Realism – the Ideological Chameleon  
(On TV image "realism")

"Life can only be understood starting backwards to beginning, but yet it must always be lived forward" - Søren Kierkegaard

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"We view the present through a rear-view mirror. We march backwards into the future." - Marshall McLuhan

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Words, our, until the tomb, faithful stuntmen ...

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1. Why does anyone need, especially today, when slowly, but steadily we become victims of "virtual reality's" cybemimesis, to attempt to be "more real" than "Reality" itself?

Actually, the use of the term "Realism", by inerntness of its utilisation, is similar to fluent speech in a certain language (including even the mother tongue): "Realism" is the pass-par-tous of the sense nets of all-possible theories, forgetting the necessity to be familiar with the details of its coded grammar. "Realism", as a style strategy and (further)
realized formation, is an infinitely paradoxical term: it is unclear why a certain "artist" (in inverted commas because cybermimesis with its craft-like reproducing omnipotence, destabilizes the romantic privilege of a “chosen one”, cursed or blessed with aesthetic talent), "to reproduce the objective reality that surrounds him", and doing so “in the most accurate manner”? So, who needs to be a “realist” by definition these days? Isn’t it better to these days, in this case, just live, liberated of the need to be conscious of the level of chaos that one is in? Why should the works of the so called "realistic art", which are analysed and ascribed art value, be more realistic than documentary recordings in which the “artistic” is suspended and situated in an entirely separate, even un-artistic genre? Why would Borges’ metaphysical digests with documentary features be less “realistic” than the absolutely and classically affirmed “realism” of Dostoevski or Tolstoy? What is “objective” reality if one knows that the phantom of “reality” takes upon as many faces as the number of ideologies trying to accomplish its “final” computer image in accordance with their “value system”, actually – after their self-portrait?

“Reality” is not all the listed words between the covers of the dictionary. That is clear. Otherwise it would follow that Englishmen are more realistic than Macedonians only because they have more words in their dictionary. “Words have meaning, objects make sense”, Sartre used to say.

Objects and words... But sense is an eternal, universal void of equally valid differences. The primary reconstruction of the Beginning is impossible, Derrida would say, actually quoting, for example – Lao Tzu: “We make a bowl using a piece of clay; The “emptiness” of the bowl gives it utility. Therefore, as the

„Реализмот”, како стилска стратегија и (потов) реализирана формација, е крајно парадоксален поим: не е ясно, зошто му е на извесен „узнетник” (под наводници, зашто кибертимейното, со неговата занаецка репродукција од уметни интелект, ќе дестабилизира романтичната привилегија на „изборник” кој се проколнал или благословен со естетски талент), „да ја репродукцира објективната реалност што го окукува”, и тоа „на што е можно повеќе до стоен начин”? Значи, кому му е денес потребно да биде „реалист” по дефиниција? Не е ли, во овој случај, денес подобро само да се живее, без потреба да се биде свесен на кое ниво на хаосот се наоѓа? Зошто делата на т.н. „реалистична уметност”, на кои им се анализира и им се припуштува уметничка вредност, да бидат по-реалистички и по-реалистички од документарните записи, на кои, „уметничкото” им се сусепсирало, сигурни во еден соедина друг, дури и не-уметнички жанр? Зошто метафизичките појави со документарните проседи на Борхес, да бидат помалку „реалистични” од асоциално и класично афирмиранот „реализам” на Достојевски или Толстой? Што е тоа „објективна” реалност, ако се знае дека фантомот на „реалноста” добива овкука лица колку што идеологија се обидуваат да го изработат неговиот „траен” фоторобот, по нивен „вредносен систем”, височност - по нивен соопштен автопортрет?

„Реалноста”, тоа не се сите попишани зборови меѓу кориците од речникот. Тоа се знае. Инаку, би следувало дека англичаните се по-реалистични од Македонците, само затоа што имаат повеќе зборови во речникот. „Зборовите имаат значења, а предметите имаат смисла”, велеше Сартр.

Предмети и зборови... Но, смислот е една вечна, универзална прашина на еднаков важни различности. Изврната реконструкција на приношењето е невозможна, би рекол Дерида, цитирајќи го всушност, на пример - Лао Це: „Праивме чинија од грушка глина; Пращината во
tangible has its advantages, the intangible is what makes the tangible useful.

