How to Study Literary Realism as Archive Art? The Case of Charles Dickens' Later Novels

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Archive Art

Instead of collecting and placing side by side individual artworks, as in literary journals, anthologies, at public readings or in art museums, in archive art the artwork itself becomes a collection of individual items. In this case, a collection—an archive—is an artwork, one artistic statement.[1] Of the two concepts used, artwork and archive, the archive seems less ambiguous, since the notion of art is becoming more and more difficult to define. Most contemporary art—in literature, fine arts, media arts etc.—questions its status while facing other creative, reflexive and communicative practices of the different disciplines, cultures and contexts. For instance, what is included in the literary canon is decided through highly complex procedures that, nonetheless, cannot really explain, what is it which makes something an artwork. Is the Adornian culture industry using commodified "high art" part of art domain or not? It, however, does not coincide with the notion of *Kunst* from the romantic period. Realism, as an artistic tradition that started in the 19th century traversing literature and other arts, seems to be necessarily struggling with the issue of belonging in the ivory tower of fine arts, since it programmatically connects themes and effects of an artistic statement to an epistemological question about

[1] For a number of perspectives on this idea see Merewether's collection (2006).

the world and to a political question, what position and agency one is to assume in a given situation. This weak connection of realism to an unambiguous definition of a (more or less) autonomous artwork justifies the focus of this article on the study of the possibilities of an archival language in realism in literature and other artistic practices.

The question of what makes something an archive, within the domain of arts polysystem or in everyday life, is crucial. An archive can refer to an institution, such as a library, also in the sense of some technical device for storing, sorting and retrieving elements. But, the archive is primarily not the storage facility itself, it is the sum of all content that is stored, and only subsequently the concept is transferred to a specific technical solution to the problems caused by the need to store and manage objects. It is a response to given requirements demanded by some material already collected or identified as necessary to be preserved in a retrievable way. The entities, the units that are brought together in an archive, however, cannot be just anything: they must be completely separated. Here is an example pointing to a sort of anti-temporal nature of the archive: a year is a multitude of days, but it is not an archive of days. Evidently, one does not require "a year" as an object to experience the days, they happen anyway. By the fact that one lives through days, the year is realized, however, it is not kept, the days and the year are both lost. In contrast, the archive stores all its elements at the same time, keeping them distinct from one another, putting effort into preserving each element. The Kantian idea of space being the foundation for comparison—as a form of pure intuition—, opposed to time, which gives ground for change, may be referenced (Janiak 2016). The situation is similar in the Aristotelian idea of narrative plot that consists of a beginning, a middle part and a conclusion—it does not constitute an archive, since the whole and the parts cannot be thought of in separation.[2] Another, and of a different kind, nonarchival collection is implicit in the Saussurean

[2] The dichotomy database vs. narrative is one of the core ideas in Lev Manovich's theory of the language of new media which construes the new media object as a database, an archive (Manovich 2001, Bovcon 2009).

idea of language as a system: the signs rely exclusively on differences between and among the signifiers and signified, the real elements of the language are not the comparable ideas or sound-image segments but the negative medium of a nondifferentiated difference (de Saussure 1959: 120); for this reason, it is impossible to archive a language as such, only its realizations in the speech (*parole*) can be recorded. To summarize, what is essential for an archive is the ability to provide access to any element at any time. This causes each element to become completely isolated from all other elements in the same archive. The archive is never one whole, a totality, it must remain an *ad hoc* group of disjointed elements.

However, any such fixation of an element in the archive is a problematic act from at least two points of view: on one hand, the human experience and interpretation of phenomena occurs in time and in context; on the other hand, the materials physically deteriorate, change—this process of transformation, however, can only be destroying the archive, it never positively contributes to it.[3] The isolated elements gathered in an archive are always cut off from their original context; the infrastructure of an archive is a response to this twofold damage that occurs to entities, when they are included in an archive. To return to the "year and days" example, the reverse view is possible: as the days rhythmically perish, evidently, a need to preserve something from the past emerges, while other aspects are let to vanish, and the archive is the response to this fundamental human need. The archive elements therefore appear as much less substantial than they would be in their (wished-for or imagined) "original" existence. In fact, there is always something "wrong" with the elements—in the sense of

[3] A strain of archive art displays, even fetishizes, the decay of everyday objects, which in turn weakens the impulse towards establishing order, e.g. Christian Boltanski's art installations (Merewether 2006: 10-11). The ironical use of the concept of archive in arts, e.g. the concrete blocks containing documents in Akram Zaatari's installation at the dOCUMENTA (13), where the documents are virtually inaccessible, is representative of the institutional critique art practices (Alberro & Stimson 2009).

the allegorical imagination of Walter Benjamin (see below)—, which resounds in the meaning of the word archive as a more or less rigid technical infrastructure, which seems to leave its mark on the elements.

