's fantasy, created by Salinger as part of a frustrated, displaced typology, animated by a pursuit with echoes from the inside, but also from the outside of the self. Asked what he would like to do when he grows up, the protagonist replies, with his unmistakable, never serious and still ideologically unstable style, as if daydreaming, and creates what is possibly the most beautiful metaphor of the entire American postmodernism:

"...I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody's around – nobody big, I mean – except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff – I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and *catch* them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all. [...] but that's the only thing I'd really like to be" (Salinger, 1951, p. 224).

Antiquity was actually the one to have placed the ugly and the dysmorphic in a context full of significance, pointing to the abyss hidden in the marshiest waters, so different from the clear ones, which comply with the aesthetic laws. In Enkidu's savagery (*The Epic of Gilgamesh*) or in Apuleius's imagined metamorphosis (*The Golden Donkey*), we can identify similar forms of contamination of the human horizon, if it comes in contact with something that belongs to the animal side, something apparently savage and apparently incompatible with culture and civilisation. Here is, for instance, Enkidu's description, as made by the gods out of clay so as to become Gilgamesh's equal, but particularly to ensure the almighty king's balance. The clay dropped into wilderness takes a shape that is specific to the place: "All his body is matted with hair, he bears long tresses like those of a woman: the hair of his head grows thickly as barley, he knows not a people, nor even a country" (George, 1999, p. 5).

Enkidu's antique awkwardness finds similar shapes in the modern typologies sketched by various authors. Characterized by various flaws or idiosyncrasies, often caught in a constant diseased paradigm, the protagonists have social skills that are deficient, if not absent altogether. In this context, we should remember that Prince Myshkin is never able to understand the subtleties of group communication, which is why he is turned into a stereotype and considered an idiot due to a permanent recourse to uncomfortable truths (a feature which makes him similar to the trickster as an archetypal character). Arkady, in his turn, indulges in concocting big plans only to change his mind soon after, obviously at the mercy of urges which denote immaturity and superficiality, while Salinger's Holden seems to be stuck in the trickster typology, whose tragic destiny is to repeatedly disappoint anybody with expectations. As a result, social relationships seem to be, for both Dostoevsky and Salinger, the true measure of the heroes' alienation.

Art, and mainly literature, have therefore from the very beginning realized that the forms which are aesthetically less acceptable may contain a potential as generous as that of positive characters and symbols. The evil and the ugly seem to have always included a straight path to catharsis and, beyond catharsis,

an obligation to show the world readily identifiable figures and scenarios, which most of the receivers intimately experienced long before coming into contact with the work of art. It is along these lines, inaugurated by the universal, exploratory artistic spirit, that Dostoevsky erected his great monument dedicated to the antihero. The evil in association with the ugly, and sometimes with the beautiful, represents a reference point in the Russian author's work that is impossible to overlook. The very realities of the world he lived in and which he experienced objectively, either through the press or intimately (through the false death sentence, playing the roulette and the virtual incapacity to make a living, the loss of a son) placed Dostoevsky in the vicinity of a morbid imaginary, which generates scenarios the antihero cannot be absent from. As compared to his other novels, *The Raw Youth* wavers between the two dimensions of Dostoevsky's writing: masterpiece and failure.

With its main character, Arkady Andreyevitch Marakovich, or, in short, Dolgoruky, the novel is built around paternity, which the young man searches for tirelessly, frustrated with the distance which separates him from Versilov and which is impossible to get rid of: "And it must be said that it was just at this time that my perplexity about him was greatest. [...] but it's just about that that I'm writing this whole account..." (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 439). The psychological type of the bastard is commendably illustrated by the writer, especially in connection with what Robert (1983) remarked, for good reason, in everything Dostoevsky ever wrote. The two types of characters, which give rise to two separate entities in the novel, the *hero* and the *bastard* (Robert, 1983, p. 80), can be alternately identified in Dostoevsky's writing, so imbued with specific symbols and symbolic activities. The young Arkady, stigmatised as a bastard (a mark of shame in which he often takes refuge), finds its echo in Holden's behaviour in the groups to which he strives to belong. Without being a typical "bastard", like Arkady or Smerdyakov, Salinger's teenager goes around people, either old or young, being different and feeling different from them.

