

**Making the Writer Visible:  
the Dostoevsky Museum in St. Petersburg**

Anna Boldyreva

Submitted to Central European University

Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

Supervisors: Alexandra Kowalski

Daniel Monterescu

Budapest, Hungary

2009

## **Abstract**

This project challenges the traditional notion of a museum as a special place that is held by many museum professionals and museum goers, as well as museum sociologists. Instead, it suggests approaching a museum as a set of practices performed by the people who work there. The peculiarity of these practices comes not from some specific qualities of a museum enterprise but from the tools that museum workers have at their disposal. In case of the Dostoevsky Museum such tools are the personal belongings of the writer, by means of which they make such an abstract notion as Dostoevsky's genius personality visible and their statements about him credible.

**Key words:** museum, material objects, personality, genius.

Pushkin was sitting at his place thinking: "I am a genius, that's ok. Gogol is a genius too.

But Tolstoy is a genius as well; and Dostoevsky, may he rest in peace, - too!

When will be the end to all this?"

And at that moment it all ended.

**- Daniil Kharms -**

## Contents

Introduction .....	1
Chapter 1. Sociology as a de-mystification project.....	4
1.0. Mystification vs. de-mystification .....	4
1.1. First to de-mystify a laboratory and then the rest of the world .....	5
1.2. De-mystifying Dostoevsky's Tea .....	9
1.2.1. Who is Dostoevsky? .....	10
1.2.2. What is a museum? .....	12
Chapter 2. Following Dostoevsky.....	16
2.0. Methods.....	16
2.1. Dostoevsky and his five posthumous incarnations.....	18
2.1.1. Dostoevsky as a religious philosopher.....	19
2.1.2. Dostoevsky as a revolutionary .....	20
2.1.3. Dostoevsky as a reactionary writer.....	22
2.1.4. Dostoevsky as a great writer.....	23
2.1.5. Dostoevsky as an indisputable classic.....	24
Chapter 3. Making Dostoevsky Visible.....	27
3.1. From personal belongings to museum exhibits.....	27
3.2. Visualization of a writer .....	30
Chapter 4. Following the museum workers.....	36
4.0. Following the founding fathers.....	36
4.1. Following the tour guides .....	39
4.2. Following the museum researchers .....	43
4.3. Following the museum managers .....	45
Conclusion.....	48
Acknowledgements .....	50
References .....	51

## Introduction

On Kuznechny lane in St. Petersburg there is a place called the Dostoevsky Museum. If someone dares to enter it they might be surprised by the things they will find there: a hat in a glass box, expired bills and a clock constantly showing 8:36 PM. If the visitors walk around the place further sooner or later they will come up to the door gate leading to what is obviously someone's study room, since one can see there a bookshelf, a chair and a massive desk with some papers on it. One can see the room, but one cannot enter it as the way is blocked by a rope. It might look a bit strange because from the door gate one can clearly see a glass of tea standing on the desk. Would it not be an adequate question then to ask: if no one is in the room and no one can enter the room, for whom is there this glass of tea? Since the visitors know they are in the Dostoevsky Museum, this can lead them to believe that it is Dostoevsky who drinks tea here. It seems reasonable. As the visitor might know, for example, from the tour guide, Dostoevsky used to make strong tea and take it to his study room, where he smoked, walked around and wrote his great novels. However, we can hardly accept this answer as it is a well-known fact that Dostoevsky died more than a hundred years ago. Is this situation then not a bit strange? Dostoevsky is dead while his tea is obviously waiting for him on his desk in his study room. I doubt that anyone truly believes that Dostoevsky will someday come and drink it. At the same time we have to face a fact – the glass of tea is there. Social scientists often have hard time convincing other social actors that their work is not always useless. Not this time, however. Of course, if people are interested in mystical experience and communication with spirits, they have a full right to enjoy the Dostoevsky Museum as it is; but if for some strange reason they are not satisfied with the mysterious evidences and references to the unobservable entities – social scientists can definitely be here of some help, since "the task of the sociologist is to demystify", as Philip Abrams put it (Abrams 1977).

In the past decades the museum has become a mainstream topic in the sociological literature. Such questions as what is displayed in a museum, who decides what to display and who comes to see what is displayed gave rise to many debates (Fyfe 2006). The great academic enthusiasm that these issues triggered during the 1980s can be explained by the revelation that museum is not a value-free institution whose only purpose is to promote knowledge, but rather a highly political enterprise (Macdonald 2006). This revelation resulted in the fact that if previously ideological agenda of the museum was neglected, now it has become overestimated. Firstly, this quick transformation of the image of a museum from a neutral institution to the centre of ideological propaganda guides the research to treat it as if something special happens inside. Secondly, it tends to be too quick in seeing the order of display inside a museum as a mere reflection of the political concerns from its outside.

The present project problematizes the notion of a museum as a special place and claims that there is no natural divide between its inside and outside. The focus here is not on a museum as such but on its contribution to the production of statements about Dostoevsky. Since his death in 1881 different actors have exchanged claims about the writer, thus negotiating the meanings of his texts and the status of his legacy. It is by following this constantly changing Dostoevsky that my analysis brings me to the point when the new museum was opened in Leningrad<sup>1</sup> in 1971. What made the establishment of the new museum possible? And how have the activities of its workers contributed to the production of Dostoevsky? These are the questions that will be discussed in the next four chapters.

I start by reassembling two common sense notions: Dostoevsky and Museum. Theoretical reflections of Michel Foucault and Bruno Latour enable me to approach them as sets of practices rather than mystic entities. This conceptual operation of de-mystification allows me firstly to

---

<sup>1</sup> The name of St. Petersburg between 1924-1991

delineate Dostoevsky as a series of statements that were produced in different circumstances of the Russian history throughout the 20th century and then to analyze the Museum – as a result of activities pursued by the people who work there. Using this framework I tackle then the question of what happened when Dostoevsky and the Museum met in 1971 and what this new association has made possible. On the basis of my ethnographic observations I show how the museum workers make an abstract notion of Dostoevsky's genius personality visible. I claim that Dostoevsky production does not know the border between the inside and outside of a museum, and museum workers participate in it along with many other actors convincing the others in the validity of their claims. What makes their contribution peculiar is the tools that they have at their disposal to convince their visitors. These tools are the material objects that they use to support their claims about Dostoevsky's personality and the secret of his creativity.

## Chapter 1. Sociology as a de-mystification project

### 1.0. Mystification vs. de-mystification

Probably the first to notice the tendency to mystify social life was Karl Marx, and in this sense his analysis of commodities can be seen as the first de-mystification project. For him seeing commodities in terms of their inner qualities was as mysterious as the religious experience, when firstly people create divine entities and then treat them as if they were autonomous (Marx 1992). This illusion prevents us from seeing that the abstract notions are present in social life only as long as their producers stick to them and make them relevant for their interactions.

Fetishism is not the only illusion in the social sciences. Probably the most general example of the tendency to produce illusions and mystify the world is the usage of the notion of society in sociological literature. Bruno Latour points out that although this notion is very abstract, it is often used to account for the different phenomena. The idea that there are some social factors that can explain social aspects of everything else, comes, as he claims, from the attempts of the sociologists in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to prove the peculiarity of their research domain. Since that time sociology has often been seen as a discipline that is able to explain the hidden aspects of the phenomena that escape all other disciplines. From this point of view, only sociologists can see that everything that happens, happens inside the society; as if this inside-ness gives us surplus knowledge of what people do, as if a scientist (or an artist, or a lawyer) does one thing and a scientist (an artist, or a lawyer) inside the society – something else (Latour 2005). As in case of the invisible divinities in the example of Marx, firstly people invent an abstract notion of the ubiquitous social dimension and then start to see the different happenings as its manifestations. The logic of mystification of social life thus confuses explanans with explanandum, prompting us to see the explanations in those abstract entities, that themselves should be explained.



Another example of mystifying the social world while trying to explain it can be taken from the political sociology. Philip Abrams drew our attention to the fact that though the notion of state is widely used both in political practice and political science as an ultimate point of reference, it rather masks than elucidates the political life, since it makes people believe that their practice is not directed at each other but at the state that is everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Instead of analyzing political practices as they are, some scholars tend to refer to the state, as if all local appearances were mere manifestations of this enigmatic entity (Abrams 1977).

To break with the logic of mystification in this case is to admit that as every abstract notion, the notion of state is a cultural construct, meaning that only actors themselves 'make it happen' (Steinmetz 1999). To say that the state is a notion created by social actors is not, however, to say that the state is a fiction. Everyone who has ever applied for a visa or has been arrested for possession of marijuana would evidence that the state is not a fiction at all. To treat the state as a cultural construct is rather to transform it from the enigmatic entity that flies high above into the concrete interactions that take place between the social actors much lower than the sky (Kowalski 2007). Thus, if under mystification I understand the analytical operation of explaining things by means of the references to the abstract, often ambiguous notions, the project of de-mystification consists of looking closer at the local practices and negotiations that are empirically observable.

### **1.1. First to de-mystify a laboratory and then the rest of the world**

The impulse to de-mystify has been very present in the sociological research recently. The whole series of the so called cultural turns in such sub-domains as capitalism, organizations, social movements and state studies can serve as an illustration to that (Kowalski 2007). Probably the most rigorous attempt to de-mystify social life has developed from the field of sociology of

science (e.g. Latour and Woolgar 1979). The starting point of this research in the 1970s was to suspend the authority of the scientists' self-descriptions and instead of listening to what they say they do, go to the laboratory and see, using the ethnographic equipment, what they actually do there. As Latour summarizes the results of this project: "nothing extraordinary and nothing 'scientific' was happening in the laboratory (Latour 1983). By this, however, Latour does not mean that laboratories produce nothing special. It would be ridiculous to claim that while using the results of the scientific practices in our everyday life: we do take the airplanes when we travel and we do take the medicines when we are ill. The idea is that treating laboratory as a special place where some mutants with larger brains work (and thus mystifying it) does not get us further in understanding how the development of science has become possible. As in case of society or state, the notion of science does not explain anything but itself needs to be explained; in order to do this Latour, as well as other de-mystifiers, focuses on the concrete practices performed by the actors involved.

