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# **The Spectre of Reality in the Symbolic and Fantastical Universe Imagined by Mikhail Bulgakov in the Novel “The Master and Margarita”**

*Svetlana Radtchenko-Draillard*

## **ABSTRACT:**

The main objective of my research is to analyze Mikhail Bulgakov novel 'The Master and Marguerita' which is very complex and at the same time a story of sacrificial love, religious interpretation, symbolic and moral, criticism of the totalitarian Stalinist political regime, burlesque comedy about the social life of the time and also of fantasy tale. According to my hypothesis, the purpose of Bulgakov's thinking in this novel is to place sacrificial passionate love at the centre of the conflict between good and evil. It should be noted that this novel is best considered one of the major masterpieces of Russian literature of the 20th century. The interaction of two worlds is the centre of the novel: whose action takes place in Moscow in the Stalinist era, alternates with a rewrite of the Passion, including the Roman Procurator Pontius Pilate and ancient Jerusalem. Another original element is the central scene of the book which is set in a Moscow theatre where the Devil (named Woland) clique performs a grandiose session of black magic in front of a delirious Moscow crowd. In conclusion, different readings of the work can be made: a novel of humour, philosophical and socio-political allegory, satire of the Soviet system, and the vanity of modern life in general.

**Keywords:** symbolic, imaginary, real, fantastic, religion, morality, Stalinist totalitarianism, passion, love story and sacrifice.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The novel «The Master and Margarita" written by Mikhail Afanasievich Bulgakov (in Russian: “*Мастер и Маргарита*“) is considered one of the greatest classics of contemporary Russian writers. “The Master and Margarita” was written between 1927 and 1940 on the eve of the death of its author, which occurred at the age of forty-nine following a long exhaustion due to illness, deprivation, political tensions and the condemnation of silence in the Stalinist USSR.

This manuscript, before its late publication in Russian, restored dignity and sincerity to its author and strength and hope to the large number of citizens of the Stalinist and Post-Stalinist USSR. It should be noted that Mikhail Bulgakov wrote four versions of his novel, first he began writing his novel as early as 1928, but he destroyed a first version of the book in March 1930 after being warned that the authorities had banned his comedy “The Cabal of devotees”. He then returned to this novel in 1931 and completed a second manuscript in 1936, which already contained all the main episodes of the final work; finally the third version was completed in 1937, but Bulgakov continued to fine-tune a fourth version with the help of his wife, until he was forced to stop four weeks before his death in 1940. For more than ten years Bulgakov worked tirelessly on this great novel, which represents 500 typed pages, which he continued to constantly review and correct, without ever harbouring any real hope that it would ever be published. It was his wife- Elena Sergeevna Bulgakova, who completed his work in 1940 and 1941. A manuscript version (without an official edition) circulated and included pieces cut by the various censors and these were also incorporated. A censored version of the book was first published in the magazine “Moskva” (No. 11, 1966, and No. 1, 1967). In 1967, the publishing company Posev (located in Frankfurt) published a version supplemented with these excerpts. In the Soviet Union, the first full edition appeared in the magazine “Khoudojestvennaïa Literatoura” in 1973. This edition remained the reference edition until 1989, when the last edition was based on all existing manuscripts. Currently, this novel has since been published in several languages and editions.

In the novel "The Master and Marguerita", the spectre of reality, imbued with the symbolic and fantastical pivots of the novel. The novel is thus divided into three intertwined actions. In order to determine the central line of the novel, in the foreword Bulgakov quotes "Faust" by Goethe 'Say at last--who art thou?' 'That Power I serve. Which wills forever evil. Yet does forever good'[1,p.3] Precisely, the First Action: the main action of the book takes place in the Moscow of the 1930s, where the Devil presents himself as a mysterious magician named Woland, accompanied by a motley troupe composed of the whimsical Fagotto (or Fahoth, according to translations), aka Koroviev, big and talkative black cat Behemoth, the malevolent killer Azazello (reference to the demon Azazel) and the impudent red sorceress Hella. Beneath the mantle of the fantastic lies the Devil himself who, accompanied by his suite, visits the Muscovites who, under the Stalinist regime then in force, are supposed to believe no more than they believe in God. This group targets the literary muscovite elite with its official syndicate, MASSOLIT, its restaurant for the privileged of the literary nomenklatura (said the house