The preoccupation with social relationships seems to characterize both protagonists, Arkady and Holden, equally, but the magnitude of their failure shows their incapacity to maintain relationships with other people. Dominated by feelings typical of teenagers, always in conflict with the people who love him unconditionally, Arkady seems incapable of constancy in his choices and resolutions. Busy with an "idea" which, though concealed from the others, is nevertheless easily anticipated by those willing to understand the superficial teenager, and fully devoted to this idea up to a point, he does not hesitate to abandon it effortlessly, a fact which recalls the same typology of the bastard, readily adaptable, not based on his ideals, but based on external stimuli or desiderata of the group.

On the other hand, Holden, as a distant echo of the same typology, evinces the same difficulties in establishing social relationships. Irresponsible (a trickster-like feature), the young American refuses everything that is not to his liking, regardless of the consequences. Elected captain of the fencing team ("I was the goddam manager of the fencing team. Very big deal."), he ends up losing all the equipment on the way to the match ("Nobody won. [...] I left all the foils and equipment and stuff on the goddam subway"). (Salinger, 1951, p. 6). The same sloppiness can be observed in young Arkady's case, who is incapable of assessing the risk of losing the compromising letter sewn in the lining of his coat. Apparently driven by irrational impulses: to talk, revealing thus sensitive information which might harm him, too; to drink; to react disproportionately, thus lacking the ability to adapt his attitude or answers to other people's attitude, Arkady illustrates the trickster archetype, stuck in a complete fidelity to the concept of truth (as perceived and formulated by a teenager) and an inability to understand the world, with all its pettiness. It is not Arkady's carelessness that leads to the theft of the letter (a plot that is, anyway, below Dostoevsky's typical themes and metaphors), but his unique way of perceiving realities and the people who builds them. The teenager avid for social acceptance and frustrated all along due to the way he is perceived ("In short he behaved to me as though I were the greenest of raw youths, which I was hardly able to endure...") (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 22) is dominated by his own unconscious. Holden, too, tends to react in complete opposition to what one might expect from him.

We must emphasize the fact that, in using the concept of "trickster-like tragic destiny" (obviously, referring to Arkady and Holden), we aimed at following precisely the way in which these protagonists do

not exclude themselves from the scenarios in which they appear as disappointing, by failing to fall into a given behavioral or ideological pattern. They are, therefore, not the ones betrayed (but their parents may be, for instance), and we can also speak of failure felt on a very intimate level by those who are carried away by events and are completely aboulitic. As a result, subtle elements, which can be found galore in the poetics of the double in Dostoevsky's works, are present in *The Raw Youth*, suggesting some kind of distance between the hero and his actions, which he often does not even acknowledge. Just as Goliadkin plans to react in a certain way, only to do exactly the opposite, so too Arkady gets carried away by his unconscious reflexes. "I had a longing to tell some one, or to make a scene, or to fight, or even to have a cry – I can't tell which, but I went up to Tatyana Pavlovna's." (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 163).

Unjustified fear, that Dostoevsky turned into a genuine literary monument, by playing extreme anxiety at the centre of his heroes' feelings and inner processes, can be found in Salinger's character, too, thus attesting to Holden's appurtenance to an antihero typology. An unexpected knock on the door will always be, in Dostoevsky's imaginary, associated with fear: "I was pretty scared. I'm very yellow about those things." (Salinger, 1951, p. 124).

We should remark, at this point, that psychoanalysis showed, by means of Freud's extensive works, that irrationality and, generally speaking, everything that cannot be justified in relation to a thought or a feeling, comes from the inside. The lode the two novels, *The Raw Youth* and *The Catcher in the Rye*, have in common, relies on the morbid imaginary which characterizes moral corruption. Arkady is beguiled by the voice of the world he initially rejects, and ends up being more and more involved in a petty group, dominated by the verb *to own*, while Holden, as a distant echo of this archetype, belongs to a corrupt system he tries to evade. After all, the way in which this young man takes a refuge in the imaginary, becoming a hero who rescues children from falling into a chasm, suggests the same symbolic line of interpretation.

