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FOR A RECONSTRUCTION OF A.F. LOSEV'S WORK ON DOSTOEVSKY AT GAKHN'S LITERARY SECTION¹

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Abstract. The article deals with one interesting historical and philosophical fact that is still poorly investigated in the field Dostoevsky's studies: the analysis of the work on Fyodor Dostoevsky conducted by the famous Russian philosopher Aleksei Fedorovich Losev while working at the State Academy of Artistic Sciences (GAKhN). The article also provides additional information about Losev's work at GAKhN in the 1920s, based on archival evidence.

Particular attention is paid to the activities of the Russian philosopher at GAKhN's Literary Section in 1927–1929 (in the group for the study of ancient literature, in the Commission for the Study of Dostoevsky's work). The author cites numerous evidences of Losev's special attention to the work of Dostoevsky, including the fact that the Russian philosopher took part in discussions with reports on topics devoted to the work of the Russian writer.

The author draws attention to the fact that the main point of Losev's analysis of Dostoevsky's work was the symbolism of the writer. Dostoevsky's work attracted Losev throughout his life. This is evidenced not only by youthful memories of his passion for the work of the great novelist, but also references to the Russian writer, which are observed in his works of different periods. The author notes that Losev turned to the study of the problem of the symbol in the works of Dostoevsky already in the 1920s, but the philosopher managed to publish these studies only much later. According to Losev, symbolic images permeate the entire work of the Russian writer. Losev's prose of the 1930–1940s also did not remain devoid of ideological contaminations in the spirit of Dostoevsky: suffice it to mention here such works of the Russian philosopher as *Perepiska v komnate* (*Correspondence in the Room*), *Vstrecha* (*The Meeting*), the novel *Zhenshchina-myslitel'* (*The Woman-thinker*). The same religious pathos of Losev's philosophical discourse is also present in his prose, for example, in the themes of man's estrangement from ideal life and rejection of the religious sphere.

Based on a comprehensive analysis of archival sources, primarily the minutes of GAKhN meetings stored in the RGALI archive, and their comparison, the author presents, as far as possible, a picture of the activities and interests of the Russian philosopher, which helps to better represent the range of his scientific interests and significantly expands the possibilities for further research on this period of Losev's life, and also provides new materials for the history of GAKhN.

Keywords: A.F. Losev, GAKhN's Literary section, F.M. Dostoevsky, GAKhN's archive materials

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¹ A shorter version of this paper was published in [1], in Russian.

Научная статья

МАТЕРИАЛЫ К РЕКОНСТРУКЦИИ РАБОТЫ А.Ф. ЛОСЕВА О Ф.М. ДОСТОЕВСКОМ В ЛИТЕРАТУРНОЙ СЕКЦИИ ГАХН

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Аннотация. В статье приводятся дополнительные сведения о работе Алексея Федоровича Лосева (1893–1988) в Государственной академии художественных наук (ГАХН) в 1920-е гг. Особое внимание уделяется его деятельности в Литературной секции в период с 1927 по 1929 г. и его интерпретации культурного наследия Федора Достоевского. На основе всестороннего сравнительного анализа архивных источников автор обрисовывает картину деятельности и интересов А.Ф. Лосева, что помогает лучше представить круг его научных интересов и значительно расширяет возможности для дальнейших исследований этого периода жизни А.Ф. Лосева, а также предоставляет новые материалы для реконструкции истории ГАХН.

Ключевые слова: А.Ф. Лосев, Литературная секция ГАХН, Ф.М. Достоевский, архивные материалы ГАХН

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In recent years, the history of the State Academy of Artistic Sciences (GAKhN, 1921–1931) has increasingly attracted the attention of researchers. There have been published works that shed light on certain moments of its history, as well as publications of previously unpublished materials stored in Russian archives. However, as Nikolay Bogomolov pointed out, little attention was paid to GAKhN's Literary section [2. P. 278]¹.