Griboedov), its Soviet bureaucrats of different administrations and its citizens profiting from the totalitarian system, as well as sceptics and disbelievers characters. Three types of categories of people are clearly distinguished in the description of the Muscovites of the time: the servants of totalitarianism (Stalinist militia, psychiatric clinic, Soviet administration, social services, etc.), the victims of the Stalinist system (the Master and Marguerita, Ivan Bezdomy etc.) and the docile, jealous and profiteering characters who do not hesitate to denounce and betray others to obtain personal profits (literary critics, writers, pro-Stalinian writers, writers, neighbours of the Master and Berlioz, etc.). The book begins with a discussion of the existence of God between the head of the official literary section, Berlioz, a well-known atheist, and a very distinguished stranger (Woland) met in the square of the Patriarch's Pond in central Moscow. Woland predicted to Berlioz that he would not attend the meeting where he was expected that evening, and that he would die in a few minutes with his head cut off. In fact, soon after, Berlioz slips under a tram and is beheaded. Witnessing this scene, Ivan Nikolaevich Ponyrev, a young independent and modern poet who uses the pen name Bezdomy ("homeless") tries in vain to pursue and capture Woland with Fagotto and a giant black cat Behemoth, and then to warn the authorities of the evil nature of this trio, but fails and he will be thrown by the Soviet militia into a psychiatric clinic. At this point appears the character of the Master, an embittered author, depressed, desperate for the rejection of his novel about Pontius Pilate and Christ, to the point of having thrown the manuscript into the fire before turning away from the world, including his beloved Marguerite. After a period of vagrancy, he was interned in the psychiatric hospital where Bezdomy later failed. The said psychiatric clinic plays an important role since, throughout the novel, victims of the deceptions of the Devil's troop will be locked up there. The second action is in Jerusalem, under the government of procurator Pontius Pilate. This is Woland's account of Berlioz, which also reproduces in pages of the Master's novel. The narrative is fragmented but can be restored as follows: Roman Procurator Pontius Pilate meets Yeshua Ha-Nozri (i.e. Jesus Christ of Nazareth) and discovers an affinity with this man and even a spiritual need of him, but does not resign himself to handing him over to those who want his death. The Master's novel then deals with the vernal night of the full moon when Jesus, after his condemnation by Pilate, is crucified in Jerusalem. The end of the Master's novel also describes Matthew the Levite, the tax collector and unique disciple of Jesus, of his encounter with Pontius Pilate, and of the assassination of Judas of Carioth — who had delivered Jesus Yeshua — by Pilate's advisor, a hooded man who can be assumed over the course of reading to be Woland himself. The third action sees Marguerita's character take on great importance. The Devil gives a midnight ball (Satan's Rout), which coincides with the night of Good Friday. He

makes an offer to Marguerita, after her consent, to become a witch endowed with supernatural powers during the prom, and serve the Devil as a "mistress of the house" to receive her guests. As she learns to steal and control her wild passions — not without violent revenge from the bureaucrats who condemned her lover, the Master, to despair — by dragging her servant Natacha with her, Marguerita enters the world of the night naked, flies over the black forests and rivers of Russia, bathes and, purified, returns to Moscow to be the queen of the great devil's ball. Standing next to the latter, she greets the most infamous criminals in the history of mankind as they pour out in droves from the gates of hell. As a reward she receives freedom and love found with the Master and leaves with him from Moscow and the real world for eternal peace. But beyond this departure for the immortal existence of this loving couple, Bulgakov projects above all a glimmer of hope for the deliberate life and full of moral and human values in eternal Russia. Thus, this novel deals with the interplay of good and evil, innocence and guilt, courage and cowardice, responsibility towards truth when authority would deny it, and freedom of the spirit in an unfree world. Love and sensuality are also dominant themes in the novel.

### **1. Dangerous liaisons between Eros and Thanatos in the loving relationships of the Master and Margarita**

In the novel the main heroine, Marguerita presents herself as a woman who never gives in to her desire for love. From the beginning, Marguerita and her lover exchange testimonies of love weaving for renunciation by the statement of the Master "... I refuse to let you lose yourself with me" and Marguerita's exalted decision to sacrifice herself for him, "I get lost with you." Such a result leads Bulgakov to improvise the plot to an unknown land where all the living despair of Marguerita, full of suffering and anguish. This is the landscape of Marguerita's dream in the novel «Margarita had dreamed of a place, mournful, desolate under a dull sky of early spring. The sky was leaden, with tufts of low, scudding grey cloud and filled with a numberless flock of rooks. (...)The surroundings looked so lifeless and miserable that one might easily have been tempted to hang oneself on that aspen by the little bridge. Everything, around, was as dead, and so sorry that it made you irresistibly want to hang yourself from that aspen, near the little bridge” (Ibid, ch.19). Marguerita interprets her dream as a sign of the banishment and annihilation of her lover in this Stalinist country. She can no longer bear to be separated and pushes the disagreement to the point of expressing her tragic feeling of being excluded from life. She says she is ready to give her "soul to the devil just to know if her lover is alive or dead.

