Structural Fear and the Ways to Resist It

El miedo estructural y los modos de resistencia

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Abstract

The article approaches the concept of structural violence by elaborating on the idea of fear as an indicator of social or individual self-destruction. It argues that learning to read fear is an important skill for individuation and, therefore, a part of resistance to oppressive practices. Based on Tolstoy's political thought, the article draws attention to honesty, gratefulness, love, trust, creative act and responsibility as essential conditions for developing sensibility to read fear and the social structures. Likewise, the article looks at several popular series and literary pieces in each other's context as an existing intellectual or even social discourse with a special emphasis on the science fiction and fantasy genres in the context of spiritual anti-hierarchical thought. A distinction is made between organic fear –a natural emotion with a function of developing self-recognitio– and structural fear –a tool for manipulation and control over individuals employed by social institutions. The natural character of the emotion, in other words, the experience of fear common to every person, makes it a convenient mechanism of control over the Other. The article uses the findings to support the qualitative turn in the social studies and particularly the tendency towards the holistic or ecological approach to data selection and data interpretation.

Keywords: ethics of care, methodological anarchism, structural violence, networked storytelling, transmedia.

Resumen

El artículo despliega el concepto de violencia estructural mediante la idea del miedo como indicador de la auto-destrucción social o individual y plantea que aprender a leer el miedo hace parte de la resistencia a las prácticas opresivas. Con base en el pensamiento político de Tolstoi, el artículo llama la atención sobre la honestidad, el amor, la confianza, el acto creativo y la responsabilidad como condiciones esenciales para desarrollar la sensibilidad a la opresión. Asimismo, el artículo analiza varias series populares y piezas literarias en el contexto de cada una como parte del discurso intelectual y social existente. Se hace una distinción entre el miedo orgánico, una emoción natural con la función de desarrollar el auto-reconocimiento, y el miedo estructural, una herramienta de manipulación y control. El artículo pretende contribuir al giro cualitativo en los estudios sociales y, particularmente, la tendencia hacia el enfoque holístico o ecológico al conocimiento y a la investigación social.

Palabras clave: ética del cuidado, anarquismo metodológico, narrativas de la red, violencia estructural, transmedia

Introduction

Violence goes hand in hand with fear, and fear, in fact, could be an indicator of a structural fault and a call for change. This article explores fear as such an indicator through fiction genres in cinema and literature. Fiction appeals to the knowledge of reality, intuitive and conscious, but, as a product of imagination, it often escapes censorship (Coser, 1963; Golovátina-Mora, 2014; Váňa, 2020): "A fairy tale is told not to hide something but to open: to tell everything in a loud voice with all the strength, exactly what one thinks"[1] (Shvarts, 2002, Prologue). It disrupts the "automated perception" and engages new sensibilities (Christoyannopoulus, 2019a).

For the purpose of this article, I rely on Tolstoy's social and political thought, particularly articulated in his novel *Anna Karenina*, as a foundation for the theoretical discussion of fear. The other storylines engage in the discussion proposed by it and facilitated with three methodological approaches brought together within this paper. The article brings together transmedia analysis (Jenkins, 2007, 2011; Rodrigues & Bidarra, 2014), diffractive analysis (Barad, 2014) and networked storytelling (King, 2011), to get a more complete perspective on the discourse. Based on these methodological proposals, the choice of the stories is not restricted to a specific geographical region or one particular genre intentionally to ensure multiple subjective voices of seemingly unrelated origin. The stories are read in each other's context, through each other (Mazzei, 2014). The categories leading the analysis emerge in the intersections of such readings. This makes the current study a performative act of non-violence in methodology, which minimizes the contradiction between the content and the form of its presentation, and hence, draws attention to the ontological nature of violence. An active role of the references from outside the conventionally accepted in academia reference circles is part of this performative act.

The recurrence of the similar debates in different genres and throughout time also evidences the importance of the subject and highlights the zones of tension in its understanding. Without necessarily being familiar with each other's work, the authors contribute to the debates in a nonlinear and networked way. They form in an archipelago (Agudelo Muñetón & Gaviria Londoño, 2015), a rhizome (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005), visually fragmented yet forming one network of thought and action.

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1   All non-English citations are translated by me when not indicated otherwise

As such, the sections of the article could be read separately from each other or as each other's justification, framework or expansion. The article does not follow the positivist tradition of the linear presentation of the argument as it largely contradicts the way people think and shape our thought (Marcuse, 2002; Sousanis, 2018). The argument developed in the paper expands not only our understanding of fear as a structural and politically inflicted phenomenon, and questions the imposition of the disciplinary borders, but also draws attention to the recurrence of solutions suggested over decades, genres and disciplines. It pursues to address and understand the source of the recurrence of violence.