The two characters are, however, different, if looked at as two examples in world literature: what distinguishes them is the way they hurry to infuse morbid feelings (particularly hate) into social relationships. Either admitted as such or disguised, hate is often seen as most suitable for a given scenario. Arkady, although lacking life experience, often comes to the conclusion that "I have always hated that sort of nastiness all my life and always shall..." (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 11). Further on, the teenager displays a puerile indifference towards the opposite sex, to whom he cannot be faithful in the first place: "It is true that I know nothing about women, and I don't want to either, for I shall always despise that sort of thing, and I have sworn I will all my life" (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 11). Moreover, ready to adopt ideas or an ideology which focuses on morbid feelings, Arkady produces scenarios in order to support his superficial beliefs. Without openly acknowledging that he hates elegant women, the young man becomes really passionate about it:

"They walk along the parade with trains half a yard long behind them, sweeping up the dust. It's a pleasant thing to walk behind them: you must run to get in front of them, or jump on one side [...]. And what's more it's silk, [...] when their husbands get five hundred roubles a year in the Senate [...] I've cursed them aloud and abused them (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 32).

We can see thus that Dostoevsky manages to associate (in a very direct and atypical way) the typology of the adolescent with distinctive features such as *inconstancy*, *superficiality*, *impulsiveness*. Arkady's contempt for women dressing fashionably, so harshly criticized, disappears all of a sudden, as soon as there is something to gain from it (financially). He does not hesitate to help a lady ("handed it to the lady, taking off my hat") (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 51), a type of lady he used to describe in hateful terms: "...a lady came out to get into the carriage. She was young, handsome and wealthy-looking, gorgeously dressed in silk and velvet, with a train more than two yards long" (p. 51).

But Holden Caulfield is, in his turn, built on the same baselines which provide the hero with the same attitude towards femininity. For example, the American teenager shows the same kind of disdain, which

only serves to conceal uncertainty and insecurity: “The trouble is, I get to feeling sorry for them. I mean most girls are so dumb and all” (Salinger, 1951, p. 121). To a greater extent than Dostoevsky’s, Salinger’s typically postmodern hero is associated with psychological reflexes with a certain symbolic detente, suggesting feelings barely visible to the untrained eye, not used with the latent and manifest meaning of life. When he comes face to face with a prostitute, whom he discusses with a lift attendant and whom he accepts, Holden goes numb from a sensorial point of view: “I was getting more and more nonchalant as it went along” (p. 122). As he looks at the girl who enters his room, he projects his reactions and feelings onto her: “She crossed her legs and started jiggling this one foot up and down. She was very nervous for a prostitute. She really was. I think it was because she was young as hell. She was around my age” (p. 123). In other words, the teenager ascribes to the woman the dominant feelings he had at the time. We consider this a significant detail, as both Dostoevsky and Salinger place their characters in “experimental” situations, with a view to emphasizing psychological reflexes or feelings specific to the death drive (which, as Freud’s psychoanalysis claims, lies in the unconscious, along with the life drive). As observed by Vasile Dem. Zamfirescu, some people seem to be “haunted by a demonic fate: benefactors are systematically and hatefully abandoned by the ones who benefitted from their gratitude, men who end up always being betrayed by their friends...” (Zamfirescu, 2001, p. 73).

The hate teenagers use to protect themselves from a world they cannot fully understand is also a part of the same death drive, which Freud calls *thanatic*. Stuck in various ideological and behavioral patterns, both Arkady and Holden only feel safe when despising something, which helps them move apart from all scenarios that may be uncomfortable. The best proof in this respect lies in Dostoevsky’s text, and in the way in which, sheltered by hate, the characters built a comfortable universe for themselves, in which frustration is toned down. Without a Christian vein, which sometimes overlaps with the personality of the characters, like Alyosha and Myshkin, Dostoevsky gets almost exclusively carried away by the morbid imaginary. The teenager, whether we are talking about Smerdyakov or about Arkady, is linked to a crisis for which the refuge in the self seems like the only available solution.