The studies on archive art often reference Borgesian chance recombination of letters and punctuation in books, which would build a universal library, such as the one from the short story *The Library of Babel* (*La biblioteca de Babel*, 1941), as an example of archive art. However, the archive as discussed above can only include elements that are found, consciously collected, and stored. The archive cannot generate new items, as is the case with the randomizing Borgesian library. In general, this issue is considered in Mikhail Bakhtin's early treatise *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity* in the chapter on rhythm. He states, for example:

> Rhythm takes possession of a life that *has been lived* […] If, however, the meaning that impels the hero's life fascinates and absorbs us *as* meaning, i.e., if we are fascinated with its being imposed as a task to be accomplished, and not with its individual givenness […], then the achievement of form and rhythm is rendered difficult. (1990: 132)

If the reader faces the same problems with understanding and acting in the world, as the hero of a literary work, then the rhythm and symmetry as the ordering principles—or even less so as generative forces—are impossible. For rhythm to emerge, the reality needs to be objectified. Recombinant permutations are always alien to the practice of collecting. This is further linked with Bakhtinian rejection of any coherent theory in favour of preserving the uniqueness of phenomena, e.g. in his *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, and also, in the works from the middle period, in connection with the rhythm in poetry in his famous essay *Discourse in the Novel*:

> *Rhythm, by creating an unmediated involvement between every aspect of the accentual system of the whole* (via the most immediate rhythmic unities), destroys in embryo those social worlds of

> speech and of persons, that are potentially embedded in the word. (2004: 298)

Of course, Bakhtin's main goal is to preserve and non-destructively represent the multiplicity of voices in the dialogue, an archive of voices, which turns out to be a very complex task.

Another example. Even though the theory of the modern museum by Boris Groys theorizes the emergence of "new" on the basis of a transition from some "profane space" outside into the valorising inside of a museum, seemingly postulating an abstract mechanism for building archives, what happens really is a reordering of an archive. For Groys, the profane outside is not an amorphous chaos but consists of artefacts from some neighbouring (cultural) archive. His particular case is the Soviet avant-garde that is misaligned with the Western idea of the avant-garde (Groys 2002: 100).[4] The bordering archives, consequently, form an ever larger and increasingly unmanageable archive.

This is also Foucault's point of view from *The Archaeology of Knowledge* ([1]1969). Foucault's archaeology is a theory of archive which takes structuralist negative notion of sign as a starting point. In turn, it strives to differentiate the differences: "[The archaeology's] aim is not to overcome differences, but to analyse them, to say what exactly they consist of, to *differentiate* them" (1982: 171), thereby establishing an archive of differences:

> Between the [de Saussurean] *language* (*langue*) that defines the system of constructing possible sentences, and the *corpus* that passively collects the words that are spoken, the *archive* defines a particular level: that of a practice that causes a multiplicity of statements to emerge as so many regular events, as so many things to be dealt with and manipulated. […] It is *the general system of the formation and transformation of statements*. (*Ibid.*: 130)

[4] See also chapters *Muzealizacija vzhoda* and *Postsovjetski postmodernizem.*

The archive is not a mere collection, it strives to establish an order within the collection. The archaeological description is never complete:

> The never completed, never wholly achieved uncovering of the archive forms the general horizon to which the description of discursive formations, the analysis of positivities, the mapping of the enunciative field belong. (*Ibid.*: 131)

It is important to keep in mind that an archive itself is never a single object, it must remain a dispersion of elements that resist unification. If an archive can completely explain each of its elements, and their joint significance as a whole, then it is not an archive any more,[5] it becomes a structure or an organic whole.

Archives are used to preserve human experience; the living world is therefore in part translated into archives. Reality itself is not an archive. Archive is a cognitive tool, a particular model of reality, which helps us to deal with and to some degree understand reality, especially when reality is in crisis. And this paper (implicitly) argues that the current European reality can profit from such a model of reality. From the point of view of an archive, its contents are all that is available to human cognition. Particularly in situations, when the outside world does not make sense, the archives are consulted to provide a way forward.