Two kinds of fear are addressed: fear as the individual and innate system of checks and balances that I will call organic fear, and the institutional or systemic fear, that is, the system of checks and balances originated in the social institutions as a mechanism of social control and manipulation of the individuals. The article's focus and argument draw on the ethics of care, developed recently by authors such as Sara Ahmed, Karen Barad, Rosi Braidotti and bell hooks, to name a few. The feminist ethics of care questions and challenges the binary, static and goal oriented, hierarchy-based paradigms of sense-making and emphasises its relationality and processual nature. Such perspective is driven by the attentive interest in difference instead of binary informed homogeneity and universalisation.

Relationality in *Anna Karenina*

Tolstoy's literary work cannot be separated from his other critical essays. Together they form his critical political thought (for example, Christoyannopoulos, 2008, 2019b). For this article, I focus in particular on *Anna Karenina*, Tolstoy's novel originally published in 1878. The novel scrutinizes social institutions and established social practices, as well as the role and place of an individual in their reproduction; therefore, it offers an appropriate theoretical framework for analysing fear.

The characters are the most obvious category of analysis in the novel revising relations between an individual and social structures that, in addition, carries an individual name in its title. No one in *Anna Karenina* is absolutely bad or good. Together with the author, the reader experiences sympathy, at times pity, towards nearly every one of them. Tolstoy portrays them with compassion, showing their suffering and exploring their reasons for it. In fact, paraphrasing the first line of the novel, "every person is unhappy in their own way" in the

novel. The characters in *Anna Karenina* do not simply form a background for the leading characters, but are each other's stages, versions, becomings, alternative ways of being, or an advice to each other. The author reveals these processes by accentuating the relations between people, people and objects, people and time and place. To illustrate this idea, I will mainly focus on two characters: Anna Karenina and Konstantin Levin, who impersonate the same quest for true and honest Self within and without the society.

The title of the novel suggests that Anna Karenina is the main character. Yet, she does not appear in the novel for another twenty chapters. The last chapters are almost entirely dedicated to Levin. The novel ends with his revelation regarding the role of a person in the society. Anna's brother, Stiva Oblonsky, Levin and Vronsky all appear before Anna. In the first pages, the reader learns that Anna's maiden last name is Oblonsky, but throughout the novel she appears only with her patronymic name or with her husband's last name. All three names mark her belonging to a certain social category –kinship (father) and marriage (husband) –which Anna was not free to choose.

The reader first looks at her from outside through the layers of social conventions. Coming from a wealthy family with standard education for the nobility and having got married very young to a person almost twenty years older than her, Anna had never put the layers into doubt until she met Vronsky. When this happens, she experiences a deeper and more intense feeling than she ever knew before. This experience changes her vision: even symbolically, the moment she leaves the train, she notices every imperfection not only in her husband's but also in her son's appearance that she had not noticed before. One can interpret this distortion of vision as the influence of the sin. Then the old bearded man that haunts her and her lover Vronsky, both in her nightmares and in the reality, could be read as a cry of the wretched souls. Anna's death becomes the logical end on the path down the hill that she took having committed an offense against her marriage (Likhachev, 2015; Sato & Sorokina, 1998).

Yet, in the context of Tolstoy's thought, together with the broader reading of the novel that includes the lives of other characters and especially that of Konstantin Levin, another interpretation is possible. Everybody is in search and in doubt in *Anna Karenina*. The doubts appear mostly on the border between personal feelings and socially accepted truths. This borderline is the space where new knowledge is formed, following the logic of Lotman's semiosphere (2000), because of the recognition of difference, tension, challenge and collision it

provides. This is the line of reflexivity that could be compared to the Bourdieusian "margin of freedom" (2000, pp. 234-236).

> … not being able to believe in the significance of what he [Levin] was doing nor to regard it with indifference as an empty formality, during the whole period of preparing for the sacrament he was conscious of a feeling of discomfort and shame at doing what he did not himself understand, and what, as an inner voice told him, was therefore false and wrong. (Tolstoy, 2019, part 5, ch. 1)

Those doubts made them suffer because of the conventional knowledge they have –social truth is the truth, but then what doubts can they possibly have? Throughout the novel, various characters feel an immediate discomfort and shame for themselves or the others who respond in *clichés* that socially accepted "working" rules harm others' feelings. Tolstoy emphasizes the keen instinct or the inner moral knowledge that everyone possesses since childhood and then learn to ignore. With his "child's keen instinct for every manifestation of feeling" (Tolstoy, 2019, part 2, ch. 22), Seriozha noticed every small detail in the behaviour of the adults around him, but without all the knowledge about the social relations he was not able to make clear sense of the received information. This caused confusion in Seriozha's behaviour but still did that to Vronsky and Anna: "This child, with his innocent outlook upon life, was the compass that showed them the point to which they had departed from what they knew, but did not want to know" (Tolstoy, 2019, part 2, ch. 22).