Thus the Eros impulse articulated to her desire propels her towards the death drive. The work thus regains its sensuality of letter whose traces of flames have been erased by Marguerite's pact with her desire. In my opinion three types of Marguerite's love for the Master can be seen in this novel: love as passion, love as protection and love as sacrifice. Therefore, I distinguish three roles of Marguerite in romantic relationships: the role of a romantic girl who gives herself to the heart of joy to her love and erotic passion towards her lover, the role of a mother-protector who tries to defend her lover from all the real and potential dangers and the role of a determined woman who sacrifices her personal and social life to be together with the man of her life. Moreover, her accentuated narcissism, her desire for revenge to those who destroyed her lover and her hysterical behavior make her particularly sensitive. From Lacan's point of view, for a woman, there is an alternative: either to refuse this situation where there is no basis for the formation of a whole; issue is then to tidy up on the other side of man - what can be compared to what Freud called the complexity of masculinity that refers to the desire for penis, constitutes the stop of analysis par excellence for a woman. From Lacan's point of view - making man is the position of the hysterical. He also points out that all his realization, sexual intercourse leads to fantasy. The introduction of this other enjoyment, to account for the opacity of femininity, will lead Lacan to reorganize the relationship the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary around phallus. As much as this phallic register makes the subject evolve in the symbolic and imaginary universe, as much this Another enjoyment, feminine, leads the woman into a world where their body is intertwined with being out of meaningful representation. As a result, the real world transports it to edges where they stand out. More precisely, the abyss and nothingness, but also ecstasy and vengeance, rage form the extremes of which the modes of enjoyment of Marguerite. Overwhelmed by a loneliness that leaves her constantly deserted because she falls "to the bottom of the existential abyss", dispossessed in orgasm when it drags her into an infinite enjoyment and still into an off-limits of her bowels, Marguerite is annihilated by a separation with the "man of her life". His psychic state evokes what the Other enjoyment is made of: the infinite, the absolute, its sense of existence between ruin and ecstasy; between enthusiasm and disappointment. His body as a container became the instrument of these objects which are "*plus- de -jouir*: more-of-play" in the sense of Lacan's expression - to replace a structural fault, and an emotional burden that takes place in an impression of imbalance where the edge surface but also the hole, the void, become living places of its enjoyment. So the spectrum of real shows that it is he who orchestrates this feminine enjoyment. For then, it is drawn into areas where the feeling of existing is confused with the intensity of all these states. She finds her very singular being. It should be noted that a real love, in the Lacanian sense, which leaves out the games of