One of Latour's crucial insights was that though the scientists interact with each other like everybody else, what they use while talking and convincing each other more often than everybody else is what he calls inscriptions – "any set-up, no matter what its size, nature and cost, that provides a visual display of any sort in a scientific text" (Latour 1987:68). It can be a number, a diagram, a graph or a map. These at first sight trivial devices make several things possible. Firstly, they enable the humans to take things away from their original location and move them to the other places. For example, the map of the Sakhalin Island allowed taking this grandiose piece of land to Versailles and presenting it to the people who had never been there; so that they could decide how to divide this part of the world among themselves. Secondly, the inscriptions make the actor's statements stronger because they are always there to support his claim. With the inscriptions at hand their producer can say to the interlocutor: "you doubt of what I say? I'll show you". The counter-claim remains possible but the cost of its production increases, since

now one has to produce the counter-inscriptions that could support his counter-claim. Unless it is done the first statement preserves its status of a fact (Latour 1986:13). A statement remains valid as long as everyone involved is convinced in it. In order to convince each other actors refer to the inscriptions that they produce according to the number of operations, and that can be reproduced by any dissenter in case if he has any doubts about their validity. In this sense Latour's notion of inscription is useful as it allows us to approach the process of constructing facts as a series of observable operations, interactions and instruments that made these facts possible.

Another conceptual device developed by Latour that is useful for the present project is the notion of a spokesperson. The problem with the inscriptions is that they can say nothing without commentaries of those who produced them. Spokesperson is a notion that allows us to describe a situation when an actor speaks on behalf of something that everyone can see, but is not able to read the meanings from it. Without a spokesperson the inscriptions cannot say anything and without the inscriptions a spokesperson can only speak for himself that often cannot be convincing enough; their alliance, however, makes the claim more credible as "the solidity of what the representative says is directly supported by the silent but eloquent presence of the represented" (Latour 1987:73).

According to Latour, a spokesperson can represent the humans as well as the non humans. The last case is particularly interesting for the present project. Speaking on behalf of the material objects has two specific features. Firstly, the objects usually tend to be very silent so it is not so difficult to talk them into this or that project. Secondly, the material things are able to last longer, and being enlisted to support someone's statements they transmit to them their durability. That is why Latour insists that sociological analysis should not neglect the role of things in social life: they lend their steely quality to the constantly shifting interactions and make them thus durable

(Latour 2005). According to him, the ability to enroll the material objects into associations is what differs the humans from the baboons; it is things that allow humans to have relatively stable, durable and strongly differentiated social landscape; since with them they do not have to renegotiate every social situation every time anew. How much easier it gets, for example, to recognize the king when he sits on a throne and a policeman – when he has his uniform on (Latour and Callon 1982).

Recently what has shaped in the empirical context of a laboratory has begun to spread out in other domains. For example, Dominique Linhardt argues that the divide between 'making science' and 'making politics' is a contingent one, and that for the sociological analysis it is more effective to step out of it; this is what he did studying the conflict between the German state and the Red Army Fraction in 1970s. For the description of the 'political' events he used such 'scientific' notions as experiment, method, protocol. This allowed him to avoid the usual clichés through redirecting the focus from the state itself (as some mysterious totality) to the local situations in which the state is 'included' by the actors who use the material devices as state-owned (e.g. x-ray in the airport) (Linhardt 2008).

This close attention to the material objects and the micro details of interactions proved to be also fruitful for the de-mystification of the creative activity, undertaken by Yaneva in her analysis of the production of a chalk Bruegel copy on the floor of Musee d'art moderne de la ville de Paris. Basing on the microscopic ethnographic observations she claims that an ordinary object is not elevated to the status of artwork through some sudden artistic or institutional gesture. Creation of something artistically significant should be rather approached as a process of producing small differences in the objects, their intensification, repetition and stabilization (Yaneva 2003a).

Thus, the research oriented towards de-mystification (e.g. of the state or the creativity) proves the analytical potential of the language developed originally for studying scientific practices. This language allows us to think freshly about the usual phenomena and opens up the new domains of the observable reality. That is why I find it fruitful to apply the concept of Latour, namely his notions of the inscriptions and spokesperson, to the case of Dostoevsky's tea in order to see the work of social actors instead of smoke and mirrors.

## **1.2. De-mystifying Dostoevsky's Tea**

At first sight the case of Dostoevsky's tea in the museum is quite clear. Every Russian schoolchild knows that Dostoevsky is a great writer and almost every urban citizen will say that museum is a special place worthy to visit once in a while. However, sociological discipline encourages us to be suspicious to any quick answers and taken for granted knowledges. Both notions seem to be clear when perceived in their own terms, on their own territory. But where the common sense ends, the sociological imagination begins. Firstly, we know that Dostoevsky is dead, secondly, we know that usually people do not drink tea right in the exhibition hall, and finally, we know that dead people do not normally drink tea at all. This line of reasoning makes the clear picture of Dostoevsky's tea a little bit blurred, since why would museum workers bother to make tea for someone who, as they know, will never drink it? As the common sense notions of Dostoevsky and Museum do not seem to clarify this situation, it becomes necessary to go back and ask again: who is Dostoevsky and what is a Museum, keeping in mind the danger of referring to the abstract notions in search for the clear explanations, discussed in the previous sections.

### 1.2.1. *Who is Dostoevsky?*

Saying that Dostoevsky is a great writer we refer to the abstract notion of an author as an ultimate center of the creative will that became especially distinct in the 19th century. Romanticism has taught us to appreciate a genius as an extraordinary individual who has an access to the highest spheres of the universe, unavailable to the ordinary people in their daily routines. The development of this notion can be explained by the industrial revolution and commercial expansion of that time. The more painters, musicians and writers were forced to occupy the positions of hired workers and paid entertainers, the more the image of the ideal artist took on an aura of spirituality (Shiner 2001). True artists now were seen as the distinguished individuals who managed to escape from the utilitarian logic in favor of the spontaneous creativity. An individual writer started to be perceived as a primary source of creative imagination that drives him to write his texts. This is what Pierre Bourdieu called "the ideology of the man of genius."

According to him, the abstract notion of a writer can be de-mystified with the concept of field that redefines an enigmatic creator as the agent of the literary field. A literary work for Bourdieu is not a projection of an individual will, but the reaction to the different mental and social positions given in the field of literature. What make a creative project original are these choices made by its author among the available possibilities. In terms of social position a writer can chose between being a bourgeois artist, who writes, for example, for the theatre and enjoys the benefits of the dominating class or an avant-garde artist, who lives in poverty, promotes alternative lifestyle and hopes for the long-terms success<sup>2</sup>. In terms of mental position a writer can chose, for example, between "art for the common good", claiming that art should aim at improving the

---

<sup>2</sup> We should, however, exclude the naïve understanding of the nature of this choice. According to Bourdieu, all the choices of the actors are already made and compactly packed in their habituses, though they can be not always aware of it.

social life and "art for art", standing for the art that intentionally has no other aim except itself. It is through these choices, distinctions and position taking uniqueness of the creative project takes shape. For example, Gustave Flaubert managed to create a unique position in the literature field through defining himself against both of the popular movements of that time - realism and idealism (Bourdieu 1993). Thus, for the de-mystification of a writer a la Bourdieu we need to observe the moves of an actor in his social environment and his relationships with other actors.

The even more radical attempt to de-mystify a writer would be to suspend the notion of an individual creator and break the contingent link between the personal attributes and the texts. For Roland Barthes, who introduced this idea, text is a tissue of different quotations coming from far more numerous cultural sources than just an individual experience of its creator, his tastes or passions. That is why he proposed to kill the author and liberate a text from the tyranny of the single interpretation rooted in the never fully clear intentions of its producer (Barthes 1977).

However convincing the proposition of Barthes is, before this rather violent act, it would be not unnecessary to have a more detailed vision of what it is that we are going to kill. For these purposes we need to do to the author what Abrams proposed to do to the state - that is to redefine it as a cultural construct and a product of certain discourses. Exactly this task was pursued by Michel Foucault (Foucault 1969), who proposed to see an author as a classifying principle within a particular discursive formation. The operation of author redefinition transforms the question of how a writer produces texts into the question of how the texts produce an author; since an author does not precede his works but results from them.

Instead of treating an author as an individual endowed with a secret creative force, Foucault approaches him as a function of text that can be made visible by the linguistic analysis. If the number of texts appears as a coherent unit, it is the result of the work done by the critics and

scholars who have collected them under the author's name. Depending on their operations of connecting and disconnecting different texts (this is what they do as a profession) the author can be constructed as a philosopher, a poet or a mathematician. To have an autonomous and meaningful unit of texts in the end, the commentators have to make very concrete decisions, such as whether to include the laundry list of a famous writer into the edition of his collected works or not (Foucault 1969). The emphasis on these observable practices allows us to smuggle the figure of an author from the mystic realm back to the social life.

Thus, the answer to the question "who is Dostoevsky?" deprived of its mystical aspect, is the following: Dostoevsky is a series of statements produced by the actors in the various local situations. This, yet tentative answer, allows us to disperse Dostoevsky production into concrete practices that are empirically observable. Before proceeding in this direction we should first come to terms with the second question.

### ***1.2.2. What is a museum?***

The idea of public museum belongs to the Enlightenment project with its ambition to transform the life of population on the principles of reason. It was believed that visiting such a special place as a museum would help people to educate themselves and organize their lives better. The rich collections of very different things used to belong to the noble few; making them accessible to the gaze of the broad audience was meant to be a contribution to the common good (King and Hedstrom 2002). That is why a museum visitor was encouraged to feel a special awe and thrill while proceeding through this social ritual of gazing. Since then the myth of a museum being a special place has firmly settled in the popular discourse. In the second half of the 20th century the positive image of a museum has been challenged by social scientists. In numerous studies it



was shown that instead of promised emancipation a museum just reproduced the social differences in all possible coordinates – class, gender, ethnicity; instead of providing people with new information and inspiring them for the independent intellectual adventures a museum just promoted self-discipline and serviced the panoptic state (Bennett 1995; Fyfe 2006; Coombes 1991; Duncan und Wallach 1980; Bourdieu und Darbel 1991; Dimaggio 1978; Hopper-Greenhill 1992). Problematizing the nature of a museum and its role in a society this research, however, preserved the established notion of a museum and treated it as if this special place does some special things to the objects and people who cross its border and this is what I call the mystification of a museum.

The abstract notion of a museum as a special place remains valid in the eyes of many scholars since they find support for it in the writings of Foucault and his concept of heterotopias. In his lecture on this topic Foucault referred to a museum as "a place of all times that is itself outside of time", emphasizing that the idea behind this institution was to have everything from the world accumulated at the same place and perfectly ordered according to the rational principles. In this sense museum is a heterotopia typical for modernity (Foucault 1967). However, it is important to note here, that the focus of Foucault's research was never a museum as such, as a specific place. He talked about it because the historical transition from a cabinet of curiosities to a museum illustrated the transformation of knowledge structures that took place in Europe in the 17-18 centuries. The idea of an ordered space can be seen as a program, in terms of which the previous gatherings of things were meant to be reorganized, the place where they were kept – rearranged, and the behaviors of their observers – redefined. This kind of program depends on much more general form of rationality and it was this rationality that interested Foucault when he spoke about heterotopias (Foucault 1988). To study this kind of programs is important if we want to understand which references inform the individuals when they perceive and evaluate things that

happen in the local contexts. They are, however, not of much help, as Foucault himself mentioned, if we are interested in what it is that happens in these local contexts.