Social conventions are not limited to the norms of courtesy, social morality, social institutions, to what to read or wear, but also include the words themselves:

> When Levin thought what he was and what he was living for, he could find no answer to the questions and was reduced to despair; *but when*[2] he left off questioning himself about it, it seemed as though he knew both what he was and for what he was living, for he acted and lived resolutely and without hesitation. Indeed, in these latter days he was far more decided and unhesitating in life than he had ever been (Tolstoy, 2019, part 8, ch. 10).

Innate knowledge can be suppressed by the words themselves. It reveals itself in the action. Taking care of children, praying, working with earth, dancing, writing or doing art can be an action that heals and restores the body. Comparing Vronsky

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2   My italics here are to emphasize the changes in translation that did not correspond exactly to the Russian original.

and artist Mikhailov, whom Vronsky and Anna visit during their journey abroad, Tolstoy continues comparing the value of a form or a trend as a social convention and that of true feeling, knowledge or understanding of the beauty of the Other. Art as a sincere and dedicated form of action occupies an important place in the novel and Tolstoy's thought altogether (Akhmetova, 2014). As a sensitive form of feeling, knowing and communicating the world and Self (Tolstoy, 1904), art becomes the indicator of honesty. As an active practice of creation, it liberates (Fromm, 1942, ch.1) a person and leads them towards self-realization. Anything seemingly unrelated on the first sight can show the meaning and bring life to it, turning it from an object to a subject. The artist, who is sincerely curious about the world, sub-creates. The act of dedicated yet spontaneous creation frees a person and brings them peace not by a mere distraction but through the act of creation that is impossible without appreciating the world and recognising Self in it (Tolstoy, 2019, part 5, ch. 10).

All the characters intuitively search for sincerity. The rediscovered inner and naïve Self who trusts the outside world and accepts it brings happiness. For example, Tolstoy speaks of Karenin's inability to see someone's sorrow. Tears made Karenin nervously agitated. Not knowing how to interpret it, he chooses anger and sends the person away. Metaphorically speaking, he turns his eyes away. But facing Anna dying, Karenin experienced such an intense nervous agitation that he could not bear it. He "ceased to struggle with it" and

> Suddenly felt that what he had regarded as nervous agitation was on the contrary a blissful spiritual condition that gave him all at once a new happiness he had never known. He did not think that the Christian law that he had been all his life trying to follow, enjoined on him to forgive and love his enemies; but a glad feeling of love and forgiveness for his enemies filled his heart. (Tolstoy, 2019, part 4, ch. 17)

At this moment, agonizing Anna exclaimed, "That is him!", as if recognizing his true Self.

As an intense feeling, it can't last long, it is painful in its liberation and characters mostly choose to go back to their socially accepted Selves. In order to suppress fear caused by the knowledge of betrayal of the true Self, they choose different forms of ignoring or not knowing it. Morphine, partying, or religious practices, to name just a few, become the mechanical and passive way of following the norms instead of active construction of true Self. It is well impersonated in Stiva Oblonsky. One of his defining qualities, for example, which Tolstoy likely with satire characterizes as "the most important point," was "his complete

indifference to the business in which he was engaged, in consequence of which he was never carried away, and never made mistakes" (Tolstoy, 2019, part 1, ch. 5).

The social practices described in the novel have a purpose to comfort a person in their imperfection by tricking them into thinking they are perfect to ensure their belief in the perfection of the system itself. Facing imperfection liberates and opens doors to the knowledge of perfection through spontaneous creative work. It does not eliminate one's fears but teaches accepting them as part of one's Self.

The Old Bearded Man

Anna and Levin resist any form of self-deception by questioning both their own Self and the society. The doubt is intense and has several stages that remind pendulum trajectory or neurotic mood swifts: feeling bad about oneself or seeing oneself in the distorted form; feeling bad about the loved ones and the rest of the world and seeing them in the distorted form; forgetting one's wretched Self and loving a nearly saint Other. The final stage is recognizing, forgiving, accepting everyone's imperfection including that of one's own and feeling grateful to all the imperfections. By accepting one's Self in its totality and complexity one learns to accept the outside world in its totality and complexity. Isolation, believing in one's perfection or total imperfection means betraying one's nature and killing it eventually (suicide). Death can be physical or metaphorical as turning oneself into a mechanical object. The stages are repeated to equip a person with the tools of dealing with them so that the person could continue living healthier. Levin passes all the stages including the death wish. He does not kill himself. Instead, he continues with his everyday rituals that keep him rooted in his journey inwards and comes to realize that he, as a human being, is not perfect, and he would argue, scold the loved ones "for my own terror," do mistakes and be "remorseful for it." But what brings the meaning is the awareness of these mistakes and critical reflections of what makes them a mistake together with the constant work towards improvement:

> But my life now, my whole life apart from anything that can happen to me, every minute of it is no more meaningless, as it was before, but it has the positive meaning of goodness, which I have the power to put into it. (Tolstoy, 2019, part 8, ch. 10)

Levin's revelation becomes the closing paragraph. Together with the epigraph, it frames the proposal of Tolstoy's novel. The epigraph is a Biblical quote "Vengeance is mine, and I will repay." According to the official Russian

language reference web page *Gramota* (2021), the quote is taken from *The Book of Deuteronomy* and is repeated in *The Epistle to the Romans* in the *New Testament*, where it sounds as follows in its context of *Christian living*:

> Let your love be without hypocrisy… In love for the brethren, be tenderly affection with one another… rejoice in hope, endure in trouble, persevere in prayer… bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse! Be of the same mind with one another! … associate with humble… as much as is in your power, be at peace with all people. Do not seek revenge, beloved, but let God's wrath follow its course. (12:9)

Betraying oneself because of conformism with the societal or religious norms or because of the lack of courage is the main source of suffering and self-destruction for Tolstoy. The old and scary bearded man that haunts Anna's night and day dreams, then, is an indicator of this betrayal and his sin. He works with metal, speaks French and always appears around the rail road. All those are the symbols of something unnatural and mechanical (Sato & Sorokina, 1998). Levin does not see the bearded man because he does not betray his humanity; others do not see him for other different reasons. Analyzing Anna's last minutes of life not from the clinical but rather from the symbolic perspective, one can notice her mechanical behaviour that does not allow her to see the beauty in others or in her own Self. She does not think till the very last second. This mechanical behavior symbolizes social norms that objectify and destroy the person the same way the train deformed the bearded man in the beginning of the novel as well as Anna closer to its end.

The mechanical does not necessarily mean material. Material things are part of the human nature: their body, mind, knowledge and emotions (Ferrando, 2012). Walking on the platform in the end of the novel, Anna forgets about the little red bag she holds in her hand. Yet, it stops her from the first jump and urges her to start remembering. Memory, attachments and love could have saved her. Yet the train was moving by inertia and so was Anna: she throws the red bag away, symbolically confirming self-betrayal, and flings herself between the carriages.

> And at the same instant she was terror-stricken at what she was doing… *A little man*[3] muttering something was working at the iron above her. And the light by which she had read the book filled with troubles, falsehoods, sorrow, and evil, flared up more brightly than ever before, lighted up for her all that had been in

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3   My corrections of the translation.

darkness, flickered, began to grow dim, and was quenched forever. (Tolstoy, 2019, part 7, ch.31)

Being afraid of the shame of their position, Anna and Vronsky avoid people. But Tolstoy says directly that there was no shame at all (Tolstoy, 2019, part 5, ch. 8). With natural desire to be happy and alive they behaved naturally like children, and hence, nobody they met felt ashamed of their situation. Using a complex discourse, Tolstoy leads a reader to feel the real conclusion without moralizing. That is why there continue to be a lot of debates and multiple interpretations of symbolism and meanings of his works. Anna is not really the main character of the novel, but rather a symbol of self-destruction caused by passive submission to the structural fear. As a critical treaty, the novel offers a solution by introducing Levin, who symbolizes actively resisting the structural fear by revising it and finding missing pieces of Self in it.

Breaking the rules of innate moral knowledge causes fear. Rules can be broken because of the easier and faster road to a certain goal. Breaking the rule repetitively can create a new pattern and, so, a new rule that would contradict the innate moral knowledge while serving immediate benefit of the few and evoking constant fear both in those who created the rule and those who obey it (Golovátina-Mora, 2016).

In the following section, I will look how different authors address the questions of systemic fear contributing in their way to the ethics of care with a focus on the concept of deception or flee, as it has been elaborated here.

Relevance for the International Relations

The article shares the premise of continuity between international, domestic politics and, further, interpersonal relations. It does not necessarily come from the proximity of interests or interaction of the factors and politics (Chaudoin, Milner & Pang, 2014), but are rather products of the one world view that shapes the way in which they operate (Morgentau, 1948, p. 4). In the dialogue with the concept of *raison d'état* that proclaims the primacy of the state interests, Arendt (1963) noted that the state is always above the laws it issues and protects: and while "devised to eliminate violence and the war of all against all" the law betakes the actions that itself defines as a crime (p. 291). Eichendorff (1826/2015) summarized the reason of state with the proverb: "*Quod licet Iovi, non licet bovi.*"

The innate injustice of the state system (at least as a Western liberal model) privileges one group over another. as that was its design from the beginning (Christoyannopoulus, 2008; Leydet, 2017). "The structure leads to hierarchy, to caste, to bureaucracy, which must be persistently undone," argues Spivak (2012, p. 342). However, it requires sensitivity, accountability, will power and a privilege itself to overwrite the system (Boggs, 2007).