Lao Tzu is behind Derrida, as Leonardo da Vinci is behind Mona Lisa. The Real stands behind the Pragmatic as the Androgynous behind the Centaur. Words and Objects...

2. These questions take upon themselves a more specific weight if applied onto the TV image which, compared to all other communication conventions, has adopted the prerogative of the “most wildly spread”, “most convincing”, “most transparent”, “most objective” broadcast of happenings in “reality”. Far more “realistic” than the one in literature, for instance, because it is directly visible, “transparent”, compared to literature realism that requires a more intense engagement of the recipient in the respective interactive communication in both media cases. In fact, the case is not which media will give a more authentic representation, reproduction of “reality” in regard to imagery, visibility. It concerns the interpretation of the seen visible, i.e. it concerns the “contents”, the “true” part of the information. Or as Leonid Sheika underlines in his “Painting Tractate”:

The misunderstandings accompanying the term realism derive from the fact that what is realistically given are not visible, material entities, but what is realistically given is the subject’s relation to them, and because the relation between the subject and the objects is one of intimate closeness, things in the image illusion have an appearance true to the models of nature.

The aspect of “subjectivization” (even of “solipsism”) is also a shadow (which actually always witnesses the objectification of the system hypostasis!), a conceptualising background in the “radical thought” from the book “Perfect Crime”, one of the best, key works of Jean Baudrillard, French theoretician of the fatal
на Жан Бодрийяр, французский теоретик на фатальной
легура општество/ медиум: „Верата во реалноста спаѓа во
основните облици на религискиот живот. Таа е слабост на
разумот, слабост на здравинот разум, но во ист миг и последна
твердина на фанатизмот на моралот и на апостолите на
рационализмот. Нишо до крај не верува во реалното, ниту
во извесноста на сопственото реален живот. Тоа би било
премногу тажно. (…) Зошто не би имало исто толку реални
светови колку и имагинирани? Зошто би постоеал само еден
реален свет, од каде таков исчезнал? Всушност, реалниот
свет е, меѓу сите останати можни светови, немислили, освен
како вид на опасно суеверие. Мораме од него да се одвониме,
како што критичката мисла некогаш се одвои (во името на
реалното!) од религискиот суеверие. Уште малку напор,
мисители! (…) За разлика од дискурсот на реалното, кој
става влог на фактот дека постои нещо, а не ништо, и тежне
да се втемели на вегувањето на обективниот и одгледлив свет,
радикалната мисла го става својот влог на илуизијата на
светот. Таа би сакала да биде илузија која повторно ја
восстановува невистинитоста на фактите, незначењето на
светот, поаѓајќи од обратната хипотеза дека постои ништо,
а не ништо, онејки по трагата на тоа ништо кое тече под
привидниот континуитет на смислата."

Значи, се работи за еден корозивен, „веселонаучен”
ниhilизам преку кој, нештата добиваат потик за нов
реверзиибилен семиумигски (= сè одношо превреднувачки за
смислата), бран. Да се верува во „обективната реалност”,
всушност е некроморфна, егоизм заковен во сопствениот
кулкул аутохипнотички транс од предрасуди, зацапан во
ништата безбедно плитка, опасно баланси, таутолошки
црвена крв: Кој може, склоностички свесен за сопштата
ахронија на космогонискиот каузалитет, однапред да тврди
дека ја знае траjната, замрзната смисла и карактер на сите
нешта и на сите луѓе кои го опкружуваат во „објективната
реалност”? Чака „реалност“ е „пообјективна“? Јалови се,
затоа, сите обили на теоретичарите на телевизијското екрани
амalgam society / media: Belief in reality is one of the main forms
of religious life. It is weakness of reason, weakness of common
sense, but at the same time the last fortress of the fanatics of
morality and the apostles of rationalism. No one has absolute
faith in the Real or in the certainty of one’s own real life. That
would be too sad. (…) Why aren’t there an equal number of real
and imaginary worlds? Why should there be only one real world,
why that exception? Actually, the real world is, among all other
possible worlds, unthinkable, except as some kind of dangerous
superstition. One has to separate from it, just as critical thought
at one point separated (in the name of the Real!) from religious
superstition. Just a bit more effort thinkers! (…) Contrary to the
discourse of the Real, putting its stake on the fact that something
exists, not nothing, and aiming to rise on the promise of the
objective and enlightening world, radical thought puts its stake
on the world’s illusion. It would like to be an illusion that once
again establishes falsity on facts, the unmeaning of the world,
starting from the reverse hypothesis that nothing exists, not
something, following the lead of that nothing flowing underneath
the delusional continuity of sense."