The Literary section was created at the end of 1921, in parallel with the foundation of the Academy², and its first meeting was held on November 26, 1922 [5. P. 23]. The main task of the section was the scientific study of literature in its various trends and schools. Its main interests included the notion of literary style, the poetic form in the broadest sense of the word, and work on unpublished materials. At first, three subsections were formed: theoretical poetics (where “poetics” meant both poetic and fictional works), literary history, and folklore. A few years later, to them was added the subsection of literary criticism, and from 1924–1925 began their activity the subsection of Western literature and the Commission of literary translation [5. P. 24]. The work plan of the Literary Section during the last years (1930–1931, 1932–1933) provided for three main directions: Russian literature (ancient and Western literature), history of the science of literature and literary criticism, and literary theory. In addition, the study of Lev Tolstoy and

¹ An exception is the recently published book edited by Plotnikov, Podzemskaja and Yakimenko [3]. GAKhN materials can also be found in [4].

² The Russian Academy of Art Sciences (*Rossijskaja akademija chudožestvennyh nauk*, RAKhN), renamed the State Academy of Artistic Sciences since 1925 (*Gosudarstvennaja Akademija Chudožestvennyh nauk*, GAKhN), was founded on 7 October 1921 on the initiative of Vasily Kandinsky and Aleksandr Gabrichevskij, with the support of the People's Commissioner for Education Anatoly Lunacharsky. In the scientific and academic landscape of those years, the Academy, chaired by Petr Kogan with Gustav Špet in the role of vice-president since 1924, played a particularly significant role, not only for the originality of the approach and the topics covered – the psychology of art, the analysis of the internal form of the word, aesthetic reception – also for the relative independence that it managed to maintain for several years with respect to the prevailing Marxist orientation in research.

Fyodor Dostoevsky's work (the Dostoevsky commission was headed by Valerian Fedorovich Pereverzev) was continued [6. P. 1–4]. The Literary section published the collection “Ars poetica” (the first issue of which was issued in 1927), as well as research works and investigations devoted to the problems of artistic expression, Russian and foreign literary prose and to the poetic language. The section also conducted work on unpublished materials of Russian writers and raised the question of the Dostoevsky House (*Dom Dostoevskogo*) [7. P. 26–27].

Along with subsections (theoretical poetics, historical, folklore, criticism and literary criticism, general literature), in May 27, 1922, at the suggestion of Nikolay Piksarov was formed the Commission for the study of Dostoevsky, which was then reformed in December 1923. It included N.K. Piksarov, L.P. Grossman, V.V. Veresaev, V.F. Pereverzev, G.I. Chulkov and others. The Commission developed a plan for the study and analysis of the Russian writer's texts based on new materials and, as a result of the plenary discussions held at the Literary section, prepared a number of works for publication in this field, suffice it to mention Georgy Chulkov's renowned *Dostoevsky's Poetics*. It should be noted that literature within the framework of GAKhN was studied at different departments (Physiopsychological, Sociological and Philosophical). The close connection of the Philosophical Department with the Literary section was largely due to the efforts of Gustav Shpet, vice-president of the Academy [8, 9]. Literary criticism was understood by many GAKhN members not as a mere method of studying works of art, but as part of the *philosophy* of art¹. Such transitional ideological atmosphere of scientific universalism, as well as the dialogue between different interpretations of literature [11], could not fail to attract Aleksei Losev, who was both a philosopher, a writer and a philologist. However, little is known about Losev's participation in the Literary section. Would it be appropriate to see in this lack of information only the influence of circumstances? In the last years of its existence, GAKhN experienced a crisis moment, as evidenced by archival materials², moreover, Losev did not work at the Academy for long, and soon Losev will be expelled from the Academy. Nevertheless, archival information about the activities of the Academy makes it possible, at least hypothetically, to raise the question of the possibility of Losev's scientific dialogue with the main research themes developed in the Literary Section.