[5] This is a free paraphrase of Gayatri Spivak: "If the subaltern can speak, thank God, the subaltern is not a subaltern any more" (Veeser 1989: 283). A political task of naming is to empower the excluded, to integrate it into the dominant discourse. Similarly, the archive preserves something that is fragile and elusive, not the elements that already exist in excess. In the letter case, an archive is not needed.

Novels as Archives of Voices: *Hard Times* and *Our Mutual Friend*

In Joseph Peter Stern's theory of realism, which could be linked to the archival paradigm *via* its ties to the late Wittgenstein's method of family resemblances, the author emphasizes that it is a feature of realism to build bridges, i.e. to connect collected phenomena, and through connections thus established indicate even the transcendental phenomena, as far as they are continuous with the conception of one singular reality, the world that we all share. In Dostoyevsky's novel, *The Idiot* (1869), Count Myshkin imitates Christ. His love is, of course, inadequate by comparison:

> Yet it is only just inadequate: informed by a greater love he might have succeeded. But seeing that a greater love is continuous with the lesser, is conceivable within the same terms as those in which we accept the novel as it stands, a happier ending need not have been less realistic […]. The story of Myshkin is a bridge—the building of bridges between the visible and the invisible […] is a prerogative of realism. (Stern 1973: 47)

Archive thus functions as a collection of possible solutions, models, "terms" for action and understanding, that are available.

This chapter will show how Charles Dickens' novels, in particular the so-called "later novels," embody an archive-like model (Vaupotič 2001). To demonstrate the archival structure of a novel the Mikhail Bakhtin's methodology is used (Vaupotič 2009). A segment of the world in time cannot be automatically considered an archive. Bakhtinian dialogism provides a solution: an archive-like novel could relate to a model of reality and of literature, which consists of individual socio-historically specific human voices. These are separated from one another, describable, and subjected to categorization and control. Michel Foucault's works (1981) provide ample proof for the existence of such an understanding of the world, i.e. of the practices of introducing order—and power—into discourses.

Bakhtin postulates a homogeneous semiotic horizon, which includes the three elements: world, human and language. He defines a human as plethora of more or less isolated voices.[6] The voices feature in literature as heroes with more or less strong opinions, i.e. ideologists, as worlds represented in world-views, or as languages and ideologies used impersonally in a narration of a work. The analysis of a novel as a single internally (voices and languages within the novel) and externally (i.e. in respect to the novel's contexts) dialogised utterance should therefore scrutinize the relationships between these voices. Bakhtin emphasizes "the distinctiveness of novelistic dialogues, which push to the limit the mutual nonunderstanding represented by people *who speak in different languages*" (2004: 356, 405). The ideal type of a novel that his theory thus presupposes is a network of voices that remain strictly separated. The voices do not even *understand* each other and therefore never reach an agreement in a joint world-view—on the contrary, the communication virtually equals misunderstanding.

The analysis shows that Dickens' novel *Hard Times* (1854) is an archive of voices, which cannot be reduced to a single all-encompassing voice, i.e. an ideology of the whole work. While not following the usual interpretation of this novel—with an image of Sissy Jupe as an idealized counterbalance to the utilitarian evil of Gradgrind—the Bakhtinian approach shows that multiple sides of the conflict consist of "internally persuasive discourse" that Dickens "experimentally objectifies" (*ibid.*: 348).

Here some additional explanation regarding the objectification of a voice is needed. To make something an object usually means its appropriation into the discourse of the one who objectifies, and the destruction of the object's otherness. However, Bakhtin argues that even though some resistance of the voice of the other is lost in a "language-image", to merely include in a novel the chaos of recorded voices as they are given would nonetheless result in an author's monologic utterance, which, additionally, fails in the artistic sense

[6] Bakhtin explicates his model of literary interpretation comprehensively in his text *Discourse in the Novel* (2004: 269-422).