From a psychoanalytic perspective, we will propose a hypothesis which connects the typology of the bastard with the one imagined by Marthe Robert, based on its unhealthy extrenalizations. Smerdyakov’s tantrums, well-known by his close friends, clearly used in order to manipulate and hide criminal intent, has a direct counterpart, if we were to look back, chronologically, in Dostoevsky’s fiction, in the illness which affects Arkady after his public humiliation and his rejection from a cricle of roulette players. Accused of stealing or of cheating, with his morality being questioned (“Persons have been admitted without introduction! Who brought him in? Who is he?”) (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 354) and his lineage being mocked, the young player becomes alienated, like all the other characters in Dostoevsky’s works that are socially rejected. Rudely chased away from a group he would have liked to be a part of, Mr. Goliadkin, the main character of *The Double*, wanders the streets deeply affected by the aggressive reaction of people of quality, believed to come from the high society. This is what triggers his inner splitting, a brilliant metaphor which shows its complexity much later, when Dostoevsky’s entire oeuvre can be analysed. Chased thus away from a circle in which he felt safe and *everybody else’s equal*, as far as gambling was concerned, Arkady wanders almost as much as old Goliadkin. “I was almost running”, says the text about the turmoil the young man goes through when he faces rejection *again*, when he finds himself without his only emotional support, indirectly obtained through the very appurtenance to the group of gamblers:

“And as I wandered about the streets, not noticing where I was going, and indeed I don’t know whether I meant to run anywhere in particular [...]. And strange to say, it seemed to me that everything about me, even the air I breathed, was from another planet [...] Everything had become suddenly remote, it had all suddenly become NOT MINE.” (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 356).

Driven along the town’s deserted streets by an acute feeling of rejection, having to face a group which did not offer him the support and acknowledgment he was expecting (“Tell them about me, tell them

about me!”) (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 354), Arkady allows himself to be entirely overwhelmed by the death drive, by destruction, the moment he intends to set on fire a great amount of wood (“I only know that I suddenly felt a great longing to do it. [...] The frost will make it burn all the better...”) (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 358). As a result, it is only in such a context, as the one created by the gifted Russian author, that we can see more clearly the way in which Salinger, too, designs a character that is equally marked by reflexes and attitudes about which there is barely any information. Without anatomising human feelings, like Dostoevsky, who permanently probes into his characters in order to reveal their true nature, Salinger settles for descriptions which, though laconic, display a similarity with the psychological typology proposed by Dostoevsky. With the same feeling of social rejection, which, much like Arkady, he substantially adds to, Holden drifts around, overwhelmed with feelings we would not automatically link to his age. Feeling “so damn depressed and lonesome”, he gets carried away by the dominant emotion: “It wasn’t far over to the park, and I didn’t have anyplace else special to go to – I didn’t even know where I was going to *sleep* yet – so I went...” (Salinger, 1951, p. 198–199). Without following a specific financial goal (which seems, however, important in the first part of the novel *The Raw Youth*, where Arkady is haunted by a secret, but quickly and effortlessly foreseeable idea), the typical behaviour of the gambler lacking will and lucidity when facing the roulette is actually a result of the death drive, which governs the protagonist’s actions. In itself, the nature of his idea, “to become a Rotschild” (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 86), so easily understood by Versilov, the father who did not acknowledge him as his son (“my notion is that he wants ... to become a Rothschild, or something of the kind, and shut himself up in his grandeur...”) (p. 118) suggests a kind of superficiality the character is not even aware of.

The relationship between hate and death drive offers, in Dostoevsky’s works (even if we are talking about his least acclaimed novel), a good context for an analytical, undiluted discourse about the psychology of the individual going through a crisis. Always at the extremes, the human types proposed by Dostoevsky correspond to universal prototypes, and the authenticity of the death drive, so visible in his works, is anchored in the author’s dramatic biography. If some young characters from Dostoevsky’s works, like Myshkin or Alyosha, are given prominence as martyrs, if looked at from a Christian point of view, as always vacillating between what is good, what is beautiful, what is true, the very lack of a spiritual register allows for morbidity to manifest freely and indomitably. Important aspects of the antihero typology can be found in the protagonist of *The Raw Youth*: the weakness (both physical and moral) of the character from the *subterranean* seems to have been imprinted on the young man as well. We could say, on the other hand, that a thorough and genuine concept of the antihero can be discussed only by reference to Dostoevsky’s entire oeuvre. “It is a strange characteristic of mine that I am capable of hating places and things as though they were people” (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 151), says Arkady, and the similarity with the *subterranean* hero is even more striking in the passages about the young man’s cowardice: “but I did not get up, and did not come out; I didn’t dare, I was in a most despicable funk” *putem citi mai departe despre lașitatea tînărului: „...n-am ieșit din ascunzătoare, fiindcă n-am îndrăznit; de frică, m-am purtat ca un laș, ca un ticălos”* (p. 165). As drive towards destruction, the hate Arkady feels towards objects and the way Holden forgets (a genuine Freudian slip) all the equipment for the fencing competition do come from the unconscious. As the reputed psychologist Leonard Gavrilu observes, hate is describable by means of its primordial relationship of “the subject with the real objects from the outside world” (Chemama, 1997, p. 366), but also with the specific social encounters, impossible to avoid.