Losev's work at GAKhN began in 1923³, when he became a full member of the Academy, and continued until his discharge in 1930 due to staff cuts, a few months after the closing of the Academy⁴. In 1923 he was a member of the

¹ The investigations on art theory at the Philosophical Department found expression in the work on the artistic form (starting from 1924–1925, when a commission for the study of art form was created, guided by Gustav Shpet), as well as on the preparation of the collective works *Iskusstvo portreta* (*The Art of Portrait*, Moscow, 1927) and *Khudozhestvennaja forma* (*The Artistic Form*, Moscow, 1927). The Philosophical Department also organized work on the compilation of a *Dictionary of Artistic Terms*. See [10].

² For instance, see the open letter addressed to the GAKhN's President P.S. Kogan of February 28, 1929 (78 signatories, including Losev) with a request to resolve urgent issues regarding the existing organization of the Academy [12. P. 85].

³ In a letter addressed to Špet dated May 30, 1922, Losev asked to be admitted as an external collaborator (*vneštatnyj sotrudnik*) of the Institute of Philosophy [13. P. 77].

⁴ According to the materials stored in Losev personal dossier (*ličnoe delo*) of the GAKhN fund at RGALI archive, the dismissal took place with a certificate of 8 February 1930 based on the resolution of 21 January 1930 of the Glavnauka (Central Directorate of Scientific, Scientific-Artistic and Museum Institutions) [14. P. 21; 15].

Commission for the study of artistic terminology, created with the aim of publishing a (never completed) *Vocabulary of artistic terms* [10], in which he will take part with some entries. The following year (1924–1925) he headed the Musical-psychological commission and was elected president of the Commission for the form of the Philosophical department. From 1925 he joined the Music section as a full member, where he presented a series of reports on music, which will form the basis for the publication of *Muzyka kak predmet logiki* (*Music as a Subject of Logic*, 1927). Finally, between 1926 and 1927 he was president of the Commission for the study of aesthetic doctrines, and a few years later (1929) he was secretary of the Group for the study of musical aesthetics [16]. In addition to participating in the works of these sections, Losev presented various reports in other sectors¹, such as the Association of Rhythmists and the Literary section, thanks to the fruitful exchange between different areas that was GAKhN's main feature as an institute. Losev also took part in the work of the Commission for the study of art education, mainly with themes relating to antiquity. Losev's work at GAKhN continued until his arrest in 1930. The Academy soon was closed².

Such a variety of interests and fields of research could only positively influence the development of Losev's thought; observing the titles of his reports, many of which have not yet been found in Russian archives, we notice an evident insistence on the themes that will be resumed in his works of the 1920s – the ontology of the symbol, the cultural roots of classical and romantic aesthetics, the notion of myth, the dialectics of musical form –, consequently it cannot be excluded that the systematisation of Losev's philosophy dates back to these years. Our thesis is supported by sometimes very evident examples. The report *O mifotvorchestve* (*On Mythopoiesis*, 1926–1927) [17. P. 219–220] almost literally anticipates the well-known Losev's definition of myth and the criticism of modern theories of myth as they appear in *Dialektika mifa* (*Dialectics of Myth*, 1930), so much so as to suggest a much previous elaboration with respect to the final draft of the work. Another example is the report *Dialektika v nemeckoj estetike konca XVIII veka* (*Dialectics in German Aesthetics of the End of the XVIII Century*, 1925), which theses will be taken up almost entirely in the long in-depth footnotes dedicated to Romantic aesthetics in *Dialektika chudozhestvennoj formy* (*Dialectics of the Artistic Form*, 1927) [Ibid. P. 215]. The same applies in particular to the musical theme, whose relationship with *Muzyka kak predmet logiki* is made explicit by the author himself; for example, the report *K voprosu o sistematike muzykal'no-theoreticheskikh kategorij* (*For the Problem of a Systematics of Musical-theoretical Categories*, January 26 and February 23, 1928) is presented as “an extract from the work *Music and logic* that he wrote in this year” [20. P. 13/ob].