There are not so many attempts to de-mystify a museum in the sociological literature; however, some first steps have already been made in this direction. In her analysis of art installation held in Musee d'art Moderne de la Ville de Paris Albená Yaneva (Yaneva 2003b) suggested to follow such actors as the artists, curators, technicians and workers in order to see what they are actually doing, turning a blind eye for a moment to the place where it happens. She showed how the bus was transformed from the trivial object to the museum-worthy exhibit through a series of uncertainties and controversies that the actors had to negotiate while installing it (Yaneva 2003b). In her analysis she referred to the museum not as a place whose inner qualities can explain what happens there, but on the contrary as a by-product of the interactions of the actors involved in the team-work. This redirection of the research focus allowed Yaneva to leave the mysterious to the mystics and to do her work as a sociologist using the strategy promoted by Latour: to follow the actors doing their work (Latour 1987).

Mystifications often lead to simplifications, while the counter-project enables us to approach the social world with all its complexities. That is why I believe that it is more fruitful to follow Abrams's imperative and to attend to the senses in which a museum does not exist rather than to those in which it does<sup>3</sup>. By doing this we move the focus from the place itself to the practices and interactions of the actors involved. Having freed ourselves from the abstract notion of a museum, we become more mobile in following the actors who, as we will see, are much freer in their 'museum' activities than we sometimes tend to think. The tentative answer to the second question – what is a museum? – is then the following: museum is a result of the museum professionals doing their work. In order to answer what they do in the Dostoevsky Museum (not

---

<sup>3</sup> "The task of the sociologist is to demystify; and in this context that means attending to the senses in which the state does not exist rather than to those in which it does" (Abrams 1977)

forgetting such a strange thing as a glass of tea for the dead writer) I will turn now to the analysis of the empirical material I have managed to collect.

## Chapter 2. Following Dostoevsky

### 2.0. Methods

The main site of my research was the Dostoevsky Museum in St. Petersburg. It is a relatively small one and has no pretensions of entering the high league of such museum giants as the Hermitage or the State Russian Museum. However, among museums of its genre it is known as one of the most successful enterprises. If one takes a look at a local magazine, there is a great chance that some event of the Dostoevsky museum will be mentioned there, as they always have something on. This intense program and their ambitions to be innovative made this case interesting for my research. It was important for me to be sure that I was dealing with an actively developing institution, not a stagnant remnant of the past.

It was not a big problem to get access to the field: most of the workers sympathized with my interest and readily told me about their activities. Though I have to admit that our conversations, in spite of my efforts, happened to be rather formal; often ready-made speeches was all I heard. However, I am not inclined to see it as a serious disadvantage since from the start I was interested in the way Dostoevsky is presented to the public and not in the undercurrent streams of the museum life. All in all I did five interviews: with the director, top manager, researcher, librarian and manager assistant. The information from our conversations I also supplemented with the published materials of my interviewees, as most of them regularly write on Dostoevsky and museum issues in specialized magazines. A considerable part of my findings is also based on my ethnographic observations at the exhibition itself. Many times I went through the exhibition following school groups, individual visitors and by myself, trying to understand what a tour guide wanted the visitor to notice, what was noticed by the visitors themselves and what remained unnoticed. By the example of Yaneva (Yaneva 2003b) and the similar micro-oriented studies (e.g.

Knorr-Cetina 1999) I tried to be very slow in my pursuit. Instead of looking for something hidden I aimed at zooming in on what seemed to be obvious and natural.

Observing the present exhibition I developed an interest in the history of museum in order to understand what brought all these things together. Having got permission to do research in a small for-insiders-only museum library, I was able to collect the necessary material. There were only few articles focused on the museum history, so I added this material with the information from the guidebooks from different years and articles on the separate items of the collection, such as Dostoevsky's wardrobe and icon.

To understand the logic of a memorial exhibition as a genre I turned to the different essays written for the museum professionals that discussed different tips and know-hows of this museum subfield. To understand how this logic works in practice I reconstructed what can be called the history of exhibiting Dostoevsky starting with the first memorial exhibition devoted to him in 1921. Chronologically the next point was the Dostoevsky Museum in Moscow that opened in 1928. However, analyzing the material on it I realized that the logic and the display patterns of both the Moscow and St. Petersburg museums were the same. As the Moscow case did not bring me anything substantially new, I decided to leave it out and focus only on the museum in St. Petersburg that I had a chance to observe myself. This is the material that lies at the heart of the Chapter 3 and 4.

From the stories of my interviewees I understood that the opening of the Museum in St. Petersburg was an important moment in the history of reception of Dostoevsky's writings in the Soviet Union. This more general topic forced me to leave the museum for a while and gather the articles about Dostoevsky from the popular and more specialized press that were referred to by the actors as the important landmarks. Chapter 2 is based on the analysis of this material.

Thus, my strategy was to move from statement to statement, place to place, object to object, that were mentioned by the museum workers – the main story-tellers in my research. As discussed in Chapter 1, I aim at problematizing the common sense assumptions that there are such 'things' as Dostoevsky and Museum; in this sense my project has parallels with the work of Laurajane Smith, when she claims that "there is no such thing as heritage", meaning that heritage does not fall from heaven, but there is a set of concepts and practices that bring it to life (Smith 2006). To unpack this set she used the notion of discourse. In my interpretative analysis I followed her example since this methodological kit fits best my theoretical purposes. By discourse I understand the study of language use (Wetherell 2001), assuming that collecting and analyzing the statements that were produced by different actors at different time enabled me to understand how the Dostoevsky Museum became possible and natural. Adopting this position I keep in mind that to function like this all statements have to find some material support and if they do find it, they have then material consequences. In fact, to show how words and things support each other was the main concern of my analysis, to which I now turn to.

## **2.1. Dostoevsky and his five posthumous incarnations**

Fyodor Dostoevsky died in 1881, however, since then the statements about him have never stopped proliferating. His relatives and friends were the first ones that made their best to make other people keep on talking about the writer. Nikolay Strakhov and Orest Miller organized memorial meetings where they shared with public their recollections on Dostoevsky, Anna Dostoevskaya worked on his first posthumous biography, many people wrote their memoirs about him - even the man who helped the Dostoevskys with the distribution of books, as a teenager, left his notes about the writer (Belov 1985; Perlina 2001).

Basically all the statements regarding Dostoevsky's personality and his life circumstances got into circulation from those who knew him personally. All of them were educated people and were aware of the widespread tradition to interpret the works of a writer on the basis of his personal and biographical details<sup>4</sup>. So they shared their private knowledges about Dostoevsky with public hoping that it would help to understand his ideas and his interest in the particular topics. In their narratives they tried to find a coherent system in what Dostoevsky did what he said and what he wrote.

Through the circulation of the statements produced by different people Dostoevsky has remained a public figure after his death. People kept on discussing his works and biography, suggesting their answers to the question "who is Dostoevsky?" At least five different answers to this question can be inferred from the Russian and then Soviet press: Dostoevsky as a religious philosopher, a revolutionary, a reactionary writer, a great writer and, finally, an indisputable classic. I will delineate now these five Dostoevskys in more details.

### ***2.1.1. Dostoevsky as a religious philosopher***

The first reading of Dostoevsky was proposed by the Russian writers and philosophers of the end of the 19th century. It was unstable time for the Russian society with hot public debates on the future development of the country. Participating in these discussions religious philosophers such as Vasily Rosanov, Nikolai Berdyaev and Vladimir Solovyov emphasized the Christian ideas of Dostoevsky and thus used his status to support their own claims. They presented him as a genius who showed the way to the world harmony through the evangelist love, deep faith and inner self-improvement and as a prophet who foresaw the destructive power of the revolutionary

---

<sup>4</sup> I discussed this tradition talking about the ideology of the man of genius in the previous chapter.

movements<sup>5</sup> (Ashimbaeva 2005). Contrary to this, the critics of Dostoevsky emphasized his inclination to describe the dark sides of social and individual life and called him "the cruel talent" who enjoyed narrating sufferings instead of showing healthy ideals for social change (Michaylovsky 1882).

The whole future machinery of Dostoevsky production in the 20th century was founded on these ambiguities picked up by his early critics: Dostoevsky showed unfair social conditions but never proposed any clear program of social change; he contemplated the destiny of humanity but promoted rather individualistic approach to the salvation; he talked about love and faith but narrated about criminals and amoral people. As Christianity was a crucial part of the official ideology of that time, the 'light' Dostoevsky prevailed and the religious aspects of his works were pushed to the foreground in the mainstream media. Thus, Dostoevsky entered the pantheon of Russian literature as a religious philosopher in the first place. This version of Dostoevsky, however, became problematic for the Bolshevik government after 1917.

### ***2.1.2. Dostoevsky as a revolutionary***

The radical transformations brought about by the October Revolution in 1917 had a very inspiring effect for the Soviet artistic field: different avant-garde groups and movements started to proliferate. Some of them had very radical artistic programs. It was claimed, for example, that high culture was an outdated bourgeois phenomenon and that in the new communist society every one had a right to be an artist: "The proletariat will create new houses, new streets, new objects of everyday life...Art of the proletariat is not a holy shrine where things are lazily regarded, but work, a factory which produces new artistic things" (Iskistvo Kommuny 1918).

---

<sup>5</sup> This remark refers mainly to his novel "The Demons" which played later a crucial role in constructing the negative image of Dostoevsky by the communist ideologists.



However, after the first wave of the enthusiasm fell down, the Bolshevik government started to support more traditional artistic views: the cult of an individual creator was preserved.

Dostoevsky, a writer highly appreciated by the previous regime, became problematic. His interest in psychology of an individual became irrelevant and his religious ideas began to speak against him. As mentioned already, the pattern of criticizing Dostoevsky for being too focused on the negative phenomena and amoral characters took shape already in the 1880s; in 1913 it entered the Bolshevik discourse through the article of Maxim Gorky<sup>6</sup>. In this article Gorky spoke against the project of the Moscow Hudoghestvenny Theatre to stage Dostoevsky's *The Demons*. He argued that this novel was "a sadistic and unhealthy work" that promoted pessimism and could make the social situation only worse (Gorky 1913). Mass media willingly contributed to this Gorky vs. Dostoevsky scandal and the words of Gorky kept on traveling from one critical article by the Soviet ideologists on Dostoevsky to another.