(*ibid.*: 366). In his early phenomenological writings, such as *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity*, Bakhtin states that a human is not an isolated entity, but exists in a dialogic relationship.[7] A human existentially needs another human, who exists outside of one's spatial and temporal spheres and outside the limits of meaning. Bakhtin uses the terms "extra-location" and "transgredience". The "objective shadow" therefore, in Bakhtin's early works, relates to the Godly mercy, protection and the transgredient gift of the other (1990: 41, 66-67). The voices in a novel are partly objectified images, and «the novelist […] attempts […] to achieve an *artistic consistency* among the *images* of these languages» (2004: 366).[8] Here the key issue of an archival discourse is clearly stated: artfully curated *images* of the things, that are to be collected, are present in the archive as mediated and objectified substitutes and not the fragments of (past) reality themselves. The elements of the archive are, for Bakhtin, necessarily impure.

To show the archive-like discourse in *Hard Times*, the analysis has to stress the strict boundaries between voices. An example of this feature is the scene when Sissy, a simple girl, makes an aristocrat, Harthouse, leave the town and disappear from the story altogether. This reading of the chapter *Very Ridiculous* (B.3/Ch.2) demonstrates, that the world-views of Sissy and Harthouse are completely separate and impenetrable. Both horizons of understanding are closely linked to diverging—but nonetheless really existing—ideologies in the society, and cannot be explained by goodness or malice of a character or even by her or his intelligence, since both world-views are internally coherent and well defined. Sissy rejects political economy teachings and stubbornly follows her world-view.

> […] after eight weeks of induction into the elements of Political Economy, she had only yesterday been set right by a prattler three feet high, for returning to the question, "What is the first principle

[7] In this early period, however, this key Bakhtinian term is not used yet. The idea, however, is already clearly formulated.

[8] Emphasis A. V.

> of this science?" the absurd answer, "To do unto others as I would that they should do unto me." (B.1/Ch.9)

"The absurd answer" is a citation from the Church of England catechism[9] (according to Dickens, satirically or not, every person always speaks with foreign words). The quoted fragment shows also that, here, the narrator is someone who does not share the author's view, since the reference is—perhaps ironically—ignored. On other occasions, the narrator himself uses Sissy's language.

When Sissy speaks to Harthouse, a total communicative breakdown occurs—each character sees and assesses the situation in a completely opposite way, to such a degree that the situation becomes somehow superfluous and subsequently Harthouse leaves the remaining part of the plot. It is interesting, however, that it could be argued that Harthouse's views are the closest to Dickens' own—he sees the dangers of statistical methods of utilitarian political economy, he understands the plot well, at least much better than Sissy.[10] What Harthouse cannot grasp at all is Sissy's point of view. Harthouse summarizes the events of the chapter—which was here of course much too schematically referenced—as follows: "He glanced at her face, and walked about again. 'Upon my soul, I don't know what to say. So immensely absurd!'" (B.3/Ch.2).

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[9] Reference to Matthew 7:12 ("Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets"), and the *Book of Common Prayer*. Her statement is commonly known as the Golden Rule. See *Discovering Dickens*.

[10] In relation to the novel *Bleak House* (1852-53) Alexander Welsh (2000) points to the alignment of Dickens' views with the negative character, Harold Skimpole (the chapter *Jarndyce and Skimpole*). Welsh considers the novel *Hard Times* as the key to Dickens' later novels, and an epilogue to *Bleak House* (see the last chapter).

It is the absurdity of the misunderstanding, which could be one of the characteristic Dickensian features.[11] It can be demonstrated that all characters in the novel share mutual misunderstanding, which includes the narrator's voices. Since Bakhtinian universe consists of a network of voices, and if Bakhtinian method seeks indications of nonunderstanding between world-views, what happens to the communicative link between the author and the reader? Do the two literary partners successfully understand each other, as opposed to the heroes and narrators in the worlds of Dickens' novels? In the transition from the early novels to his later ones Dickens increased the level of misunderstanding. For instance, a similar situation to the one in *Hard Times* could be shown in *Bleak House* (1952-53), *Little Dorrit* (1955-57), etc. The last finished novel, *Our Mutual Friend* (1864-65), radicalises this element of misunderstanding even more (Geppert 1994: 463, see also Solomon 1988, Mundhenk 1979). Dickens explicitly plans and then "writes" a large segment of the story, which happens without the readers knowing it. Mr. Boffin, John Harmon (John Rokesmith/Julius Handford) and Mrs. Boffin decide that Mr. Boffin shall pretend to become a miser. It is not possible for the reader to know this because along with the character Bella and others, who are deceived, even the narrator and the circumstances confirm, that Mr. Boffin has in fact changed into a miser (Mundhenk 1979: 44). The revelation comes as a surprise almost half of this long novel later, which is highly unusual. The reader cannot understand half of the novel correctly. Does this segment of the novel's content in fact exist, if it is hidden from the readers for such a long time? Does it only emerge in the second reading? The scholars argue, that this causes a problem for the overall artistic quality of this particular work by Dickens. In any case, it is difficult to imagine the next stage after such a bold experiment in novelistic narrative. However, since *Our Mutual Friend* is Dickens' last completed novelistic plot, the answer must remain open. On the other