The young man’s inability to form opinions of complex concepts can be traced along the entire text. Attracted by opposite forces, sometimes towards love and compassion, at other times towards contempt and hate, Arkady is almost pedagogically designed, without glossing any emotion over. The young man is equally incapable of controlling the sinuous process of ageing and cynically and immaturely admits that “most of all I worried my mother” (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 374). Unconditionally tolerated and loved, by the maternal imago at least, Arkady is caught between opposite reactions. In tears, but comforted by his mother, he accepts her displays of affection, but his description shows the same turmoil inherent to ageing: “...she [...] stooped down and began kissing me. I restrained myself and endured it, but at that instant I

positively hated her” (p. 375).

We will therefore make a note at this point of the fact that hate is the only emotion closest to love. It is behind it that both Arkady and Holden tend to hide, to take refuge from a world the laws of which are hard to internalize. Hate dominates the emotional profile of Dostoevsky’s characters, being the teenager’s first reaction to unpleasant or frustrating contexts. The death drive which dominates Arkady is, as mentioned before, visible in the way the hero hastily assumes a feeling that is so close to that of love. For example, “there was a glow of hate in my heart” (Dostoevsky, 1916, p. 392) or “hating him at that instant with my whole soul” (p. 464) represent identical reactions of defence in different social contexts.

Holden, on the other hand, embodies the typology of the misfit who takes refuge in words he mistakes for realities. In a text not as large as Dostoevsky’s, Salinger uses over 50 times the word “hate” and other derived words. Despite the fact that the Romanian translator of Salinger’s novel does not preserve this detail, and chooses to replace “ură” [hate] with synonyms which suggest frustration, vexation or simply rejection, Holden Caulfield remains a major reference point in American literature when it comes to the antihero and his characteristics. Following Dostoevsky’s typology, Holden is too quick to hate all those willing to listen to him as well as all the elements of the world he tries to discover. For example, Salinger develops the teenager typology out of small but relevant details, such as his attitude towards the cinema (“If there’s one thing I hate, it’s the movies”) (Salinger, 1951, p. 4), whereas the Romanian translation focuses, partly for good reason, on a totally different feeling: “Dacă e ceva de care mi-e silă sînt filmele” (Salinger, 2001, p. 4) [If there is something I’m sick of, it’s the movies. (back-translation mine)].

In another context, that of the expulsion from school, Holden speaks about his forthcoming departure, meditating on being separated from the place and the people (“I mean I’ve left schools and places I didn’t even know I was leaving them. I hate that”) (Salinger, 1951, p. 7), whereas the Romanian translator prefers “nu pot să sufăr asta” (Salinger, 2001, p. 9) [I can’t stand that. (translation mine)] for “I hate that.” The examples could go on. “Grand. There’s a word I really hate” (Salinger, 1951, p. 14), says the teenager, listening to his teacher, which is translated as “...un cuvînt pe care nu pot să-l sufăr” (Salinger, 2001, p. 15) [a word I can’t stand (my back-translation)]. There is, however, proof, beyond the accuracy of the translation, which shows an intimate apprehension of the universe inhabited by the American character. Faced with his own essay, which the teacher reads to him, the young man reacts predictably: “He stopped reading and put my paper down. I was beginning to sort of hate him.” (Salinger, 2001, p. 18). The hero of *The Catcher in the Rye* hates urban hills, too general responses from his interlocutors, sleeping when he’s not tired, fist fights or some of his colleagues. The more general and extended the action of the feeling, the more superficial it is, as most of his reactions and attitudes, except for the fantasy in which he rescues children on the brink of a chasm. Holden’s hate, just like the one felt by Arkady, though taking different shapes, does not place him in incompatibility with the world, with the people or with the elements onto which he projects it. In a puerile rather than grown-up register, caught in moments of metamorphosis and turmoil, the heroes are too quick to reject scenarios or people which they find frustrating. The brilliance of the two authors, able to play in full authenticity the role of the frustrated young man who mentally, passively, therefore with minimal aggressivity (given that hate suggests an active passion) rejects everything he dislikes (yet another feature of puerile behaviour), becomes visible in the small details in the two heroes’ inner lives.