The desire to rule, control and possess another –"clinging to the things made as 'its own'" (Tolkien, 1951)– is likely connected to the human obsession with the perfection or vain and arrogant imitation of the divinity or rather its misinterpretation, a rebel "against the laws of the Creator" (Tolkien, 1951). Voldemort's phrase "But only I can live forever" reflects this pursuit (Yates, 2011). The misinterpretation of the meaning of creation is informed by the choice of easy instead of right (Rowling, 2000, p. 724), by "the desire for Power, making the will more quickly effective <…> instead of development of the inherent inner powers or talents" (Tolkien, 1951), by the belief in false absolutes and binaries and their static nature.

The secularisation of the society challenges the argument of the divine nature of a prince that could justify the asymmetry of power. Thus, in order "to assure its own existence," the law together with the government "always stands in need of the instruments of violence" (Arendt, 1963, p. 291), direct, indirect, material and discursive, and of normalisation of violence. The essence of the structural violence was satirically captured in popular culture:

> But people with guns ensure my peace. People with guns wish me well! <…> People with guns will protect me from people with guns when needed. The good ones will kill all the bad ones. But if the bad ones win, it means they were good after all. And the good ones will thoroughly explain this to us. (Swanky Tunes, Noize MC, Monetochka, 2018)

Dr. Arnim Zola in *Captain America* elaborates on the need of normalisation. *The Winter Soldier*, when he revealed the strategy developed by the secret "parasite" organisation HYDRA: "What we did not realize was that if you tried to take that freedom, they resist […] Humanity needed to surrender its freedom willingly" (Russo & Russo, 2014). A century before that, Saltykov-Schedrin wrote: "My system is very simple – never allow anything directly and never prohibit anything directly" (Saltykov-Schedrin, 1988, np). Similarly, President Snow explains the colonial system of control in the cinematic version of *The Hunger Games*:

> Why do we have a winner? I mean, if we just wanted to intimidate the districts, why not round up twenty-four of them at random and execute them all at once? Be a lot faster. …Hope. It is the only thing stronger than fear. A little hope is effective. A lot of hope is dangerous. A spark is fine, as long as it's contained. (Ross, 2012)

The social contract theory that defines the Western social and political thought and the common understanding of the society-state relations is based on the subordination of underprivileged to the privileged, and it rather sounds as a way to justify the dominant group (individual) power (Dorlin, 2018; Grosfoguel, 2011). Not trusting oneself and by extension the others, a person, according to this logic, would delegate their protection to the third part (paradoxically also human) in exchange for their freedom. Korstanje (2010) defines this complex systemic logic as the state of fear. Its paradox is in the fear of the system, intuitive understanding of its destructiveness for a person, the world and the system itself, and yet the desire to sustain it whatever it takes. Deleuze and Guattari emphasize its schizophrenic nature of such a worldview and the social structure related to it: the state of a split (2005). Fromm, whom Korstanje uses to support his thesis, insists on the destructiveness and the insanity of the Western world order throughout his publications and explains it from the standpoint of social psychology as a fear of freedom that a person faces in the process of individuation (Fromm, 1942, 1973, 2002). The escape appears easier than to continue making choices while developing one's personality.

The destructive escape from freedom is based on self-deception, which has been recognized as human nature or rather as its political nature by classic political realism, but not as a damaging psychological result of the pursuit of power, "For only by deceiving himself about the nature of politics and the role he plays on the political scene is man able to live contentedly as a political animal with himself and his fellow men" (Morgenthau, 1997, p. 16-17).

The power is seen by this thought exclusively as power over. Deceptive itself, the power-over is convinced in the deceptiveness of everybody else, yet cynically demanding "eternal loyalty" (Rowling, 2000, p. 647) as an extra tool of subordination and control. The "voluntarily" subordination to a violent by design ruler, either individual or systemic, gives to a ruler additional argument as a defensive psychological mechanism (McLeod, 2020): "You deserve this pain, Wormtail. You know that, don't you?", Voldemort enjoyingly justifies his cruelty towards his servant (Rowling, 2000, p. 649).

While the defense mechanisms are normal bodily reactions indicating what has to be addressed or resolved, their excessive usage leads to neuroses and obsessions. Normalized structural violence, or symbolic violence, using Bourdieu's term (Burawoy, 2019), is the normalization of the excessive usages of such defensive mechanisms. It generates toxic relations throughout the society, and hence, more violence and suffering when left unrecognized and unquestioned. A person being not aware of the cause of it would only feel guilty for not complying with the norm or even for not knowing how to react. Denial, projection, repression, and so on, become systemic and continuously normalized reactions of individual and collective bodies increasing their suffering and leading gradually to self-destruction.