However, the resonance made by Dostoevsky's works in pre-revolutionary society was too deep to be able just to write him out of the new Russian-Soviet literature. What cannot be ignored can be re-interpreted; and this is what was done to Dostoevsky's legacy. The main text that helped to translate Dostoevsky's writings into the Soviet discourse was the speech that Anatoly Lunacharsky made at the celebrations of Dostoevsky's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1921<sup>7</sup>. In this speech Lunacharsky turned Dostoevsky from a religious philosopher into a passionate revolutionary and the victim of the autocratic regime. To support his interpretation Lunacharsky referred to Dostoevsky's biography and highlighted the moment when he was arrested and exiled because of

---

<sup>6</sup> Later the Soviet Government did a lot to propagandize Gorky as a true pro-revolutionary writer and a founder of socialist realism

<sup>7</sup> Lunacharsky was a Commissar of Enlightenment (Narkompros) at that time

his revolutionary activities.<sup>8</sup> According to Lunacharsky, it was the political regime of autocracy that was to blame for twisting Dostoevsky's worldview and making him politically passive. Lunacharsky virtuously mixed religious and revolutionary rhetoric to conclude that: "He could understand and feel the existential harmony. He was obsessed by the aspiration to harmonize life and atonement. This made him join the Petrashevsky Circle. This attracted him to the utopian socialism. Yes, Dostoevsky is a socialist. Dostoevsky is a revolutionary! (Lunacharsky 1921:4).

Basically the Soviet discourse reproduced the dichotomy that took shape in the pre-revolutionary debates: the dark pessimistic Dostoevsky vs. the light and ready for the changes. The only difference concerned the direction of these changes: if before 1917 they were associated mainly with his Christian ideals, after 1917 they were translated into the Socialist revolution language. New interpretation made it possible to preserve Dostoevsky in the pantheon of Russian-Soviet literature. Some of his novels were published soon after 1917 in such series as "Away with Illiteracy!" and "Cheap library of classics". In 1918, when the Civil War was in full swing, it was even decided to set up a monument to Dostoevsky in the framework of the Monumental Propaganda Project (Fedorenko 2003). The academic research on Dostoevsky also kept going throughout the 1920s without serious impediments from the officials. The situation began to change in the 1930s under the Stalinist regime.

### ***2.1.3. Dostoevsky as a reactionary writer***

By the mid 1930s Dostoevsky was stabilized in the Soviet discourse as a realist writer and a severe critic of the corrupted capitalist society, however, for the Stalinist times this reading was too indulgent for class enemy. In the first edition of the Big Soviet Encyclopedia (Lunacharsky

---

<sup>8</sup> As a young man Dostoevsky was a member of The Petrashevsky Circle, a secret discussion club. It did not have a clear political program but most of its members sympathized socialist ideas and were the opponents of the Russian autocracy.

1931) Dostoevsky was characterized as a petty bourgeois, whose worldview was not only harmful but even shameful for the true proletarians. The culmination of this negative re-interpretation fell on the end of the 1940s, when Leningradskaya Pravda - one of the central Soviet newspapers - published a report of the discussion that took place in the Leningrad University (Leningradskaya Pravda 1948). It was said that imperialist agents from abroad used Dostoevsky's ideas to discredit socialism and the Soviet people; in this context it became clear, so the narration went, that some Soviet literary critics were too quick to include Dostoevsky into the camp of true revolutionary writers. It was suggested his works be divided into two periods: progressive (in the 1840s) and reactionary (since the 1860s), when he started to sympathize religion and criticize revolutionary movement. Publication of that article was a clear signal to all who wrote about Dostoevsky that he was included in the list of "reactionary writers" and any research (if not mere mentioning) on him became unwanted (if not dangerous). In fact, nobody seemed to be interested in Dostoevsky as such - the ideological machinery of that time was programmed to look for the enemies of the regime and Dostoevsky was just another public figure to whom the structure of unmasking-enemies-everywhere was applied.

#### ***2.1.4. Dostoevsky as a great writer***

The situation began to change in the USSR after the 20th Congress of the Communist party in 1956 when "the personality cult" and dictatorship of Stalin were denounced. The atmosphere of general distrust in the official discourse was replaced by the more easy going and liberal censorship; nobody was interested in unmasking anybody as long as it looked and sounded ideologically correct in public. Dostoevsky became if not so welcomed but at least a legitimate subject for the academic research as long the unwritten rules of the Soviet literary criticism, such as mentioning the works of Lenin in the introduction, were obeyed.

A certain convention took its shape regarding what could be said about Dostoevsky and what should remain out of the agenda. For example, it was necessary to celebrate his realistic style and so called anti-capitalist criticism, but the analysis of his religious contemplations remained a taboo. High esteem of Dostoevsky abroad, in the countries of the capitalist camp, was also a little bit awkward for the communist censors. The rhetoric was not as hostile as in the Stalinist times, but such authors as Franz Kafka and Albert Camus were still not so welcomed and the statements of the importance of Dostoevsky to existentialism were problematic for the Soviet ideologists. It was important for them to distance Dostoevsky from the capitalist writers and keep him in the camp of the critics of social inequalities and capitalist exploitation (Motyleva 1971). His negative assessment of the revolutionary movement was now described in paternalistic terms; as if, although he did not manage to understand that the only way out was a proletarian revolution, he nevertheless succeeded in severe criticism of the monarchical regime and showed that capitalism brought nothing but sufferings (Plotkin 1956). Once again Dostoevsky became a great writer as a true expert of human nature and virtuoso of realistic narration.

### ***2.1.5. Dostoevsky as an indisputable classic***

The early 1990-s were often perceived as the beginning of a new era and new society based on the democracy and freedom of speech. As usual talking about new society generated the statements about new Dostoevsky. For example, there was a burst of interest in the religious problematic in his texts; such articles as "On the Christian meaning of the main idea in Dostoevsky's writings" and "Ivan Karamazov in the religious experience of Dostoevsky" started to proliferate (Zakharov 1994; Ponomareva 1994). A quotation from the first issue of the newly established periodical - Dostoevsky and World Culture - reveals the dominant mood of

Dostoevsky scholars at that time: "<...> those who had to study Dostoevsky for a long time under the communist regime only now have got a chance to express their views fully and openly without any censorship" (Dostoevsky and World Culture 1993). These self-reflections show the enthusiasm for the changes on the one hand, and the tendency to emphasize the limits and the difficulties to study Dostoevsky in the Soviet times, on the other.

The title of the periodical is also very telling regarding the new status of Dostoevsky's legacy. While in the Soviet times, the recognition of Dostoevsky by "the west" was quite problematic for the communist ideologists, since 1991 Russian statement-makers have tended to include him into the international literature pantheon rather than limit his importance by the national scope. Previously it was legitimate to put Dostoevsky's name in line with a very limited number of western writers, such as Thomas Mann and Theodore Dreiser; today the authors are inspired to make new unexpected associations, such as "Dostoevsky in the Correspondence of Jack Kerouac" (Lvova 2007). At the same time, some Dostoevsky's works from the 1870s make it easy to involve him into the nationalist discourse as well, emphasizing his ideas on the special way of Russia and its great mission for the whole world. However, no matter how numerous these attempts of translating Dostoevsky's texts into the different projects are, they show very clearly that his name has become a very strong reference point. While the content of Dostoevsky remains open to the different interpretations, his status of a great writer appears now to be indisputable.

Thus, at least five different posthumous incarnations of Dostoevsky can be distinguished in the public discourse of the previous century. As a writer and social actor in the field of literature he died in 1881; but since then he has been circulating in press like a floating signifier that can be appropriated by the different statement-makers in order to support their own political claims.

The following chapter will discuss in what way the Dostoevsky Museum contributes to this process of Dostoevsky production.

## Chapter 3. Making Dostoevsky Visible

### 3.1. From personal belongings to museum exhibits

As it was pointed out by some anthropologists, things play an important role in social life (Appadurai 1986; Kopytoff 1986). Objects are not just passive pieces of the material environment, they are also able to accumulate histories and thus participate in the production of meanings (Gosden and Marshall 1999). By the example of the Kodi society Janet Hoskins showed how material things helped people in their everyday life to construct their self-definitions and life stories. Being asked to tell something about their life people often had little to say, while the questions about the concrete objects usually triggered a mass of biographical details (Hoskins 1998). In European societies it is a common practice to preserve some things that can be very expensive, like a diamond ring, or on the contrary, of no value at all, such as expired train ticket, for the only reason that they are associated with some significant events or dear people.

When Dostoevsky died in 1881, his wife preserved many of his personal things such as, for example, his writing-materials, his tobacco supplies or his hat. When Anna Snitkina and Fyodor Dostoevsky met he was already a famous writer. Appreciating her husband not only as a loving spouse but as an outstanding writer, Anna Dostoevskaya soon developed the skills of his archivist. She started writing a very detailed diary, preserved his drafts, and after his death she even invited a photographer to make a shot of his study room.

Anna Dostoevskaya outlived her husband by 37 years and all this time she devoted to the further promotion of Dostoevsky's legacy, acting rather as a goal-oriented politician than as a sentimental widow. In 1901 her attempts to memorialize her husband were recognized on the institutional level, when her efforts resulted in the establishment of "the Memorial Museum of F.M.

Dostoevsky" in one of the rooms of the Russian Historical Museum in Moscow. Later she also managed to publish a catalogue of this collection; mainly it was comprised of Dostoevsky's manuscripts. In the best tradition of a cabinet of curiosities the access to this room was limited and it became available for the general public only in 1928 when it became a part of the newly established Dostoevsky Museum in Moscow (Bograd, Rybalko, and Tustanovskaya 1981).

Thus, some part of the private things of Dostoevsky found their way to the museum through the personal initiative of his wife. The other part found its way to the museum space through the institutional gesture. Shortly before the October Revolution in 1917, Anna Dostoevskaya left St. Petersburg and deposited her family property in one of the storehouses. Later she did not have a chance to take it back. One of the first decrees of the young Soviet Republic nationalized all the private property, including what was kept in the storehouses. Special administrative body - Chrezuchet - was directed to seize it and inventory (Fedorenko 2003). As in case of the French Revolution the result of nationalization was that part of the property disappeared into nowhere and it was not very clear what to do with the part that left. The solution did not come as a surprise, when a category of "property of artistic and historic value" took shape in the official discourse for dealing with what was expropriated.

The new "Department for preservation, inventory and registration of monuments" became responsible for dealing with the objects categorized in this way. It was by the efforts of this department that part of the things that belonged to the Dostoevskys was delivered to the Institute of Literature (usually called Pushkinsky Dom) in St. Petersburg. By this move such routine and ordinary things as his private letters, family photos and cigarette-box were labeled as "things of biographical significance" and became legitimate part of the cultural heritage (Fedorenko 2003). Since that all "the objects associated with the name of the writer F.M.Dostoevsky" became the concern of the state that had to find the ways to preserve them.