So, it’s about a corrosive, “merry-scientific” nihilism giving the
entities incite for a new reversible semurgy (= all over revaluation
of sense) wave. To believe in “objective reality” is actually
immodesty, egoism trapped in its own circular self-hypnotic
trance of prejudice, stranded in their comfortably shallow,
dangerously banal, tautologically red blood: Who can,
 scholastically aware of the universal achrony of cosmogonical
causality, claim to know the eternal, frozen sense and character
of all entities and all humans that surround one in the “objective
reality”? Whose “reality” is more “objective”? Vain are therefore
all endeavours of theoreticians of the TV screen to postulate
axiomatic defence of the objectivity of the TV image, even if they
admit its unavoidable, continuing chameleon change of colours
and the mimetic transfiguration in the seasonally fluctuant, fashionable landscape of current political ideologies that use it (the TV image) for minimum social consensus, fabricated after "their own" value system.

3. In the essay "End of the Panoptical", Baudrillard mentions a certain Californian family that in the '70 of the 20th century agreed to have its life broadcasted everyday, in a 24 hour live TV broadcast for 7 months. Only after three weeks of filming (mass voyeurism, actually), after soap operatic plotting concurrent to the "realistic" storyline of the soap operas "Dallas" and "Dynasty" or the TV-novel "Cassandra", the family fell apart!

If such comparison is allowed of this TV broadcast and the genres: "soap opera" and "TV-novel", then it will seek justification in the "aspiration" towards the so called "realistic illusion" (same as with MacCabe, Fiske and Dona Kolar - Panova), which is an inertial axiom, i.e. unargumented hermeneutical platform of almost all theoreticians of the above-mentioned two TV genres. Actually the theoreticians defend this aspiration with the approach that the audience shows mass tame enjoyment in these genres because it finds in them a quite direct socio-psychological projection and identification of its own being. Defending this, that and such projection and identification, the theoreticians even from their very hermeneutical beginning fail to avoid the easily detected paradox that: On one side, the "popularity" of both genres is interpreted as both a consequence of the need to "escape reality", and on the other hand, at the same time, a consequence of the "need for greater REALITY of the play"!?
The other aspects of similarity of the TV broadcast of the Californian family's life and soap operas and the TV-novel could be classified in the domain of: (A) - illusion of a time continuum! - period the series is broadcasted, so called "mammoth series" 2) - everyday broadcast; and in the domain of B) - "illusion of a recognizable social code 3) - sociologically, (contemporary) historically stratified interior and heterogeneity of inter-family relations, including the baggage of their social valence and "transparency" of habits i.e. the everyday life syntaxes);

Put like this, things allow for the following questions: - If the "realistic, style stratagem" is, as claimed to be, the motion of the dramatic happenings in these genres, then, where does the need for "aestheticization" of "reality" come from after the live broadcast of a family's life? Because (as Baudrillard remarks) after the hyperreality of that live broadcast (in its essence very close to the crude rawness of porno fans) the question is whether it is not stupid to once again draw on the mask of "conscious naivety" and to once again regain "belief" in the "reality" of the "realistic" genres, soap opera or TV-novel?

"The characters in "Cassandra" are not superior because of their abilities or the glamour, but they are equal with the viewer - "same as us", says Dona Kolar Panova, PhD in her essay "Simple Pleasures". If that is true as a crucial realistic stratagem for the popularity of "Cassandra", then it must apply even more so to the "transparent strategies" of the TV-broadcast; and it, on the other hand, was not even close to the hypothetic popularity of the famous "Cassandra". That TV broadcast lacks the magnetism for the socio-psychological, identification-projection matrix, although the ontological basis of its characters (even to the level of - controlled voyeurism) is doubtless and far
more superiorly sounder than the “realism” of “Cassandra”’s characters.

Or maybe all this goes to benefit the thesis: “need to escape reality”? But if so, then again, “reality” as the foundation for the socio-psychological matrix of identification-projection, actually does not exist, because, as theoreticians “claim” – it is that the escape is made from, and exactly through these two “realistic” genres?

And to escape something that doesn’t exist, means that “it” must be either a ghost, spectre or – phantom.