identification, imagination, ideal and fantasy. In Marguerita's love story, there is only one man - the Master - who is an exception, the one who made her a woman. Lacan gave this mystical love a special place to shed light on women's relationship to femininity: "It is as her enjoyment is radically Other that women have more relation to God" [2, p.77). There is in this relationship to love real something mystical, sacrificial, devotion, where Marguerita is ready to lose everything for this love - neither material goods, nor social prestige, morality, conjugality are the weight in front of him. It is his love that is stripped of all material attachment. It's a state of grace that only matters to her. Specifically, the novel depicts the love of a woman named Marguerita who tries to save a writer persecuted by the Stalinist regime, by accepting an invitation to the Devil's Ball, which chose Moscow as her temporary residence. Marguerita's unconscious is in exercise in the negotiations. Another woman awakened in her, freed, undocile, and willing to do anything to save her love. When the time comes, Marguerita follows the injunction to fly away and the unconscious repeats her excessive passion. Before flying to new existence, she uses the cream offered by Azazello. According to Freud the penetration by the cream of a body is the entity that constitutes an erogenous zone. And thanks to this it acquires the eroticization ability to fly over Moscow and its suburbs. This process of condensation is accompanied by a momentum of the Symbolic by the being "Invisible" to others. Purified by the water of the river and blessed by fantastic beings, Marguerita returns to Moscow to attend the ball (in other words Satan's Rout) (cp.23). The third part of the book sees Marguerita's character take on great importance. The Devil gives a midnight ball, which coincides with the night of Good Friday. Traditionally, the signing of such a pact is done with a drop of blood. Marguerita abandons her body so that it is soaked in the blood of the other by friction. Moreover, she decides not to refuse to drink the cup of blood stretched by the Devil who strongly encourages her. One of the formal conditions of the pact says orally that the prom queen should never be afraid of anything and remain impartial without anything appearing on her face. Marguerita's "friendly and indifferent" smile arouses Marguerita's desire to immerse herself. The devil warns her above all not to make requests to more powerful than her. "It's up to them to propose, to them to grant everything," he says. The "Evil" knows what "Good" and what Marguerita expects of him. However, he pushes her to his limits, so he insists on himself. She pretends not to be tired and to have particularly brightened up at the ball (Satan's Rout). Insist that she could still offer her "knee to fuck" to thousands of robbers and murderers. With determined sacrifice, she overcomes the ordeal — letting the worst robbers kiss her knee and testify to each of her love as prom queen. So, asking Marguerita to make a request for herself, the Devil renounces to take advantage of her embarrassment. Therefore, to reward her, the Devil

offers to grant her dearest wish and she immediately chooses to find her lover the Master and to be with him in misery and love or even at the cost of life. "I want my lover, the Master, to be returned to me immediately, at the very minute," she exclaims in the novel. Thanks to Fagotto's work, the Master leaves the asylum and finds a new life through the possession of compliant administrative documents. Moreover, Marguerita declares herself happy to have made a pact with the devil, and asks her beloved the Master to "resign himself to living with a witch". The extent of the denouement is marked by the speech of Marguerita herself, the lover, generous and entangled in her narcissistic identification. In the chapter of the reunion with her lover, Marguerita's enjoyment seems more intense at the precise moment when she reinvests the Master's novel. On the other hand, from my point of view, the Master's love goes through the different phases of the activity: 1) force- sensual passion and intellectual creativity, 2) weakness - the renunciation of love and the bonds with the woman who loves him, the abandonment of active life; 3) balance-reconciliation with one's love, abandonment of previous life. Overwhelmed by the rejection of his book, misunderstood in the society in which he lives, the Master has a sense of guilt and prays to the woman who loves so much to abandon him and stay with her husband to preserve his tidy life and well-being. Then the phenomena of the Master's moral conscience are elevated to another level, and one should speak of conscience and feeling of guilt only after this change has been made. From then on, the anguish of being discovered also falls and the difference between doing evil and wanting evil is completely erased, for nothing can remain hidden from his super-ego. As Freud writes in his essay "*Civilisation and Its Discontents*" (1930) a more severe and vigilant consciousness is precisely the characteristic feature of the moral man and adds "The field of ethics, which is so full of problems, presents us with another fact: namely that ill-luck-that is, external frustration- so greatly enhances the power of the conscience in the super-ego. As long as things go well with a man, his conscience is lenient and lets the sinfulness, heightens the demands of his conscience, imposes abstinences on himself and punishes himself with penances" [3, chapter 7). So, the investigative impulse of the Master is expressed in what is called the impulse to investigate in his work (in its entirety, intellectual and sexual) is inhibited by repression, which produces a prohibition of thought that condemns repetition and recitation, and produces a neurosis; or the intellectual part of the investigative impulse resists repression but disappears the sexual part; then intelligence tries to circumvent the repression of the sexual, and the repressed sexual investigation returns from the unconscious in the form of a rumination compulsion, distorted and not free, sexualizing thought, marking it with pleasure and anguish, signs of deep intrapsychic conflict. As for him, the Master chooses to destroy his life and go into exile in the psychiatric clinic. Using external and