Universalization and homogenization as the strategies of the systemic (structural) violence imply privilege, exclusion (Mooten, 2016), and imperial extractivism of all the resources, eventually undermining one's own resilience. Difference ensures resilience, but requires trust. The fiction visualizes what might be overlooked in the reality: dark empty rooms of Hogwarts after Dumbledore's death and the atmosphere of permanent fear at the meetings of death eaters in *Harry Potter* (Yates, 2011), dark and scorched Mordor or industrial landscapes instead of the blooming orchards of Isengard in *The Lord of the Rings* (Jackson, 2002), highways instead of a happy colourful cartoon world in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (Zemeckis, 1988) draw attention to the illogical attraction of fear.

Deception as Structure

Deception takes the forms of passive conformism, direct lie and discursive manipulation by means of floating signifiers and replacement of the meaning (Laclau, 1994) that becomes a social norm or an institution: "Politeness is deception in pretty packaging" (Roth, 2011, p. 81); "they still hate and fear us, it's just harder to see because they're more polite about it" (Singer, 2016). Questioning the employed meaning of a value is interpreted as questioning the value itself, "I am sorry, dear, but to question my practices is to question the Ministry, and by extension, the Minister himself. I am a tolerant woman, but the one thing I will not stand for is disloyalty" (Yates, 2007).

The principle of absolute monarchy –L'État, c'est moi– is still valid in the disguised form. The state and the society are perceived as perfect or as "that is all we get," or the better of all the evils, as a no alternative. Both questioning it,

suffering from and in it, or protesting are perceived as a threat and discursively accused as an imperfect and alien element that is to be eliminated. Chaos as a source of difference challenges the idea of the homogenized perfect order and is perceived as a threat in the Western imaginary of enactment of Genesis. The deception reflects the fear of chaos presented in the misleading way as an absolute (binary) opposite to the order. The firmly embedded in the Western consciousness belief in a possibility of chaos produces fear, anxiety and neuroses that are exploited by the state of fear as a source of control. The mindset supports the entire system of social organization from daily routine to politics, leaving little room for an imagination of an alternative.

As a social construct, social institutions are the products of the human mind. The human mind requires structure to be able to operate, but it also possesses its own system of checks and balances to secure freedom from the oppressive structures. The idea of the possibility and importance of continuous undoing, revising, re-adjusting and changing social structure is basic in critical thought. Belief in the ability of a person to organize themselves without the supreme authority is based on the idea of trust and belief in the Other as one believes in Self, in the innate knowledge. In fact, with the appropriate training in critical reflexivity or praxis, a person in a collective (a community, a society, a group) would actually be able to develop a more balanced self-renewable system when left alone without the rigid hierarchical power structure (Freire, 2010; Marcuse, 1971; Martin, 2001). The sane society is the society of love and non-possessive care, where "to hap care [care for shattered things] is not about letting an object go but holding on to an object by letting oneself go, giving oneself over to something that is not one's own" (Ahmed, 2017, p. 266). The care is based on the recognition of the Other –Self in them and them in Self, of the sharedness of the world we are part of; to create a space– opening for difference. Having summoned his servants, Voldemort accuses them in disloyalty: "You returned to me, not out of loyalty, but out of fear of your old friends" (Rowling, 2000, p. 649). A tired driver confronts such logic with his direct reply to an ideological instructor (Gurin, 1974): "It is all upside down. You want me to give you a ride out of my free will, and yet you resort to fear." "Only love has the right to impel," Scherbakova insists (2010, 20).

The structure based on the deception and the worldview it supports produce multiple systemic, material, practical and discursive inconsistencies (Braidotti, 2006) that could be felt intuitively. Marcuse (1971) calls such feeling a sensitivity towards any form of oppression, and it could be easily revealed by comparing

"saying" and "doing," for example, by applying the same evaluation or judgement algorithm to evaluate the system that proclaimed it (Feyerabend, 1975).

A short conversation between young Mikhailo Lomonosov in his conversation with a country priest in the cinematic biography of the famous Russian polymath (Proshkin, 1986, ep. 1) illustrates such critical revision:

> Lomonosov: How come, Semion Nikitich, the Book of Psalms says "A man ought to be not a catcher of the words but the seeker of the truth"… Would not that be secular books where I shall look for truths of the secular life?
> Priest: Quit guessing! What does Bible say? – "I shall destroy the wisdom of the sage and reject the sense of the wise." Understood?
> Lomonosov: Understood. Only one thing is still unclear. Today is a fasting day. How come are you eating meat and drink wine?