In recent years, several works have been published, testifying Losev's activities at GAKhN [3; 15; 17; 21–23], however in many cases we only know the titles of the reports, as their textual version has not been found yet. Here we would like

¹ The list of reports and some of the abstracts were published in 1991 by A.G. Dunaev [17].

² The reorganization of the Academy began after the approval of the resolution of the People's Commissariat for Education on November 25, 1929. On January 6, the new Presidium of the State Academy of Artistic Sciences was approved. In the minutes No. 343 of the Presidium of GAKhN dated January 6, 1930 (chairman – P.S. Kogan), it is decided to consider a number of employees as former members of GAKhN, including A.F. Losev (paragraph 13). See [18. P. 111]. Losev was dismissed from the post of full member of GAKhN on February 1, 1930 due to staff reductions (Decree of Glavnauka, dated January 21, 1930), see [17. P. 199]. On the “purges” at GAKhN see [19].

to refer to some archival materials which testify the participation of the Russian philosopher in the work of the Literary Section in the 1920s.

Losev actively participated in the work of the group for the study of ancient literature of the subsection of General literature. He took part in the discussions on the reports of the classical philologist F.A. Petrovsky *Replika i stikh u Plavta* (*Line and Verse in Plautus*, December 17, 1928) and the philologist-Germanist A.G. Chelpanov *K voprosu o zhanre istorii Gerodota* (*On the Issue of the Genre of the History of Herodotus*, March 6, 1929) [23. P. 20], as well as in the organizational meetings of the ancient group (November 21, 1928, and December 5, 1928 [Ibid. P. 14; attendees list: 24, p. 15], November 1929–March 1930 [Ibid. P. 5]), served as president in the debate on M.E. Grabar'-Passek's report (October 30, 1929)¹.

In the list of all GAKhN meetings for December 1929 of the group for the study of ancient literature, among the discussions of topics planned for collective study, Losev's reports *O rabote po chudozhestvennomu stiliju* (*On the Work on Artistic Style*, December 5, 1928) [24. P. 74] and *Plan raboty po chudozhestvennomu literaturnomu stiliju* (*Plan of the Work on the Artistic Literary Style*, December 17, 1928) [25; 17. P. 202] are mentioned. Losev himself mentions his work in the ancient group of the literary section in a report kept in the GAKhN fund in the Russian State Archive of Literature and Arts (RGALI). On a separate handwritten sheet (no date) we read:

"A.F. Losev

1. Conducted work for five years on the history of aesthetic doctrines in the cabinet

2. major specialist in Ancient aesthetics

3. plans to conduct work next year

a. on the sociology of aesthetic doctrines²

b. according to the terminological cabinet

c. in the Ancient group of the s[ub]/s[ection] of General literature of the Literary section

d. in the Music section" [12. P. 23/ob].

In addition, Losev is mentioned among the employees participating in the work of the Dostoevsky Commission for 1928–1929³. The general research direction of the Commission's activities, as we read in the work plans of the section for 1928–1929, was shared by Losev: "[...] a group of researchers focused their attention on the development of the problem of critical and organic principles in Dostoevsky's artistic dialectics. Considering the ideas of the writer as a kind of artistic material, this group of researchers establishes a connection between the style of the writer and his ideology, since the latter finds expression in his artistic dialectics" [26. P. 32/ob]⁴. Losev intervened at meetings of departments and sections with

¹ 9th minutes of the second meeting of the group for the study of ancient literature [23. P. 96].

² In his *Report on A.F. Losev's scientific work for the academic year 1927–1928*, Losev wrote that "material was being collected for a book on the sociology of art". No work under this name has been identified yet. It is possible that the material was collected, but the work itself was not realized. For more details see [15. P. 167].

³ Minutes of the meeting of the Presidium of the Literary section of May 17, 1928. See [26. P. 32/ob].

⁴ On mythical imagery in Dostoevsky see [27, 28].

reports related to the classification of arts, the problem of the artistic word, artistic style and symbolic forms [29. P. 445], and further developed research on these topics in later works.