This case makes noticeable the cultural logic according to which all, even the very trivial things that belonged to the writer are considered to be part of his legacy and of some interest to those who study his literary works.

The same logic can be illustrated by the first memorial exhibition devoted to Dostoevsky that was held by Pushkinsky Dom in 1921. This exhibition – the selection of things and the way they were organized for a display – can be seen as a practical theory of what the writer, as a distinct social figure in society, is. The very fact that such diverse things as a child's letter, landscape painting and a medicine box were placed together and presented as worthy of public attention makes sense only with the reference to such an abstract totality as the personality of a writer. With a presupposition that a writer is a person of flesh and blood, coherent in all his manifestations, the strange collection of things becomes meaningful, as every article is referred to as a document that can shed some light on the extraordinary person.

As the catalogue narrates, the exhibition was comprised of several distinct parts: manuscripts, visual documents and private things (Pushkinsky Dom 1921); that is to say that the exhibition analytically divided Dostoevsky in three parts: what he wrote, what he saw and what he used in his everyday life. This work of classification is interesting in itself. For example, under the category of "manuscripts" we find not only the writer's drafts, sheets from his notebooks and letters to his fellow writers, but also the letter that he wrote to his mother as a child, bills and invitation cards – texts that usually do not have anything to do with what is called literature. Into the visual documents section they included pictures of his relatives and friends, portraits of the prominent contemporaries, and the pictures of his favorite writers. Two tendencies can be noticed here. On the one hand, very intimate traces of personal life are made public: a person with a status of a great writer is deprived of the right to have any privacy. On the other, when it

goes about genius nothing can be irrelevant and the very trivial things are elevated to the status of the culturally significant objects.

In 1998, 77 years after the first memorial exhibition in Pushkinsky Dom, the Dostoevsky Museum organized a temporary exhibition devoted to Dostoevsky in Belgium. Much more effort was put into the design of the exhibition space. For example, they used the images of St. Petersburg as a background and put the enlarged photocopies of the manuscripts on the walls. However, the selection of the objects put on display has not changed significantly: the same drafts, portraits and personal belongings (Biron 1997).

Thus, the memorial exhibitions devoted to the writer that took place in 1921 and 1991 were comprised basically of the same objects. This persistence shows that though the content of Dostoevsky and the status of his legacy have changed several times during the 20th century, the notion of a writer as an individual genius itself remained unchanged. In the following section I will show how the museum workers make this notion hold by means of the material objects.

### **3.2. Visualization of a writer**

The idea to reconstruct a house or an apartment of a prominent political or cultural figure has become very popular in the USSR. It was seen as a convenient way to present 'high' ideas and 'high' values to the audience in a quite simple and accessible way; this was especially important for the Soviet ideologists, who aimed at 'civilizing' 'the wide working masses', i.e. people with the average and low cultural capital (Chuikina 2005). What the museum professionals thought to be an ideal memorial exhibition can be reconstructed from the manuals, written for the staff of the museum houses in order to help them in organizing their exhibitions.

From these manuals it becomes clear, that the main task of the memorial museum is seen in creating an authentic atmosphere of the writer's environment (Marchenko 1984). The pieces of furniture and household objects are called upon to create "a feeling of the writer's presence," as if he still lives here but just left the place for a moment. The glass of tea then becomes an evidence of this virtual presence. The comments of the visitors in the guestbook of the Dostoevsky Museum show that they are well aware of this exhibition effect, and this is exactly what they expect from it: "I was happy to find myself in the universe of a great writer"; "thank you for the opportunity to travel to the Dostoevsky's time"— they write there. These notes show that very many people are really touched by what they see in the museum and this experience is significant for them. What makes this deep emotional involvement possible?

The mystical experience of visiting Dostoevsky's apartment, as if he still lives here (and drinks his strong tea of course) plays a great role; however, there is another aspect that is equally important. The memorial board that is installed at the façade of the building is very telling in this sense. It says: in this house in 1846 and since 1878 till his death on February, 9 1881 lived Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky; here he wrote his novel *The Brothers Karamazov*. So, the apartment is significant not only because Dostoevsky lived here but also because here he wrote his masterpiece (this pattern is reproduced by most of the memorial boards devoted to the writers).

This message, repeated also by the tour guide and in the exhibition posters, is purely ideological in sense of Bourdieu's notion of ideology of the man of genius. The museum workers teaches its visitors to perceive their experience not only as time-traveling or communication with spirits; but as an opportunity to approach closer the sacred and usually hidden process of creating that museum tries to reconstruct showing the writer's monumental desk, burning candles and the glass of tea. In this discourse the curious gaze at the everyday environment of the writer is justified by the drive "to crack the secret of Dostoevsky's individual genius" (Kovina 2001). So it

is this proximity to the creating process that together with the mystical presence of the creator make possible such statements that we find in the museum guestbook.

The idea that there is some secret behind the creating process, that is available only to the geniuses is developed further in the popular theory of what it is to create a masterpiece promoted by the memorial museum. Its ideological message can be expressed in the formula: a masterpiece = life experience + imagination. This formula defines two opposite tendencies in the museum discourse: to simplify and to mystify. On the one hand, the exhibition narrates the Dostoevsky's life story and speculates what experience triggered his ideas and what real people were the prototypes of his characters. For example, they put on display the portraits of Pyotr Chaadaev and Alexander Herzen as possible historical figures that were used by Dostoevsky to create one of his characters. Another example is the display of the newspapers with reports on different crimes and incidents that Dostoevsky could take as the material for his novels (Bograd 1981). In these presentations creativity becomes something very simple: the writer just reworks his everyday life experience. But at the same time, it is always emphasized that the way he does it can never be explained: the visitor can approach this secret but never reach it – this is where the mystical mood of the exhibition comes from.

Museum professionals distinguish between what they call memorial and typological objects. Typological objects come from the same time period when the author lived though they did not belong to him. The task of these objects is to give a visitor an idea how the average writer with the same social status and income as Dostoevsky could have lived like (Tikhomirov 2009). Often the displayed things have an amateurish touch and are not so valuable from the artistic point of view. The issue of object's quality, however, is irrelevant for the memorial exhibitions. As the museum workers position themselves in the field: "we are not an art museum to display only masterpieces" (Ashimbaeva 2009).

Far more significance is assigned to the memorial objects, the ones that belonged to the writer himself. The texts of the guidebooks are full of almost religious statements such as "this very wardrobe Fyodor Dostoevsky would open" and "this is the very sofa on which he slept when he worked on *Crime and Punishment*" (Ponomareva 2002). In the Dostoevsky Museum they reconstructed the apartment according to the plan of the building, which was found in the city archives, as they wanted it to be as close as possible to the one where Dostoevsky lived many years ago. The windows, the covering of the floor and the tiled stoves of the apartment were also reconstructed. Specially for the Museum Leningrad Paper Factory made a full replica of the wall papers. The tour guide proudly talks about Dostoevsky's study room that they were able to reconstruct very closely to the original, as its photo, made at the request of Anna Dostoevskaya in 1881, was preserved.

The emphasized authenticity of the objects functions as a device of legitimization of the museum workers' narrative: things are there and they make their claims credible – a visitor can actually see what a tour guide talks about. As in case of scientists who convince their colleagues of the validity of their claims by means of the inscriptions, the workers of the Dostoevsky Museum convince their visitors of Dostoevsky's existence by means of a visual display of his personal things. If anyone wants to claim the contrary he first would have to convince the audience that the things on display do not have any relation to Dostoevsky. And this would be not an easy task, since what the visitors actually see at the exhibition is only one part of the collection. Another part is kept in a special room inaccessible to the public; it is comprised of the elaborate records on all the displayed objects including the information on where these objects came from, who their previous owners were, whether there are any copies of them and what the reasons of assigning to them the cultural value were. All these inscriptions would make the refutation of Dostoevsky's personality too costly and risky from the outset.

The manuals for curators encourage them to supplement the authentic and typological objects with the visual material of different kind: photos, pictures, books. While the memorial things are called upon to provide evidence, these materials are there to illustrate. In the Dostoevsky Museum they decided to separate these things: the memorial exhibition in the reconstructed apartment shows Dostoevsky's everyday life and creates the atmosphere of privacy; while the "literary-historical" exhibition in a separate hall contextualizes Dostoevsky as public figure and makes possible to narrate his life story: from his childhood to his death, not only the last years when he lived in this apartment.

The work of the visual contextualization performs the task of connecting a writer to the people who knew him personally; to the places that still exist and can be visited; and to the well-known historical events or personalities of that period. For example, a visitor is shown the portraits of Chernyshevsky and other writers of Dostoevsky's circle, pictures of German cities that Dostoevsky visited and lithographs depicting the events of the French Revolution in 1848. It is through this contextualization a writer becomes a historical figure, any doubts about his existence now get even more complicated, if not absurd considering all these portraits, pictures and historical documents.

Finally, the task of a memorial exhibition, as reflected by the museum workers themselves, is to popularize the author's writings, "to motivate the visitors for the serious reading" (Ashimbaeva 1997). Portraits of people, landscape paintings and trivial things function as "the material comments to his writings" and are there to help the readers to grasp the ideas that are not so clear (Marchenko 1984). For example, the visitor can be shown a portrait of a student of the 19th to get an idea how Raskolnikov could look like. By this the visitors are encouraged to implement

their everyday knowledges to the texts; to popularize Crime and Punishment is to say: "look, Raskolnikov was a student and looked like this, it is not that difficult to understand the novel."

So it is not only Dostoevsky who is materialized at the exhibition; the characters of his novels are presented to the audience as well. This creates a certain ambiguity in the fiction/reality divide. With all these pictures, artifacts and references to the real places fictitious characters can enjoy being a little bit more real, as they are inscribed into the self-evident materiality. Dostoevsky, on the contrary, presented in the company of his characters tends to lose his status of a true historical figure and his life story begins to sound a little bit unreal considering that both Raskolnikov and Dostoevsky lived in St. Petersburg. This ambiguity, however, is a part of the experience, offered by the memorial houses; so that the glass of tea for the dead person can hardly come as a surprise – mixing fiction and reality is a part of the game.

Thus, the main imperative that can be inferred from the visual representation in a memorial museum is to present a writer as a personality and make this personality interesting for the visitors by referring to the secret of creating that he knew as a genius. This would be impossible without the main supporters of these claims – the material objects that found their way to the exhibition halls and glass boxes through a series of personal decisions and institutional classifications. However, even the richest collection of things cannot say much on its own. Visual materials look impressive, but remain silent. The next chapter will discuss how a tour guide makes the memorial objects talk.