The Kierkegaardian recapitulation, the always-delayed biographical summary, motto of this text, is what is left at the end as an agnostic conclusion in which one is trapped daily. If you remember, in Andrie’s “Devil’s Yard” (“Prokletia avlija”) (an exclusive example of literature realism), the narrator withdraws from the very beginning with a feeling of guilt; he retreats like a thief before that very Kierkegaardian recapitulation of “an ended human life”. The aestheticization in “Cassandra” (and not only there, but common in all “realistic” genres in general) is exactly in: the “recapitulation” of the dangerous liaisons in the life of the main character around which the narrative web is being woven. (Although the rashomoniedade, the cubistic fragmenting of the story by juxtaposing the subjective narrative lines, in Faulkner’s or Ćurčić’s manner, for instance, will never be avoided). Here, in “Cassandra”, the conventions of the genre allow us to, as viewers, suppose a directed ending of a previously set number of episodes in conceptualised time. This kind of deliberate ending is what is missing in the live TV broadcast of the Californian family’s life. There is no Kierkegaardian summary, which is normal, because just like the viewer’s life (the voyeur, for the “objectivity” of the image as a style tendency of “realism”), the life of the Californian family is deprived of the certainty of the end, i.e. – deprived of an art intention, deprived of “form”. That is why that life is not “estheticized” and therefore the
impotency of its identification-projection matrix. That ordinary life, shot and broadcasted “live” is indefinably and unforeseeably – extensive. Because of the lack of “form” (=unanaesthetization), because of the non-conceptualised “real” time-space (=as a basic characteristic of the live broadcast), there is a lack of awareness of the setting of the interior semiurgy of the metaphysically canonised, immanent archetypal Manichean oppositions (good-bad, beautiful-ugly, honest-crooked, weak-strong...) which are platonically atemporal by nature and are integrated in the structure on whichever mythology and whatever narrative as well. They, actually, within us, have a paradigmatic attribute of rudimental ethic correctives, ethic protoplasms which, like a compass, after short hesitation and trembling, direct one towards North and help one stay on the lead of the motivation in motion in the so called “realistically” hypostased plot. But, what makes one aware of them is – art.

And once again... objects and words... words and objects... But, if you once stand at a railway, between the rails, wondering whether the locomotive zips-up or zips-open the globe’s zipper, just like the mathematician asking himself where the two parallel lines cross – and answering: “in infinity” – then, in that crossing point reminding of a music note of the musical stave gauge, there, the words cease to have meaning. In that space, in the note, music and love are layed. I allow myself the liberty to recognize that space in a verse from the song “White” (“Blanco”) by Octavio Paz, named – “unsettled language”...
-A LOVE SUPREME-

to J.K.

Sun fills the room. Inflating it, just like a circle being drawn in a square, revealing in space a calm heart with universal pregnancy of a pollen particle. Love is Odysseus, crowned with sunray, standing with legs stuck in bowls of orange halves, discovered between the full stops of Lorca’s songs, who has forgotten how to read, and with the palm over the alert eyebrows, waiting for the hair of darkness to sprout, allowing each letter to flourish in his eyes with the spectacular death of a Super Nova, while the ice crumbling from the stars turns into cosmic crickets. The metaphor arrests Michurin, the morphology pinup, but the heart has turned into an igloo amidst the snow dessert in which the jealous lead antenna imitates the pulse in a one-stream radio wave. In Stravinsky’s musical stave, notes are blueprints of the chipped noses of the dug up ancient sculptures signing with nostalgia for the herbarium histories documented in marihuana leaves. Biographies ashed by love drip from the smoked gauges of the music notebooks, chip off from the handwriting like trained circus fleas jumping through tiny smoke wheels of imitated kisses blown with shut eyes over the musical stave from the moist palm in the constant inconsistency of the cross clouds in Coltrane who, suddenly stabbed by a sunray, sticks out the chameleon rainbow saxophone, and beneath him the butterflies of unused wishes turn into dice thrown to unfold the mathematical burden of the unread wings. The heart is a drummer holding the reins of jazz freed from the traffic jam of love. For if there was no love, nothing would be there to die. It is indescribable, because with passions you are dazzling close to her, and also equally distant from the wise man for the enrooted callipers of indifference. Love is a space unrevealing to stares full of fragmented memories, and there, to her, leads the vegetarian arrow of feathers plucked in the fight of

