

Monique Kuffer
March 16, 1991

LETTER TO DOSTOYEVSKY CONCERNING THE ORGANIZATION OF "NOTES FROM UNDERGROUND"

I have no illumination no insights on organisation theory and will bore you to death with my pretentions. First, I would have said it all without words, in one big impression, but can't be bothered with it anymore. My attention life spen is that of a three years old and I've forgotten what is important. This is embarrassing, for like the underground man I'd like to believe that the pain of self-inflicted isolation is the price paid for my genius. After all They can't understand. After all I cant understand this man without a dictionary and a whole bunch of intellectuals telling me what he indeed meant. Unique is isolation.

I picked up the book, and haven't change my mind since, it sucks. I'd hate to go to you Sir for a shrink job, I wonder what school of psychology they would fit you into...

Oh no, she's been ungreatful again, unappreciating again.

Why should you read on, yes why should you...

There is no contradiction Sir, no rational, just the gut reaction Sir, and yes I've been told it's not acceptable, not acceptable.

Let me spill my empty words anyhow, but dont worry I will spare you thirty pages of your time, your precious time.

Embarrassing

His monolog is my monolog, your mission my dissonance. Will there be anything substantial I dont think so - let me stop for a snack, ease the apprehension - your chance to anal-ize but I know you wont - you'll just impress a sarcastic smile on your face or yawn.

Doesn't he (the underground man) wrap you up beautifully around his little finger, having you ask for more - your vanity fed, your chance to identify with a man of higher-consciousness - a sick man - but so brilliant.

Caution is out of question.

The gut level is ignored, matter of priority.

This is part one.

So cleverly repulsion replaces the intellectual abstraction attraction. The Russian man will reject by prejudice, heritage? Suffering secures the need, the opium the pain killer. Who is that Russian man? Is he the peasant you wanted to free so badly from serfdom and treat with your psychological manipulation. Those accused are trapped and angry.

You can keep your brilliance and your Romanticism. Clever politics or a church service, its all the same: promesses. The priest too starts, softening the congregation with the beauty of the human soul, its suffering, beautiful in its abstracted humanity, with Christ's humanity and Godliness. Now you're ready for the basket of donation which is going around and you give with gratitude. Then the priest then attacks the Subject of humanity's fallen grace, stirring your fears, your guilt with vivid examples of human depravation as pathetic as the boubou you committed last week. As you shrink in the bench or pronounce judgement on so and so, he promises eternal life to your repented souls in Christ the only redemption. And you return for more the following sunday and you love every bit of it.

If this is not a double-bind...or am I the double-binder. Now that you've redeemed yourself from the foolishness of youth, attacked the unfortunate influences of your friends, told the Russian man the right way, I raise my hat Sir. Right on. You made the best of adversity and found yourself in this grim farce. I'm glad I ain't Russian, my mind is crocked enough as it is. How do you do it, it's clever. They've analized your structure, there is no more secrets, it's all on paper: the spacial form, the symbolism, the circonstances, what more could I add... You would have loved Rauschenberg, especially his collages: the parts are also essential to the whole, they also take on contextual meaning in their repetitions, they also come to life in contrasts. Color also, and lines, and emptiness holds it together (he uses glue).

You writers expect a lot of your customers... I walked into your customer service department with my complaints and frustrations and what did I get - a voucher for the University library - of course now I wont return my possession, I've been too involved. What was true in the arrogance of my ignorance is irrelevant in the light of a late to come understanding, and after all one gets used to the dog, even to an ugly dog. So you win, I just hope it has been a good investment.

I can assure you however that it wont change my life a bit. One last word, I like it up-front, not these sly methods of manipulations.

And for your marketing department, I'll quote Anthony Wilden who wrote that the existential heroes (The Underground man)... continue to fulfill their function in the rationalization of socioeconomic alienation, especially as they continue to be represented by all whose moral alienation and impotence encourages them to indentify with such 'romantic solipsists': to identify with them, FOR and AGAINST the *salauds* who re-present themselves...So you're still in business. You want an explanation? See "*salauds*", I think that's you. And me, unfortunately in "all whose moral alienation and impotence encourages..." and... I propose as a way out that you either throw up or commit suicide. Sorry no church service.

Bibliography

- Curtis, James M. 1972-73. Spacial Form as the Intrinsic Genre of Dostoevsky's Novels. Modern Fiction Studies. Vol.18. p.135-154.
- Dostoyevsky, Fyodor. 1972. Notes from Underground / The Double. Tr. by Jessie Coulson. London Penguin Group.
- Hall, J.R. 1981. Abstraction in Dostoyevsky's "Notes from the Underground". Modern Language Review. Vol.76, p.129-137.
- Hodge, B.J. and Anthony, William P. 1988. Organization Theory. Ed. Allyn and Bacon, Inc. Third Edition. Massachusetts.
- Kjetsaa, Geir. 1989. Fyodor Dostoyevsky: A writer's Life. Tr. by Siri Hustvedt and David McDuff. Ed. Fawcett Columbine New York.
- Mochulski, Konstantin. 1967. Dostoevsky: His Life and Work. Tr. by Michael A. Minihan. Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Wilden, Anthony. 1987. Man and Woman, War and Peace: The Strategist's Companion. Ed. Routledge and Kegan Paul. London and New York.
- Wilden, Anthony. 1980. System and Structure: Essays in Communication and Exchange. Tavistock Publications. Second Edition.
- Winograd, Terry and Flores, Fernando. 1990. Understanding Computers and Cognition. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.