## Chapter 4. Following the museum workers

### 4.0. Following the founding fathers

The museum in St. Petersburg owes its existence to the celebration of the 150th anniversary of Dostoevsky's birth in 1971. In the end of the 1960s the government officials realized that the big date was approaching and that it would be celebrated internationally; UNESCO, for example, proclaimed 1971 the year of Dostoevsky. So on the highest level it was decided that the USSR had to show to the whole world that the Soviet people knew how to appreciate great literature, and a great celebration was considered necessary. The importance assigned to this celebration can be illustrated by the fact that even a special administrative body – All-Union-Jubilee-Committee - was established for these purposes. The whole Dostoevsky campaign was launched around the country: mass media, libraries, theatres, schools and universities were recommended to reflect on this event densely. The special research group was organized in Pushkinsky Dom to prepare the fullest academic edition of Dostoevsky's collected works: all available manuscripts, drafts and notes were processed anew and provided with the very detailed academic comments (Arkhipova 2001). The establishment of the Dostoevsky Museum in Leningrad was another grand part of this large-scale celebration campaign.

The decision to establish a memorial museum devoted to Dostoevsky came from above, and was supported by the citizens. As my interviewee, who participated in the opening of the museum, told me, the idea was already in the air by that time. For many people the image of St. Petersburg was strongly connected to the name of Dostoevsky, as the city was often the main scene of his novels. Coming to Leningrad, many Dostoevsky worshippers wished they had some "visible presence of the writer and his characters". As at that time there was neither such place nor a monument, some pilgrims just walked up to the house, where he lived. The memorial board on



its façade did not meet their expectations of how the writer should be commemorated (Ashimbaeva 2009). So the news of the Dostoevsky Museum was warmly welcomed.

As I already mentioned, one Dostoevsky Museum already existed in Moscow. By its generous gesture many memorial objects associated with the last years of Dostoevsky's life were granted to the new museum in Leningrad. It was a substantial help (Tikhomirov 2009). However, along with Dostoevsky solidarity there were some elements of competition too: is Dostoevsky a Moscow or St. Petersburg writer? Here Dostoevsky is used in a traditional rivalry between two big Russian cities<sup>9</sup> that has for a long time become a part of urban folklore, numerous jokes and speculations. In case of Dostoevsky St. Petersburg considers itself to be an absolute leader, as it is here where Dostoevsky lived himself and the characters of many of his novels as well; 'St. Petersburg of Dostoevsky' became a well known cliché and part of the city self-representation. Striking back Moscow emphasizes that Dostoevsky was born and spent his childhood there, and as we all know "personality, main values and priorities take shape before the age of 16" (Volgin 1997:3). The new museum thus was an important move of Leningrad in this Moscow vs. Leningrad (St. Petersburg) game.

In more general terms the establishment of another Dostoevsky Museum was a considerable political success for those who struggled for the wider recognition of a writer by the official discourse. The Moscow Museum is situated in the building where Dostoevsky spent his childhood and the exhibition there is more focused on his early years and early writings, which were more readily accepted by the communist ideologists in comparison with his later, more philosophical and religion-oriented novels. While the flat chosen for the museum in Leningrad was the one where Dostoevsky lived during the last years of his life and in this sense it can be

---

<sup>9</sup> Both cities had a traumatic experience of losing the status of capital: Moscow – in 1712 when it was given to newly built St. Petersburg, and St. Petersburg – in 1918 when it was given back to Moscow

seen as a sign of a gradual ideological indulgence and recognition of 'late' Dostoevsky, not so convenient for the Communist Party.

Though by the end of the 1960s the Museum had already existed on the paper, the apartment on Kuznechny lane was still under reconstruction and the newborn museum group had no other place to meet but in some basement on Marata Street granted to them by the city administration. It is to this place they started to bring the articles of their growing collection. My interviewee laughed recollecting those days, as that first museum location broke all possible norms of the preservation ethics (Ashimbaeva 2009). At that time, however, it only added charm to the whole enterprise in the eyes of the participants. The first museum group was comprised mainly of the young graduates of the philological faculty of the Leningrad University. The task of creating museum devoted to such a controversial figure as Dostoevsky was accepted by them with great enthusiasm: it perfectly fitted into the atmosphere of those days - the 1960s are famous for the revolutionary mood among the young people.

Although it was launched by the official discourse, the preparation work grew into the often meetings, lively discussions on literature and philosophy. Not exactly in opposition to the existent political regime these meetings still had a touch of the alternative culture: "we all were *shestidesyatniki*<sup>10</sup>, what would you expect", my interviewee said (Ashimbaeva 2009). Very different people started to stop by at that first (literally underground) museum site: students, poets, writers – "I used to come there to hear the last news, as in Saigon<sup>11</sup>, and to listen to the new poems of Oleg Okhapkin and Pyotr Chaigin" (Ashimbaeva 2001b). Later, when museum already moved to its permanent location, this tradition of gatherings and public readings grew into semi-official "Club-81": "there were not so many places in the city back then when one

<sup>10</sup> The self-definition of the Soviet alternative youth, literally – generation of the 1960s

<sup>11</sup> Saigon – a legendary café in Leningrad that became a meeting point for the hip people in the 1970-80s

could freely exchange their thoughts. It was great to come to the museum club and find there people like yourself" (Ashimbaeva 2009).

Thus, the initiative to establish a new Museum in Leningrad in 1971 can be seen as an important contribution to the rehabilitation of Dostoevsky's legacy and signals his gradual comeback to the pantheon of the Russian-Soviet literature. To certain extent the Soviet government was pressed in that by the international community, but nevertheless it was a golden opportunity for all those interested in Dostoevsky to establish a Place of their own. It was a remarkable achievement, since the Place always allows the non-mainstream groups to represent themselves openly and keep what they win (de Certeau 1984).

#### **4.1. Following the tour guides**

Today the Dostoevsky Museum is quite popular among tourists, both from Russia and abroad. Usually they come in small companies of 2-4 people and walk around on their own or accompanied by a friend of them who shows them around the place. The main visitors of the museum, however, are school children. They came in large groups of 15-20 accompanied by their teacher. I will follow now the tour guide to show how she in the alliance with the material objects talks the visitors into seeing Dostoevsky.

The visitors are supposed to walk successively through seven rooms of the flat: an entrance hall, a washing room, the children's room, the cabinet of Anna Dostoevskaya, a dining room, a living room, and – as the culmination of a tour – the study room of Dostoevsky himself. The space thus is functionally divided and its organization presents different sides of Dostoevsky's personality. At the entrance the visitors can see a metal plate engraved with the writer's full name and a doorbell that a tour guide encourages them to ring. So from the outset of the exhibition the

visitors are proposed to see Dostoevsky as a real person that they can come to see as they can come to see their neighbor.

In the entrance hall the visitors see the clothes tree and walking sticks. These objects as well as the design of the flat obviously belong to the lifestyle of the past and function thus as a time-machine. Except for that everything looks usual – one can easily imagine ordinary people living at this place. However, when we are almost convinced that Dostoevsky was an ordinary man like all of us, a tour guide points out to the hat that, she says, belonged to the writer. The hat is placed in a glass box and by this we are gently reminded that something was special about Dostoevsky; special enough for his quite trivial thing from his wardrobe being worthy of such additional care. The glass box then elevates the trivial object to the status of a relic and creates a distance between the ordinary visitors, who came here to gaze, and the great author, who lived at this place.

After the entrance hall we find ourselves in a dining room. Here the guide points out Dostoevsky's cup and his silver spoon. These objects give her a chance to tell the visitors about the man's eating and drinking habits. Dostoevsky, so the narration goes, was fond of tea, and he usually had it very strong. No one of his relatives was able to make tea that would satisfy him so he usually made it himself murmuring: "oh my god, how miserable I am!" At this point of the tour we can not only see Dostoevsky's things, but also hear his voice saying things that normally only his relatives would be able to hear. These intimacies of his family life make the figure of a writer almost tangible. The visitors are also told that he used to get angry when someone took his cup. The very fact that such trivial and personal details are told in a public place by a supposedly knowledgeable person makes them somehow peculiar, as if the visitor is supposed to be surprised by the fact that geniuses also drink tea. Again we can see the ambiguity of Dostoevsky's image: an ordinary man and an extraordinary person at the same time - the narrator makes Dostoevsky closer to the visitor only to emphasize his distance in the next moment.

Walking further the visitors enter the children's room. There are photos of the little kids on the wall, funny illustrated books, a wooden horse and a cloth doll. On the table under the glass one can see a note written in childish handwriting, saying "father, bring me some gift." This room shows Dostoevsky as a loving father and an exemplary family man. This impression is intensified by the guide citing his letter where Dostoevsky confessed to his friend that family life was the main thing that made him happy.

The next stop of the tour is the cabinet of Dostoevsky's wife. Anna Dostoevskaya is presented as a smart businesswoman who took upon herself the financial concerns of the family and all everyday troubles to guard her husband from the trivialities that would only distract him from his creative process. Here the image of Dostoevsky as a genius is constructed through the eyes of his understanding wife. The emphasis is also made on the fact that Dostoevsky's income was low and he was always heavily in debts, which also adds to the traditional image of a poor but gifted artist.

The cabinet of Dostoevsky is the only room in a museum that is separated from the public by a rope and one can only observe it from the doorway. As in case of the hat in the glass box, this additional framing creates a distance - this time between the sacred site where Dostoevsky worked and the ordinary world where the visitors stand. The tour guide emphasizes that the cabinet is the most important point of the tour. She does not say it explicitly but it is not difficult to understand why. Up to this moment, we saw Dostoevsky as a nice person and a loving family man while here, in front of his working place, we meet him as a writer. The visitors are shown the massive table with candles, books, and papers on it. And also a glass of tea. Now we are hardly surprised by this – we already know that Dostoevsky was a devoted tea-drinker.

Everything is staged as if Dostoevsky can enter the room at any moment so it is better to leave in order not to disturb him. Before the visitors actually leave the tour guide tells them about the working routines of Dostoevsky. We learn that he preferred to work late at night when everybody was asleep and nothing could break the silence; he worked for about 6 hours in a row and went to bed early in the morning. These details do not only present Dostoevsky as an industrious person, they also tell the visitors what is it to be a writer, introducing them to the backstage of his creative work..

Here it is especially clear that the things themselves do not say anything. The same table, papers and books could be shown to support the claim that nothing is special about writing: one sits at the table and writes something. However, in the story of a tour guide, writing becomes something mysterious. The visitors are shown into the backstage not to see that Dostoevsky was an ordinary man, who worked a lot, but "to lift the veil of mystery from his creativity" and "comprehend the secret of his talent". As the material objects readily admit different interpretations, a tour guide is there to illuminate only those of them that contribute to the positive image of Dostoevsky's life and incomprehensibility of his talent.