To summarize the discussion and to illustrate "methodological deception," I will use Marvel's cinematic image of Captain America. Steve Rogers (Captain America) embodies a value of freedom, justice and equity, and the order based on these values: "I don't want to kill anyone. But I do not like bullies; I don't care where they come from," he replies to Dr. Abraham Erskine's test question whether he wants to kill Nazis (Johnston, 2011). These values define his moral choice of action. While it sounds contradictory to the advocates of the system –Lt. Col. James Rhodes (Army) and Tony Stark (Business)– Steve refuses to sign the binding Sokovia Accords that would make the Avengers an International Institution, as an action of not taking the responsibility for their actions as that document "shifts the blame." He stands up to the national and international law in the Civil War:

> Lt. Col. James Rhodes: Sorry, Steve, that... *that is* dangerously arrogant. This is the United Nations we're talking about. It's not the World Security Council, it's not S.H.I.E.L.D, it's not Hydra.
> Steve Rogers: No, but it's run by people with agendas and agendas change. (Russo & Russo, 2016)

Believing in people as he believes in Self, he acts as an agent of chaos from the perspective of the state-based structure and its displaced notion of arrogance. As a superhero, he uses his privilege to set a precedent to challenge the dominant structure and undo it. His popularity created a threat beyond the script at the meta level and caused a highly controversial systemic response: a proposal of rebooting *Captain America,* where Captain America would be a secret HYDRA agent from the start (Dockterman, 2016). The debate was settled in *the End*

Game, when Rogers whispers "Heil Hydra" to a soldier in order to retrieve one of the infinity stones (Russo & Russo, 2019).

Resistance to the structural violence is the essence of the ethics of care. The following section will summarize the three key components that convey the resistance.

Critical Reflexivity – Being Honest

The late 1960s movie *Literature Class* (Korneev, 1968) announces honesty as the key value for a person's growth, and empowerment and liberation that that come with it: "Coming of age possibly means the age when one stops asking questions to the others and starts asking them to oneself." After a day of honesty, the leading character, a school teacher, comes to realize that he "lived the way he wanted: "I was not afraid of nobody, I was saying what I thought to the others and to myself." The literary version of the story is less optimistic and leaves an open end or a choice to the main character to continue the day of honesty or return to the old way of living: "It appears that to tell the truth one must live it. If not – lie or keep silence" (Tokareva, 2005, 145). But the advantages of that day were very obvious to the main character both in the movie and in the literary version.

> I found out that there are much more good people than the bad. And how convenient it would be if everyone always told the truth even when speaking about something insignificant. Because if you tell lies about something insignificant, by default you will lie about something important. (Tokareva, 2005, 145)

The movie ends with the following line: "What did I lose today? – Everything! What did I find? – Everything!" (Korneev, 1968). With his first *everything* the character means everything he had in his previous life: his job and salary, his friend and his fiancée; by saying the second *everything,* he means himself. The character decided to have a day without lies after he had noticed that he lied a lot recently about many little things. He contemplates: "It's a bad sign. It means I am not free. People lie when they are afraid" (Tokareva, 2005, 139). "What shall I be afraid of? I don't have to be afraid of anything," he continues in the movie, and "I won't be afraid of anybody today," in the literary version of the story. By employing visual forms of communication, the movie accentuates the moment of his decision not to be afraid of anything and to be honest: everyone in a trolleybus that he rides while thinking over his decision is hiding behind the official Soviet

newspaper *Pravda*, which means *truth* in Russian. The main character takes it out of his pocket as well.

Both story lines reflect about the thought of conformism with the obvious wrong that nourishes fear and contributes to the bigger wrong. The Thaw-time narrative invites to review with honesty the founding values of the system but more specifically a collective and individual Self.

Embracing Fear

Embracing fear and one's imperfection as trust in Self, one's ethical principles as an act of resistance to an oppressive structure, is a recurrent motif in literature, cinema and popular culture in general. Fear can be represented by the nemesis of the main character or the character themselves. Harry Potter and Voldemort's relations (Rowling, 1998-2007) are quite exemplary. Their connection shapes the story line: in order to destroy the villain, Harry Potter has to fall from the hands of the villain himself. The scene of the final fight is symbolic. When standing on the tower, Harry Potter finishes his explanation of the chain of the events that leads to the defeat of Voldemort with the words: "Come on, Tom. Let's finish this the way we started: together!" (Harry Potter Wiki, Voldemort`s Last Stand). He hugs him and they jump together from the tower, holding each other's heads. Honest Trailer (Screen Junkees, np) characterized the final stand as boring. The lack of actual movement, yet, is meaningful. It is not about the physical movement, but about the movement of energy, emotions and will power –the movement inwards.

Relations between Harry Potter and the dementors provide another good example. Dementors, the guardians of the prison Azkaban, the darkest creatures that suck one's happy memories until their victim is dry empty are especially attracted to Harry (Rowling, 1999, p. 247). He loses one happy memory after another with each one of their attacks. The same process, yet, could be seen as they bring those memories to the surface, which helps him to rediscover his past, details about his parents' death, and his first days, to eventually find his memory strong enough to protect him and everybody around him against them.