[11] The deconstruction-like scholarly approaches to *Hard Times* focus on the disintegration of language in Mrs. Gradgrind. Dickens probably considered such perspective as one among the existing world-views.

hand, the case of reader failing to understand the plot, in fact, confirms the Bakhtinian vision of the novel as a network of liberated characters acting in highly complex and mutually incomprehensible ways—its author and readers included. A world in *Our Mutual Friend* becomes a puzzling archive, which includes the reader as a strictly limited part, torn off from the whole.

Types of Archive Art

The idea of an artistic archive connects two tendencies: the attempt to preserve the otherness of collected phenomena, and to construct the archive as a new meaningful whole. Among the most referenced examples of archival discourse are the art historian Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne-Atlas* (*Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, 1928-29)—a series of black boards with attached photographs that represent the expressions of passions in visual arts and are ordered to express similarities and links—and Walter Benjamin's unpublished *Arcades Project* (*Das Passagen-Werk*, 1927-40), a compilation of texts on Paris arcades and their cultural context. In both cases, the contents—pictures or, in Benjamin's case, text fragments—are atomized and then consciously ordered into a constellation, which preserves the disconnected elements.

Art historian Benjamin H. D. Buchloh[12] distinguishes between two types of archival aesthetics in the historical avant-garde practices: a collage or montage aesthetics, on the one hand, and an aesthetics of archive in a narrow sense, on the other. The former foregrounds the shock of juxtaposition and the latter a didactic nature of an ordered archive. Buchloh argues that the shift from collage/photomontage to its critical rejection and to ordering of the collected material happened already after 1925 in the works of the inventors of photomontage themselves, such as John Hartfield, Hannah Höch or Alexander

[12] The 1997 article is the extended alternative version of the article from 1993. The author focuses on the 1920s and photography, but also on the post-war visual arts.

Rodchenko as an "archival counter-aesthetics". The two types of archival art can be traced in literature too: late realism of Dickens' novels would represent the ordering of an archive, whereas Joyce's early conception of *epiphany* connects fragments of the world following the montage aesthetics. For Joyce, *epiphany* was the name for a short prose genre from his early period, but, according to Richard Kearney, "the entire novel itself [, i.e. *Ulysses*, is] an epiphany from beginning to end" (2005).[13] In a Joycean *epiphany*, what at first appears vulgar and insignificant becomes meaningful in a mysterious way. Realism, of course, cannot use such mystical discursive strategies, the realist discourse remains limited to the problematic relationships between existing and contiguous phenomena. For a novel, such as the two Dickens' works discussed above, Foucault's discourse-theoretical conception of reality seems symptomatic—the discursive facts are rare,[14] which is a consequence of the practices of elimination of certain elements, e.g. through incarceration practices or censorship, and they all exist on the same level. Foucault calls this the "exteriority" principle of the discourse, since there is no silent deep background behind statements. In the *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault calls himself a "positivist", which signals a somehow unexpected alliance with Auguste Comte's historical positivism, and this could be explained through Bakhtinian insights into Dickens' works.

The archives consist of elements. Theoretically, there are two possible types of elements. Dickensian or Foucauldian archives consist of elements of reality which follow the principle of verisimilitude. One collects pieces of reality, like Dickens on his legendary night walks.[15]

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[13] See Geppert 1994, chapter *"Daedalus Arifex" und seine "epiphany" bei Keller und Joyce*, and Joyce 1963.

[14] It is interesting to note that György Lukács' conception of "real possibility", a key element of his theory of realism, turns out to be comparable to Foucault's rarity of discourse (Lukács 1958, Adorno 1958: 157).