The tour guide ends with the story of Dostoevsky's death. He had problems with lungs for a long time and died of sudden hemorrhage. The visitor's empathy is encouraged by the stories of those many famous and respected people who came to this flat on the next day, how sad they were and what an irreparable loss Dostoevsky's death was for everyone. According to the guide on the day of a funeral the street and the church were overcrowded with people of very different social statuses: from famous intellectuals to the ordinary working people who came to say their farewells. This moment of the tour can be seen as a catharsis: we have already seen the transformation of a family man into a genius writer and now the nice man turns into the national hero. By this point the narrative of a tour guide has made its circle: starting with making

Dostoevsky human and close to the visitors it ends up with bringing him back onto the unattainable height.

The exhibition of a memorial house thus provides its visitors with the lesson in making a coherent life story and personality of a genius, mixing the material things, citations from Dostoevsky's letters, the memoirs of his relatives and the words of a tour guide. Being shown to public biographical objects trigger stories and give an occasion to present Dostoevsky as a coherent unity of his life and texts. By means of the tangible display an abstract notion of a writer's personality gets visualized; in this form it becomes available for the visitors as their own immediate experience.

This case shows a big potential of the material things to support stories and make them credible. There are not so many occasions to say what kind of person Dostoevsky was, however, once there is his favorite silver tea spoon on the table it becomes so natural to say that Dostoevsky liked his tea strong. Dealing with inscriptions their spokesperson tells us only what we can see with our own eyes, but at the same we see it only when we are told what to see. Showing different things, a tour guide teaches the visitors to see not the tobacco box, a desk or a glass, but Dostoevsky smoking, writing and enjoying his strong tea. By means of different charts and numbers it becomes possible to talk about national economy, which is invisible otherwise (Latour 1986), and by means of material objects it becomes possible to refer to the personality of Dostoevsky, who died many years ago.

#### **4.2. Following the museum researchers**

Contrary to the public figures of the museum guides, the work of the museum researchers escapes the notice of the museum visitors. However, a group of 7 researchers come to the

museum every day as to any other regular job. One aspect of their work is to follow current publications and collect all significant statements about Dostoevsky appearing in academic discourse. It is important for them to keep the museum collection of the monographs and booklets devoted to Dostoevsky updated. Another aspect is to keep the circulation of statements about Dostoevsky going. The central event of this kind is an annual conference "Dostoevsky and World Culture", a meeting point of the professional researchers and the amateur enthusiasts. Finally, museum researchers do not only collect or spread the statements about Dostoevsky, they also contribute to their production pursuing their own research.

Their research is driven by the desire typical for the collectors: to enlarge the collection by a new rare artifact connected to Dostoevsky, such as the list of the convicts of the Omsk prison with the name of Dostoevsky in it; or to find some unknown details about the articles in the collection, such as the orthodox icon that belonged to Dostoevsky. It is displayed in the study room and considered to be one of the most important objects in the museum collection as it "connects us with the innermost aspect of the writer – with his religious devotions" (Kovina 2001). A series of investigations were triggered by this object regarding what Dostoevsky's praying rituals were, how and why he got his hand on this icon and what its iconography could mean to him. The museum could not display the icon during the Soviet times as it could be qualified as "reactionary ideological and religious propaganda" and initiate "unwanted attention of the ideological curators" (Ashimbaeva 2001a). So officially museum workers obeyed the rules of not showing "religious part of Dostoevsky's universe"; however, as my interviewee said: what could not be shown could be mentioned during the tour (Ashimbaeva 2009). It would be of course too strong to say that museum workers promoted "the anti-Soviet propaganda", however, as this example shows some ideological maneuvers the new museum made possible. The museum research on the icon is another example of the present interest to those aspects of Dostoevsky that used to be neglected during the Soviet era out of the ideological reasons.



Thus, any Dostoevsky's object in the discourse of museum research is seen as another possible "key to the secret of Dostoevsky", another missing element from the coherent picture of his personality. Its focus on the material artifacts, minor biographical details and sensation-oriented character guarantees the museum workers their distinct niche in the field of Dostoevsky studies defined by its opposition to the dry texts-oriented academic research, on the one hand, and to the vulgar speculations of popular press, on the other.

#### **4.3. Following the museum managers**

In the early 1990s museum professionals reflected much on the problem of "selling out" and perceived the necessity "to market literary topics" as a traumatic experience, referring to the notion of a writer as a high-minded sufferer and the memorial house as his temple (Popova 1997). Nowadays museums tend to accept marketing as a necessary part of every business enterprise and self-promotion has stopped being seen as problematic. The strategy of the present managers can be summarized in a formula: "we want our visitor to come back". They are well aware that it is next to impossible to achieve having only the permanent exhibition, that "a visitor sees once and is satisfied for the rest of his life" (Ashimbaeva 2009). That is why the managers work hard to create new occasions for the museum to be talked about in local press and try to signal constantly their existence to public. That is why they readily house exhibitions of modern art and performances of the different theatre troupes.

On the one hand, the managers try to keep their focus on Dostoevsky as the main selling point since the name of a writer is a well-known brand and it attracts visitors; on the other, they are afraid of being monotonous and outdated. To avoid any associations with a museum as a conservative and boring place the managers often initiate experimental and innovative projects.

For example, in 1998 in order to break with the static-ness of the exhibition they decided to use it as a setting for a theatre performance; so that the play was acted out exactly in the museum halls. They were not satisfied with the results – "the exhibition remained static, instead of a true performance we had just a theatricalized tour around the museum" (Biron 2006). Nevertheless, with this performance their long-lasting cooperation with the theatre has started. The regular performances are now the important part of the museum life, they take place in a separate museum hall with a small wooden stage and seats for the audience. Even a more radical experiment was launched by the managers in 2003 together with the Kolpin Juvenile Prison, when the professional actors from a museum troupe together with 16 children staged a play on Dostoevsky.

In 2009 there was a first meeting of the museum film club: for several hours the hall of the permanent exhibition was transformed into the movie-theatre. After the show the viewers had an opportunity to discuss the film with its director. The film was devoted to the nationalistic movement in Russia and provoked controversial responses from the audience. Some viewers did not like the idea to show such kind of films in the Dostoevsky Museum: "this is not the right place for this", - they said. The museum director, however, did not see a problem here. She said that it was part of their concept "to follow current life"; if the nationalistic movement was present today in society why not discuss it in the museum: "Dostoevsky himself was interested in the demons and the radical movements<sup>12</sup>; if he was alive he would definitely have something to say about the skinheads" (Ashimbaeva 2009). Thus, such 'meetings' of the material environment of the museum and new statements in form of the film or theatre performance, provoke the further production of statements about Dostoevsky and result in his gradual re-interpretation.

---

<sup>12</sup> The interviewee refers here to the Dostoevsky's novel *The Demons*.

These examples of micro choices and decisions that the museum managers have to do on the everyday basis show that there is no pre-given Dostoevsky that museum could 'represent', as there is no clear border between Dostoevsky outside and inside museum; it is rather a continuous process of Dostoevsky production with many actors involved who never know what the final result of their work will be. Museum workers participate in this process along with the academics who write on Dostoevsky, with the school teachers who bring children to the Dostoevsky Museum, and with everyone who makes statements about the writer. However, all these actors have different tools. For the museum workers these tools are the material objects that they display and this makes their contribution to the Dostoevsky production specific. The managers organize different events that allow new interpretation of these objects; the museum researchers use them in their search for the new details of Dostoevsky's life and the tour guides show the objects to the visitors to provide evidence for their stories.

## Conclusion

Discussing the divide between prescientific and scientific culture, Latour claimed that it is as arbitrary as the divide between Tijuana and San Diego, enforced by police and bureaucrats (Latour 1986). Our everyday language is flooded with such mystical divides, and the sociologists, who have the rich arsenal of de-mystification devices at their disposal, will thus never be out of work. The present project aimed at de-mystifying the divide between a museum and the rest of the world.

Approaching a museum as a pregiven place, we already program our analysis to answer the question of what is special about it. However, it seems to be equally important to ask what is special not in a museum as a place but in the practices of those who work there. This line of reasoning was applied in the present project to the case of the Dostoevsky Museum in St. Petersburg. Following such different actors as the tour guides, researchers and managers who work there I came to the conclusion that the main task of their work is to convince themselves, each other and their visitors in the claims that (1) Dostoevsky was an individual (2) Dostoevsky was a genius. In this sense the museum workers do nothing special: convincing each other is what we all do in our everyday life.

It seems reasonable to ask at this point: "is this really what the museum workers do? Do they really have to convince their visitors that Dostoevsky was a historical personality and that he was a genius?" The answer to this would be: "of course not, they do not have to, since it is obvious to everyone." Museum goers are ready to learn more about Dostoevsky, but not to doubt that he existed; that is why they are rarely surprised by what they see - and this is what makes this situation interesting for sociological analysis. What unsurprised visitors tend to ignore is that Dostoevsky remains an important figure in our culture because there are many people who work

hard to preserve his cultural presence. This permanent work of convincing that often escapes our notice is what makes the knowledges about Dostoevsky so obvious and unproblematic.

The present research showed that the content of Dostoevsky was not always the same. Several times throughout the 20th century his writings were reinterpreted in order to support different political claims. The posthumous career of Dostoevsky thus was quite dynamic: from a religious prophet to a revolutionary, then to reactionary and almost an enemy of the Soviet State and then back to the acknowledged classic. In this sense the opening of the Dostoevsky Museum in Leningrad in 1971 was a big political achievement of those who researched on Dostoevsky's works in spite of all ideological constraints.

The Museum made it possible to link a series of statements about the writer with the collection of things. This made the claims about his nice personality and outstanding talent more valid and more durable. Since then the tour guides and researchers come to the Museum every day to verbalize things and things are always there to support their words. What is thus special about the practices of the museum workers is not the practices as such but the tools that they have at their disposal: these tools are the material objects that they put on display.

The alliance of things and words makes possible visualization of such an abstract notion as Dostoevsky. Dostoevsky is an abstract notion since the interactions in the Dostoevsky Museum happen between a visitor and a museum worker, not between a visitor and Dostoevsky. To claim the opposite is to mystify the situation, and the Museum is quite successful in doing it; maybe this is why it is so popular among the locals and tourists: mystifications can be entertaining after all. De-mystifications, however, have their own charm. Once we accept that there is no hidden reality behind the phenomena, we allow ourselves to be surprised by the observable appearances that are too interesting to be neglected.

### **Acknowledgements**

I thank the people who work in the Dostoevsky Museum for their kindness.

I thank Alexandra Kowalski for her encouragement.

I thank Daniel Monterescu for his advice.