Tris, in the dystopian saga Divergent (Roth, 2011-2013), can resist to all the serums only thanks to her integrity. Every serum represents another fear, every time going to a deeper level of Self. Embracing her fears, Tris increases her integrity until she confronts death. Death serum miraculously for the outsider

but logically for Tris does not kill her (Roth, 2013, pp. 467-469). It is logical for Tris because she is the most powerful divergent. Death serum gives her the revelation of the highest wisdom about the true meaning of love and forgiveness first of all of herself, and hence, of the true meaning of abnegation –the faction she came from. She chooses to use her privilege of knowledge to empower the others through non-possessive care:

> …it's not sacrifice if it's someone else's life you're giving away, it's just evil." I take another step and say, "She [my mother] taught me all about real sacrifice. That it should be done from love, not misplaced disgust for another person's genetics. That it should be done from necessity, not without exhausting all other options. That it should be one for people who need your strength because they don't have enough of their own." (Roth, 2013, pp. 473-474)

The list of examples can go on: Katniss in The Hunger Games series (Collins, 2010, ch. 27, epilogue) finds peace with herself embracing her past and forgiving her darker Self. The symbolic act of this forgiveness is the fact that she gave birth to two children in the very end of the novel even though the story starts with her strong belief that she would not bring children to this cruel world. It symbolizes the chance she gives to herself, the world and the future out of self-forgiveness and love. Bella Swan of the Twilight Saga (Meyer, 2005-2008) survives the birth of her half-vampire, half-human child and the rite of passage of the infernal fire of the desire only out of love and thanks to love. She turns to a vampire of the Cullen clan, who symbolizes life rather than death. Bella finds her true Self putting it together piece by piece from volume to volume (Golovátina-Mora, 2015). The culmination of this journey is her final ability to use her talent –the shield– and extend it outside her head to protect everyone in the final battle with the possessive Volturi clan. The novel ends with her lifting the shield and letting her beloved see her thoughts. This act opposite of shielding is the highest stage of mastering the talent as she learnt the courage of making herself vulnerable for the sake of love.

Loving

Love, as a source of creation as I discussed earlier, appears as the opposite to possession and guilt. It includes love of fear that is part of our Selves. By embracing fear as a source of knowledge, one embraces the present and transforms the future of fear into the future of hope (Ahmed, 2004).

The Divergent Saga concludes, "You will never know them, but sometimes you decide to trust them" (Roth, 2012, p. 510). Hope-trust in the others is essential for the mending, as it opens up new roads and knowledges for one's Self, both individual and collective. It is the way of resistance (Golovátina-Mora, 2014). "Since I was young, I have always known this: Life damages us, every one. We can't escape that damage. But now, I am also learning this: We can be mended. We mend each other", concludes another central character of the Divergent Saga (Roth, 2013, p. 526).

Conclusions

The stories analyzed in this article came to the same conclusion of impossibility of fearlessness: everybody is always afraid of something. Commonality of fear proposes its possible functionality: a breaking point where structural and organic discourses meet, creating a productive contrast to scrutinize both. Honesty, care, responsiveness, responsibility and difference in Self, Other and the shared World, as founding value help to develop sensitivity, necessary for critical revision of the discourse. By embracing fear and one's imperfection, the characters recognize fear as an indicator of systemic faults and visualize the necessity of change. They disrupt the structural displacement of the source of violence and colonial practice of fragmentation of periphery of power. This recognition initiates the process of decentralization of power by building alliances between the oppressed and marginalized forces. As Ahmed (2017) wrote, "caring is anxious" as "the future is embodied in the fragility of an object whose persistence matters" (p. 266). Care means resistance as you recognize what was shattered and do not create homogenous monuments, but "value each piece; shattering as the beginning of another story" (p. 266). It is anxious, and those who care choose being empowered by feeling vulnerable, as they recognize what was lost by shattering and what was found. Caring is to give power to the Other.

The analysis emphasizes the importance of a holistic or ecological approach to the sources of our knowledge as well as the process of sense making itself. The majority of the stories analyzed in the article insist on drifting away from the categorization or division as the essential epistemological tool, represented by, for example, the faction system in the Divergent series, the district system in The Hunger Games, or any social conventions and norms, generally speaking, that may temporarily offer the sense of security and order while supressing any other existing or possible counter narratives. As the Sorting Hat song of 1995 warns

the Hogwarts houses in the Harry Potter series, "And we must unite inside her or we'll crumble from within" (Rowling, 2003, p. 207). This anarchic-pacifist proposal does not go against the structures as they form a significant part of the human identity and, therefore, of knowledge about Self and the world, but against any form of segregation and oppression.

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