In the plan of the Dostoevsky Commission's work, the list of reports scheduled for 1927–1928 includes Losev's report *Simvolizm v poetike Dostoevskogo* (*Symbolism in Dostoevsky's Poetics*) [30. P. 85]¹. Another of his reports entitled *Simvolizm Dostoevskogo* (*Dostoevsky's Symbolism*) was included in the work plan for the year 1928–1929 at a meeting held on May 17, 1928 [26. P. 33/ob; 32. P. 125/ob]. However, neither the text nor the theses could be found in the archive. In the schedule of meetings of the literary section from October to April 1929, the reports read by Losev are not mentioned, and in the list of scientific and temporary employees of the literary section for 1928–1929 Losev's name is not indicated [36. P. 59].

As part of the work of the Dostoevsky commission, he took part in the debate on the reports by Georgy Chulkov *Kriticheskoe i organicheskoe v chudozhestvennoj dialektike Dostoevskogo* (*Critical and Organic in Dostoevsky's Artistic Dialectics*, March 29, 1928) [33. P. 20–21], F.F. Berezhkov *Snovidenija v "Prestuplenii i nakazanii"*. *Po povodu knigi Otto Kaus* (*Dreams in "Crime and Punishment"*. *About Otto Kaus's Book*, October 25, 1928) [34. P. 7], A.E. Gornostaeva *Dostoevsky i N.F. Fedorov* (*Dostoevsky and N.F. Fedorov*, December 27, 1928) [Ibid. P. 15].

As already noted by researchers, the connection with Losev's reports at GAKhN emerges from the comparison with his works of the 1920s, as evidenced by Losev's references to his own reports in the "octateuch"² and by recently found archival materials [22]. In a similar way, Losev will turn again to the issue of Dostoevsky's symbolism in his *Problema simvola i realisticheskoe iskusstvo* (*The Problem of Symbol and Realistic Art*, 1976), in which he examines the deep symbolic images that permeate all of Dostoevsky's work. In particular, Losev dwells on the symbol of the "slanting rays of the setting sun" [36. P. 180]³ that has repeatedly appeared in the Russian writer's works. Here too we can find a parallel with the discussions at GAKhN. In *The Problem of Symbol and Realistic Art*, discussing the main symbol in Dostoevsky, Losev refers to an article [Ibid. P. 179] by Sergei Durylin *Ob odnom simvole u Dostoevskogo* (*On One Symbol in Dostoevsky*), published in the 1928 collection *Dostoevsky. Proceedings of the State Academy of Artistic Sciences* [38]. The same work also contains quite large passages devoted to "the identity and difference of a symbol with its subject" on the example of Dostoevsky's symbols in *The Eternal Husband*, *The Double*, *Notes from the Underground*, *The Brothers Karamazov* and *The Adolescent* [36. P. 40–43]. Also, Losev's idea that "Dostoevsky's Petersburg is a real symbol in our sense of the word" [Ibid. P. 181] was a topic no stranger to the discussions held at the Literary section in 1927–1928 [7. P. 27]⁴.

¹ Losev is not mentioned in the list of meetings from 10/01/1927 to 10/01/1928. According to the data recorded in the minutes No. 1-18 of the meetings of the subsection of General literature in 1927–1928 [31. P. 1], Losev attended only the meeting of November 21, 1928 to discuss the tasks of the group [23. P. 4].

² Some parallels were noted already in 1991 by A.G. Dunaev [17. P. 204–205]. On the influence of discussions at GAKhN on Losev's literary prose see [35].

³ On this theme see also [37].

⁴ For Losev's attitude to symbolism, see [39].

Of great value, in our opinion, are his observations of those characters of the Russian writer who reveal the contradiction of human nature as such. According to Losev, the randomness of the behaviour in Dostoevsky's heroes hides the heterogeneity of personality as a symbol. It should be noted that the work of Dostoevsky attracted Losev throughout his life. This is evidenced not only by youthful memories of his passion for the work of the great novelist [13. P. 59–60], but also references to the Russian writer, which are observed in his works of different periods [40]. For Losev, Dostoevsky was not only a great and original artist-thinker who tried to answer the “damned” questions of human existence, but his works can be considered as an artistic attempt to describe the universal human desire to search for the meaning of being, to inner freedom.