3. Conclusions

We are therefore dealing with two similar psychological types, coming from different times as well as different cultures. Arkady and Holden belong to that category of misfits who find refuge in hate every time the social context frustrates them. Selfishly opposing, as part of an infantile reflex, any kind of inconvenience they may feel, the two protagonists end up being sad. Overwhelmed by this sadness and visibly numbed in their capacity to perceive the world, Arkady and Holden are genuine prototypes in world literature. The subtle relation between hate and sadness becomes, in the two novels, more and more

visible as soon as the image of absent paternity comes in, an image the two protagonists cannot ignore. Obstructed by social prejudice, which ends up altering his behaviour in a masochistic fashion (the teenager acts submissively in front of some of his colleagues, whom he actually despises), Arkady is permanently preoccupied with finding his own father, in person. In search of identity, usually hyperbolizing images or tales related to his biological father, the hero gradually slips into inner conflicts, all the more so as it becomes clear, towards the end of the novel, that the father and the son are in love with the same woman, an all too predictable stake for as complex a writer as Dostoevski.

Holden, too, is searching for a father figure (although his situation is different from Arkady's): he is interested in finding a father figure in the teachers he visits and with whom he behaves more like a son than a pupil recently expelled. *Dicționarul de psihanaliză* [The Dictionary of Psychoanalysis] links hate to the father figure by means of the much debated Oedipal hypothesis: "father's hate lies at the root of the symbolic law of interdiction, that is of social connection." (Chemama, 1997, p. 367, translation mine). Holden's conflict with authority, in the same psychoanalytical vein, evokes a social pattern. Thus, the feeling of incompatibility with the schools he goes through, only to be expelled, the inner or open conflicts with the other colleagues, the acute feelings of loneliness and sadness redolent of abandonment, but also of the need for physical companionship, for being with other people (e.g. the inappropriate dialogue with the mother of a former colleague, the invitation he addresses to a taxi driver to spend time together) – all of these evoke the same father figure the young man has unconscious feelings for. The end of the novel places Holden Caulfield on the last stage in his inner metamorphosis. Determined to abandon his family and home for good, stuck in a feeling of hate which envelops most of his social relationships, Holden changes his mind under the influence of the only person who seems to have preserved some kind of influence on his beliefs and feelings – his younger sister. "But you're wrong about that hating business. I mean about hating football players and all. You really are. [...] I hated them once in a while – I admit it – but it doesn't last too long, is what I mean." (Salinger, 1951, p. 243), he says, caught between his decision to leave and the suffering he causes his sister, thus admitting that hate had been real in his discourse all along.

On the brink of the chasm, Holden remains the Holden he had imagined, for the sake of his sister. Overcoming the crisis and the failure at yet another college, he feels for the first time, standing next to his sister, soaked to the skin in the pouring rain, something that is not hate or sadness: "I felt so damn happy all of a sudden, the way old Phoebe kept going around and around. I was damn near bawling, I felt so damn happy, if you want to know the truth" (Salinger, 1951, p. 275).

We would have expected from Dostoevsky, too, a similar denouement, able to offer the heroes, so minutely and intimately investigated and presented to the reader, the right context to overcome their crisis. Salinger, on the other hand, belonging to another culture and claiming faithfulness to the cathartic principle, frees his character from resentments and drives him forward in time, for many other generations of readers.

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