Сонце ја исполнува собата. Ја дуе, небаре круг исцртувања во квадрат, што открива во просторот едно мирно срце со својска бременост на трошка полен. Љубовта е Одисеј, кумисан со сочвица, што стои со нозете заеленени во лиени од преполовен портокал, откриен меѓу точките од песните на Лорка кој заборави да чита, и со дланка над вежите преселички, чека да изртните влакното на темницата, за во сите секоја негова буква да проузди со спектакуларна смрт на супернова, додека мразот на звездите се рони во космички штурици. Метафората го апси Мичури, мактиот на морфологијата, но срцето станало игло снесено среде пустина од снег, во која љубоморниот челик на една антена го имитира нулеот во едночлен радио-бран. Во петолните на Стравински, нотите се скпи за откривените носови на откопани антички бисти што издигуваат носталгии во хербарумските историји документирани во листови марихуана. Биографии пеплосани низ љубови, калем од испуштените колосели на муслишките тетратки, се одропнуваат од ракописот небаре дрезирани циркуски белина што скоакат низ тркалата как од имитираните баклажани мигечки дувани преку петолнито на исполната дланка во постојаната непостојаност на облаците намршени во Колтрейн, кој одненадеж, пробден од зрач сочвица го плази камелоенското саксофон на сунцата, а под него, пеперуките на недотрпените жели стануваат зарови флени за да го одврзат математичкиот товар од непрочитаниот крива. Срцето е галапар што ги држи уздите на везот ослободен во сообраќајниот мегеж на љубовта. Да ја немаше љубовта, не ќе имаше што да умре. Неопишива е, оти со страстите си и заслепувачки близу, а рамномерно далекен ј e мудрецот поради вкоренетиот шестар на
announcing roosters. There, you have to be light. There, the caged tigress and the level bubble stand beloved. Can you?

5. "How “realistic” the image is, directly influences the authenticity and so is a vital part of the culture form through which ideological practice operates", says John Fiske, the most commonly quoted theoretician of the TV media.

Following MacCabe’s logic for the structuring of the “narrative realism” on the principle of “hierarchy of discourses”, Fiske accepts the ideologically presented relations of (mass) communication, and opens the (eternal) ethical aspect of the dispute on TV image “realism”. But, if every ideology that the political system solidifies in social relations according to its own, current value system, is not set in some “normative ethics”, it turns into an ontological phantom whose morality has a purely pragmatic (egotistic) etiology which can, later, squeeze things into a model of totalitarian orthopaedy or to entropose into adventurism and anarchy as two extreme poles. "God is dead", cried Nietzsche. But it was a cry seen through the vision of Edvard Munch supposed to enlarge the aureole of the ethic horizon.

“The leads” to the “transcendental marked”, presents us a “progressive absenteeism” of the absolute cosmo-gonic superstructure, say Derrida and Eco. Thus, the insufficiency of the following definition given by Fiske (just like any other definition of “realism”, “reality”): “Realism does not reproduce reality in an ordinary way, but extracts meaning from it – the essence of realism is that it reproduces reality in a form that makes it understandable. “It does this primarily by convincing that all connections and links between its elements are pure and
Тој го прави тоа примарно ео тоа што се уверува дека сите врски и линкови меѓу неговите елементи се чисти и логични, дека наративот ги следи основните закони на причина и последица, и дека секој елемент постое со цел да помогне да се создаде смисла: ништо не е чудно или случајно. (После секој одигран чин на академски апстрактна неризична сериозност на дефинициите, секогаш треба да се биде на штрек: секогаш ќе има барем двајца пензионирани реалисти, кои ќе ни се смееат од малетиоуовската темица на нивната поротничка ложа...) „Чисто, обично, логично, чудно, (не)случајно, основни закони на причина и последица...", вели Фиске.

Можеби. Но секогаш, постојано е отворено прашањето: За чија прагма, за чија актуелно системски, законски оправдана хиерархија?

REFERENCES

5. John, Fiske - “Televizion culture”, Methuen, London, 1987 g; logical, that the narrative follows the basic laws of causality, and that each element exists with the aim to help create sense: nothing is strange or accidental". (After each played act of academic, risk-free seriousness of the definitions, one always has to be alert: to always have at least two retired realists who will laugh at one from their Muppet Show like darkness from their juristic booth...)

"Pure, ordinary, logic, strange, (in)accidental, basic laws of causality...", says Fiske.

Maybe. But a question is always open: For whose pragma, for whose current systematic, legally justified hierarchy?

Translated by Rodna Ruskovska