I thank Tom Rooney for his patience.

## References

- Abrams, Philip. 1977. "Notes on the difficulty of studying the state." *Journal of historical sociology* 1:58-89.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 1986. "Introduction: commodities and the politics of value." in *The Social Life of Things*. Cambridge University Press.
- Arkhipova, A. 2001. "Как мы издавали Достоевского [How we published Dostoevsky]." *Dostoevsky i Mirovaya Kultura*.
- Ashimbaeva, N. 2009. "April interview (interviewer - Anna Boldyreva)."
- Ashimbaeva, N. 2005. "Достоевский в русской философско-критической мысли конца 19 - первой четверти 20 век [Dostoevsky in Russian philosophy and criticism of the end of the 19th - the beginning of the 20 centuries]." in *Dostoevsky. Kontekst tvorchestva*. SPb: Serebrjanyi Vek.
- Ashimbaeva, N. 2001a. "Музей в контексте времени [The museum in the context of time]." in *Statiy o Dostoevskom 1971-2001*, edited by Boris Tikhomirov. SPb: Serebrjanyi Vek.
- Ashimbaeva, N. 2001b. "Музею Достоевского в Санкт-Петербурге - 30 лет [The Dostoevsky Museum in St.Petersburg is 30 years old]." *Dostoevsky i Mirovaya Kultura*.
- Ashimbaeva, N. 1997. "Специфические особенности посетителей литературного музея [The special features of the literary museum visitors]." in *Musei v period peremen*, edited by A. Margolis. SPb: Kontrfors.
- Barthes, Roland. 1977. "The death of the author." in *Image, Music, Text*, edited by Stephen Heath. New York: Hill.
- Belov, S. 1985. "Вокруг Достоевского [Around Dostoevsky]." *Novyi Mir* 1.
- Bennett, Tony. 1995. *The birth of museum*. London: Routledge.
- Biron, Vera. 1997. "Достоевский. Известный и неизвестный [Dostoevsky. Known and unknown]." *Dostoevsky i Mirovaya Kultura*.
- Biron, Vera. 2006. "Музей + Театр [Museum + Theatre]." in *Znachenie i vosmoghnosti museev v sovremennom mire*. SPb: Evropeiskiy Dom.
- Bograd, G., B. Rybalko, and E. Tustanovskaya. 1981. *Литературно-мемориальный музей Ф.М.Достоевского [The literary-memorial museum of F.M.Dostoevsky]*. Leningrad: Lenizdat.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1993. "Flaubert`s point of view." in *The field of cultural production. Essays on art and literature*, edited by Randal Johnson. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Bourdieu, Pierre, and Alain Darbel. 1991. *The love of art: European art museums and their public*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- de Certeau, Michel. 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Chuikina, S. 2005. "Другие места памяти [The other sites of memory]." *Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie*.
- Coombes, Annie E. 1991. "Ethnography and the formation of national identities." in *The myth of primitivism*, edited by Susan Hiller. London: Routledge.
- Dimaggio, Paul. 1978. "Social class and arts consumption." *Theory and Society* 5:141-161.
- Dostoevsky and World Culture. 1993. "ВСТУПИТЕЛЬНОЕ СЛОВО [Introduction]." *Dostoevsky i Mirovaya Kultura*.
- Duncan, Carol, and Alan Wallach. 1980. "The Universal Survey Museum." *Art History* 3.
- Fedorenko, B. 2003. "Многоуважаемый шкаф [Dear wardrobe]." *Dostoevsky i Mirovaya Kultura*, 170-175.
- Foucault, Michel. 1967. "Of other spaces. Heterotopias." (<http://www.foucault.info>).
- Foucault, Michel. 1988. "Questions of method." in *Politics, philosophy, culture : interviews and other writings, 1977-1984 / Michel Foucault* , edited by Lawrence D. Kritzman. New York: Routledge.
- Foucault, Michel. 1969. "What is an author?." in *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism*, edited by Josue V. Harari. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Fyfe, Gordon. 2006. "Sociology and the Social Aspects of Museums." in *A companion to museum studies*, edited by Sharon Macdonald. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Gorky, Maxim. 1913. "О Карамазовщине [About Karamazovshina]." *Russkoe Slovo* 219.
- Gosden, Chris, and Yvonne Marshall. 1999. "The Cultural Biography of Objects." *World Archaeology* 31:169-178.
- Hopper-Greenhill, Eilian. 1992. *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*. London: Routledge.
- Hoskins, Janet. 1998. *Biographical Objects: How Things Tell the Story of People's Lives*. London: Routledge.
- Iskustvo Kommuny. 1918. "МИТИНГ ОБ ИСКУССТВЕ [The meeting about art]." *Искусство коммуны*, 7.
- King, John L., and Margaret L. Hedstrom. 2002. "On the LAM: Library, Archive, and Museum Collections in the Creation and Maintenance of Knowledge Communities." (<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/59/63/32126054.pdf>).



- Knorr-Cetina, Karin. 1999. *Epistemic cultures: how the sciences make knowledge*. Harvard University Press.
- Kopytoff, Igor. 1986. "Biography of things." in *The Social Life of Things*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kovina, Elena. 2001. "Личная икона Ф.М.Достоевского [The personal icon of F.M.Dostoevsky]." *Dostoevsky i Mirovaya Kultura*.
- Kowalski, Alexandra. 2007. "State power as field work. Culture and practice in the French survey of historic landmarks." in *Practicing Culture*, edited by Craig Calhoun and Richard Sennett. London: Routledge.
- Latour, Bruno. 1983. "Give me a laboratory and I will raise the world." in *Science observed. Perspectives on the social study of science*, edited by Karin Knorr-Cetina and Michael Mulkay. London: Sage.
- Latour, Bruno. 2005. *Reassembling the social: an introduction to actor-network-theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Latour, Bruno. 1987. *Science in action*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Latour, Bruno. 1986. "Visualization and Cognition: Think with Eyes and Hands." *Knowledge and society: studies in the sociology of culture past and present* 6:1-40.
- Latour, Bruno, and Michel Callon. 1982. "Unscrewing the Big Leviathan or how actors macro-structure reality and how sociologists help them to do so." in *Advances in Social Theory and Methodology: Toward an integration of Micro- and Macro- Sociologies*, edited by Karin Knorr-Cetina and Aaron Cicourel. London: Routledge.
- Latour, Bruno, and Steve Woolgar. 1979. *Laboratory life: the social construction of scientific facts*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Leningradskaya Pravda. 1948. "Против идеализации творчество Достоевского. На заседании кафедры русской литературы Ленинградского университета [Against the idealization of Dostoevsky's writings. At the session at the Russian Literature Department of the Leningrad University]." *Leningradskaya Pravda* 16.
- Linhardt, Dominique. 2008. "A 'wild experiment' on the state: the 'nature' of the federal republic of Germany put to the test of guerrilla warfare."
- Lunacharsky, Anatoly. 1921. "Достоевский, как художник и мыслитель [Dostoevsky as an artist and thinker]." <http://www.magister.msk.ru/library/politica/lunachar/lunaa002.htm>.
- Lunacharsky, A. 1931. "Достоевский [Dostoevsky]." in *Bolshaya Sovetskaya Enciklopedia*, vol. 23, edited by O. Shmidt. Moskva: Sovetskaya Enciklopedia.
- Lvova, I. 2007. "Достоевский в переписке Д.Керуака 1940-50-х гг.[Dostoevsky in the Correspondence of Jack Kerouac]." in *Dostoevsky: materialy i issledovaniya*, 18, edited by N. Budanova and N. Jakubovich. SPb: Nauka.

- Macdonald, Sharon. 2006. "Expanding museum studies: an introduction." in *A companion to museum studies*, edited by Sharon Macdonald. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Marchenko, N. 1984. "Изобразительные материалы в историко-литературной экспозиции [The visual materials at the historical-literary exhibition]." in *Istoriko-literaturnaya ekspozitsia. Printsipy nauchnogo postroeniya*. Moskva: Izdatelstvo Gosudarstvennogo Literaturnogo Museia.
- Marx, Karl. 1992. *Capital*. London: Penguin books.
- Michaylovsky, N. 1882. "Жестокый талант [The cruel talent]." *Otechestennye Zapiski*.
- Motyleva, T. 1971. "Грани всемирной славы [The facets of the world fame]." *Literaturnaya Gazeta* 46.
- Perlina, N. 2001. "Первая посмертная биография Ф.М.Достоевского - анализ источников [The first posthumous biography of F.M.Dostoevsky - the analysis of the sources]." in *Statii o Dostoevskom 1971-2001*, edited by B. Tichomirov. SPb: Serebrjanyi Vek.
- Plotkin, L. 1956. "Ф.М. Достоевский: к 150-летию со дня смерти [F.M. Dostoevsky: to the 150th anniversary of his death]." *Leningradskaya Pravda* 34.
- Ponomareva, A. 1994. "Иван Карамазов в религиозном опыте Достоевского [Ivan Karamazov in the religious experience of Dostoevsky]." *Dostoevsky i Mirovaya Kultura* 2.
- Ponomareva, A. 2002. *Музей-квартира Ф.М.Достоевского в Москве [Memorial apartment of F.M.Dostoevsky in Moscow]*. Moskva.
- Порова, Нина. 1997. "Опыт музейного маркетинга на примере работы одного литературного музея [Museum marketing: the case of a literary museum]." edited by A. Margolis. SPb.
- Pushkinsky Dom. 1921. *Достоевский 1821-1921 [Dostoevsky 1821-1921]*. SPb: Akademicheskaya Tipografia (Pushkinsky Dom).
- Shiner, Larry. 2001. *The invention of art*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Smith, Laura Jane. 2006. *Uses of Heritage*. Routledge.
- Steinmetz, George, ed. 1999. *State/Culture: state-formation after the cultural turn*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Tikhomirov, Boris. 2009. "April interview (interviewer - Anna Boldyreva)."
- Volgin, D. 1997. "Вступительная статья [Introduction]." *Dostoevsky i Mirovaya Kultura*.
- Wetherell, Margaret. 2001. "Introduction." in *Discourse theory and practice*, edited by Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Taylor, and Simeon J. Yates. London: Sage.

- Yaneva, Albena. 2003a. "Chalk Steps on the Museum Floor: the 'Pulses' of Objects in an Art Installation." *Journal of Material Culture* 8:169-188.
- Yaneva, Albena. 2003b. "When a bus met a museum: following artists, curators and workers in art installation." *Museum and society* 1:116-131.
- Zakharov, V. 1994. "О Христианском значении основной идеи творчества Достоевского [On the Christian meaning of the main idea in Dostoevsky's writings]." *Dostoevsky i Mirovaya Kultura* 2.