Reflecting on the relationship between literature and philosophy, Losev identifies the characteristic trait of Russian thought precisely in its intimate connection with the aesthetic and literary sphere, which he interpreted, within the opposition of *ratio* and *logos*, as the choice of an expressive mode closer to the dimension of concrete life and different from the logical-rational one.

This “vitality” of Russian philosophical thought is due to the fact that the belle-lettres are the cradle of the original Russian philosophy. The prose works of Žukovsky and Gogol', the works of Tyutčev, Fet, Lev Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Maxim Gorky, often deal with the main philosophical questions, obviously, in their specifically Russian, exclusively practical, life-oriented form. And these issues are discussed in such a way that any impartial and competent judge will call such solutions not only “literary” or “artistic”, but philosophical and ingenious [41. P. 188–189].

Precisely in this particular tension of thought, according to Losev, lies the specificity of Dostoevsky's work, since “a writer and poet must think ‘eschatologically’” [42. P. 62], must try to resolve “the inner questions”. The Russian philosopher emphasizes: “Remember how much tension in the search for Dostoevsky's heroes [...] Sometimes it seems that if Alyosha Karamazov does not solve the question of faith, if Ivan does not find his ideal truth, then there will be no peace” [Ibid.]. Losev reveals a series of ideas which go back to Dostoevsky's philosophical attitude: the crisis of humanism, the awareness of the need to reject the deified world, return to the original being, to the “existential” question, which poses the problem of man's connection with the Absolute¹.

In the early article *Russkaja filosofija* (*Russian Philosophy*, 1919) Losev wrote that *The Brothers Karamazov* “gives an understanding of the world of that depth of life, in which the roots of all existence are hidden and the prediction of the near end of the world is clearly heard” [41. P. 260]. It is clear that the philosopher of this new Russian apocalyptic sense of life, Vladimir Soloviev, the who had a great influence on Russian religious thinkers like Sergei Bulgakov and Nikolay Berdyaev. Indeed, in Dostoevsky, Losev traces the same philosophical discourse that characterized Soloviev's thought, and it is quite interesting that Losev's judgments on Russian literature can often be found precisely in his book on Soloviev [44]. Such osmosis between philosophy and literature is not surprising; as

¹ On the connection between the philosophical issue raised by Losev's with one or another literary tradition see [37].

the American scholar Edith W. Clowes argued, taking up the famous Dostoevsky's image, Russian philosophy emerged from the Russian literature's "overcoat", which prepared the basis for the development of an autonomous speculative discourse, with its own claim to authority and truth [45].

According to Losev, in his *Legend of the Grand Inquisitor* Dostoevsky formulated the problem of world evil, which Soloviev tried to outline in his *Kratkaja povest' ob Antikhriste* (*A Short Tale on the Anti-Christ*), and tried to propose its solution. Soloviev's "logical" (philosophical) system and Dostoevsky's "poetic" (artistic) system all speak of the same thing¹. Soloviev himself, opposing to Friedrich Nietzsche in *Tri razgovora o vojne* (*Three Talks about War*, 1899), proposed the concept of universal history, in which he predicted the coming of the Antichrist as a result of people losing their faith, and was inspired by *The Brothers Karamazov*'s legend of the Grand Inquisitor, the defender of "the Kingdom of God without God", embodying the tragic essence of our time.