[15] In 1860, the year he began work on *Great Expectations*, Dickens wrote an essay called "Night Walks" (*All Year Round*, 1959, and Ch.13 in *The Uncommercial Traveller*, 1961): "[T]he door knocker from the entrance to the

The opposite option is to be found in Walter Benjamin's only published scholarly monograph during his lifetime, *The Origin of the German Tragic Drama* (*Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*, 1928), which is a study on the German counter-reformation "mourning play" (Trauerspiel) of the 17th century. Benjamin defines the language of allegory, which employs fragments or ruins, in fact corpse-like remains of a decaying world, to express new meanings. The elements used have completely lost their potential for meaning, they are grotesque transformations, Byzantinisms, ornamental transformations, masks, completely different from the elements of a realist archive. The allegorical discourse draws elements from emblem-books as stock requisites, not from experience. Benjamin states:

> If the object becomes allegorical under the gaze of melancholy, if melancholy causes life to flow out of it and it remains dead, but eternally secure, then it is exposed to the allegorist, it is unconditionally in his power. That is to say it is now quite incapable of emanating any meaning or significance of its own; such significance as it has, it acquires from the allegorist. He places it within it, and stands behind it; not in a psychological but in an ontological sense. (2009: 183-184)

The meaning is—of course this is a paradox—arbitrarily provided by the allegorist, since the reality fell into ruin. The meaning does not stem from the author's consciousness in a "psychological" sense but somehow emerges as in a sort of negative theology—or, maybe, it does not really emerge at all (this situation is explained as Benjamin's presentiment of the destruction of culture in the holocaust).

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women's side of Tothill Fields Prison and an armoured metal door, bristling with rivets and bolts, from Newgate Prison. / This door is simultaneously real and imaginary—a postmodern twist Dickens would have appreciated—for as well as being a genuine leftover of the old prison, it is also one of the doors of Newgate stormed by the rioters in his historical novel Barnaby Rudge." See *In the Footsteps of Charles Dickens*.

The allegorical imagination of Benjamin is not a realist perception of the world. The element of verisimilitude is missing. Fragments collected in a realist archive are not mere signs of transience but somehow still point to something substantial, to a reality that people have in common. Realism, at least in its archive-like versions, follows a more pragmaticist response: the archive of concrete observable social practices is the foundation for its *ad hoc* reconfiguration. For example, Hans Vilmar Geppert, by using Peircean pragmaticism, argues for a conditional (i.e. limited knowledge, no reliability) and imperative (the imminent need for a solution to the current condition) version of truth and knowledge as the ground of realist semiotics, which is to be found in the realist novels.[16]

The discussion of the archive art focussing on early 20th-century avant-garde movements, but also reaching further back to German baroque and forward into the late 20th century, can shed additional

[16] Literary realism is construed by Geppert as the art of the interpretant, stemming from an immediate experience of a semiotic, and therefore existential, crisis. Peirce's six-level model of the sign—representamen, immediate interpretant, immediate object, dynamic object, dynamic interpretant, final interpretant—translates into realist discourse as follows. The "realist way" starts from the immediate interpretant as the first interpretation of the representamen evoking the conventions in a dysfunctional state, which produces the immediate object, "the motivated illusions", such as Emma Bovary's self-destructive expectations about the world. It is the media-induced "inter-reality" that clashes violently with the given conditions, the dynamic object. The crisis is "amplified" in the reproduction and condensation of available cultural codes and their effects in—and on—the hero's or heroine's illusions. The dynamic interpretant is the narrative arch of the realist novel. It consists of a multiplicity of immediate interpretants with their immediate objects in experimental recombinations. It is in the recombinant constellations of the dysfunctional cultural codes that the realist verisimilitude is grounded—realism does not reproduce reality but the discontinuous archive of cultural codes. The final interpretant is the method itself, realism as a dynamic and continuous path that stands in stark opposition to a static spatial constellation (Vaupotič 2012).

light on important cases of realist literature, such as the Dickens' novels that were discussed, or, among others, Gustave Flaubert's works: the posthumously published *Dictionary of Received Ideas* (*Le Dictionnaire des idées reçues*) is in its outward form an alphabetically ordered dictionary of very short entries related to ideas in Flaubert's novels.[17] The discursive nature of all reality, an important issue for postmodern literature, can be reflected upon, in respect to the artistic use of the archive. The theories of the archive by Bakhtin and the turn in archival aesthetics in visual arts, pointed to by Buchloh, both emerged around 1925. The result of an approach focussing on archive art proposes a revised image of the literary history of the 19th and 20th centuries.

[17] See a Foucauldian discussion by Philippe Desan of Flaubert's novel *Sentimental Education* (*L'Éducation sentimentale*, 1869).

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