It is no coincidence that the work *Dialektika mifa* (*Dialectics of Myth*, 1930), in which Losev examines the social significance of modern myths, contains quotations from Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Demons* [46. P. 180–182; 36]². Solovyov's metaphysical beliefs are close to Dostoevsky's ideas about "realism in the highest sense". True realism is impossible without an orientation towards the ideal (true) being, without the direction of the writer's entire work towards one goal: the restoration of the ideal sphere in man's life. According to Losev, Dostoevsky combines "both romanticism, [...] and symbolism, [...] and realism" [42. P. 62]. Inheriting Vyacheslav Ivanov's concept of Dostoevsky's realism³ and symbolism and rethinking it in an existential perspective the problem of the relationship between "me and you"), Losev emphasizes: "What is Dostoevsky? The life of the elements in the soul of the hero and the *death of individuality* in the sea of being. Resurrection and striving for it are Dostoevsky's inner joy" [49. P. 618].

Losev's literary prose of the 1930–1940s also did not remain devoid of plot contaminations in the spirit of Dostoevsky, it is enough here to name such works of the Russian philosopher as *Perepiska s komnaty* (*Correspondence from a Room*, 1932), *Vstrecha* (*The Encounter*, 1933), *Zhenshchina-myslitel'* (*The Woman Thinker*, 1933–1934). The same religious pathos of Losev's philosophical discourse is also present in his literary prose: the estrangement of man from ideal being and the rejection of the religious sphere turn the world into a sort of prison. In the short story *Vstrecha* (*The Encounter*) the expression "proceeding from the

¹ Losev wrote that "[...] instead of philosophical analysis, one can write a novel, a long story or a poem [...]. However, the novel is not philosophy, even if it contains philosophical thoughts and understandings. The point is that the system of the novel and of poetry is a poetic system, while the system of philosophy is logical. [...] The novels of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy and the musical dramas of R. Wagner are not philosophical, even if there is perhaps more philosophy in them than in other logical "philosophical systems"" [43. P. 671–672].

² On Dostoevskian elements in the text of *Dialectics of Myth* not only in the form of quotations, but also at the symbolic (allusions, references) and discursive level ("figures" of thought and categories derived from Dostoevsky), see [47. P. 67].

³ In his work *Dostoevskii i roman tragediia* (*Dostoevsky and the Novel-Tragedy*), Ivanov characterized Dostoevsky's realism as "penetration" (*proniknovenie*): "Penetration is a certain *transcensus* of the subject, such a state of it, in which it becomes possible to perceive someone else's self not as an object, but as another subject [...] The symbol of such penetration consists in the absolute affirmation, by all will and all reason, of a different being: "you are"" [48. P. 294–295].

foundations of Marxism and communism, I come to the abolition of music” recalls Shigalev's well-known formula from Dostoevsky's *Demons* “proceeding from unlimited freedom, I end with unlimited despotism” [13. P. 192]. In the short story *Perepiska s komnaty* (*Correspondence from a Room*) Losev argues with scientific materialism (“the monkey of Christianity”¹), which can turn man into an ape (“hell has become reality, and heaven has become fiction” [50. P. 105]). As in Dostoevsky's novel-tragedy, Losev shows the battle between faith and unbelief, the battle of different kinds of being, rebelling against God and striving for a highest ideal. In the souls of Losev's characters, there is a struggle between “a hero against an anti-hero, between a hero-monk against a middle-class anti-hero” [51. P. 237]. As Elena Takho-Godi pointed out, Losev's “antiutopia” can be viewed as a new type of “anti-nihilistic novel”, genetically going back to the traditions of Russian literature and to reflections on the Apocalypse as a consequence of the crisis of civilization and culture, including the tradition of Dostoevsky [52].

The outlined possibilities of Losev's research in the field of literature and philosophy of art, to which the Russian philosopher will return only later (in the 1970–1960's), testify his attention to the problem of artistic style, artistic imagery, to the analysis of symbolic and mythic forms of works of art. Although we do not pretend to provide an exhaustive coverage of the issue of Losev's investigation of Dostoevsky's work, nevertheless, information about his work at the Literary section introduces important clarifications on his scientific activity in the 1920's and is extremely important for further studies of this period of the Russian philosopher's life, and in general for the reconstruction of the history of GAKhN.

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¹ A similar formula appeared in *Dialektika mifa* [46. P. 85].

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