internal exile it becomes an insignificant: the man without past, without real and without future. It is in social exclusion. As Douville points out, "There are islands of exclusion here, non-places located near what shows and allows the movement of bodies and objects (...), of what gives presence and physically makes palpable the speed (...) see the gathering of "locked out", "exiles from within," as they are sometimes called. The excluded is no longer only the one who lives in places (...), he is the one who has crossed a line, a threshold, a passage, who has taken this step where he is absent from the social bond and fraternity of discourse..." [4, p.163] The Master's imagination endows love with mortal energies, emerging " Love leaped up out at us like a murderer jumping out of a dark alley. It shocked us both-the shock of a stroke of lightning, the shock of a flick-knife. "[Ibid, chapter13]. Thus, the fate of the master is sad and mortifying: to be locked up in the psychiatric clinic, insane, at the same time as suspected of insufficient alienation of the Other from the totalitarian regime. Through this fearsome Soviet institution, Bulgakov symbolizes the subjective death of the character who decides to speak of the beloved woman, depriving her of her name, as he did for himself by presenting himself just as a person. The love of Marguerite and the Master is lyrical, exceptional and tragic; it is comparable to that of Natacha and Andrei Bolkonsky described by Tolstoy in "War and Peace". The Master's statements plunge us into the "painful Margarita" (stories of the personal life of Bulgakov's wife -Elena Sergeevna). The Master's interpretation makes us hear the voice of the broken one. However, neither the Devil nor even God deems this kind of real existence worthy of them, nor the couple (the Master and Margarita) is poisoned by Azazello. Having died, the two heroes are free to follow the Devil (said Woland) and leave Moscow with him, while his windows and domes burn in the setting sun of Easter Sunday. Where the lover's imagination would have valued the pact at the value of a life - that of the Master, his lover - it is rather the Real of his own death that looms from the symbolism of sacrifice for Marguerita. In our opinion, this love through sacrifice is the result of the victory over Thanatos by myth. In the psychoanalytic sense Freud introduced the great opposition between death drive and life drive. The former tend to destroy vital units, radically equalize tensions and return to the inorganic state that is supposed to be the state of absolute rest. The latter try not only to retain existing vital units, but to build, from them, encompassing units). The relationship between life drive and death drive is not oscillation (one or the other), but dualization (not one without the other). The de-entanglement of impulses, that is, the untying of Eros and Thanatos, proved when one prevails over the other, would therefore sign the end of man. Here, Freud points out that neither Eros nor Thanatos is ever found in its pure form but always in the form of alloys that associate them in varying proportions. Depending on the respective weight of the two protagonists, Eros and Thanatos, in

these alloys, one or the other prevails. Remember that Freud one already stated this in the essay *Civilisation And Its Discontents*: And now it is to be expected that the other of the two 'Heavenly Powers', eternal Eros, will make an effort to assert himself in the struggle with his equally immortal adversary. But who can foresee with what success and with what result?" [5, chapter VIII]. As Pommier points out, thus of the struggle between Eros and Thanatos, contrary figures who would fight and roll over themselves, one begat the other for the greater benefit of the survival of the species. Beautiful image, through which dualist thinking provides one of those simple explanations that give the impression of understanding, just as they offer adaptable patterns to the most diverse situations!" [6, p. 86] But it is not without price to pay, the most important of which is to perpetuate the mourning in a permanent reference to the idealized Father Death. For Rosolato, there are three fields on which the effects of sacrifice extend: that of reason, that of impulse restrictions and that of life itself, put at stake dangerously and this triple alliance relies on a sharing of guilt, so that complicity meets individual fantasies and with the threat of a permanent suspicion towards those who will fail in their belief in the idealized Father. As Rosolato remarks: "The Dead Father (idealized...) is the axis that supports the symbolic deployment, to say it possible about death, to take in desires, in the play between love, hatred and the quest for knowledge in which the Eros works and acts." [7, p.11]

## **2. 2. The fantastic and the demonic at the heart of love relations and of societal reality**

Fantastic characters populate this novel abundantly. From the beginning of the novel, it is not uncommon to come across witches, a big cat talking, and the demon Azazello or the Devil himself in person (who manifests himself as Woland- a very curious magician). However, after a rather curious first impression, some scenes are chilling and disturbing and there are other moments proposed by the author (the passage of the big ball at the Devil's "Satan's Rout" is certainly strange). The chapters of the novel are well worked, the words are used with accuracy and fluidity. Bulgakov also rewrites Goethe's "Faust" story here in his own way. It should be noted that this character, always ambitious and eager to unravel the secrets of the world, becomes under the pen of Goethe the romantic hero par excellence but torn between a noble and pure ideal and the beastly and immediate easing of his passions. In fact, the tradition depicts Faust as a famous magician and necromancer, originally from Kundlingen in Wurttemberg, or Roda near Weimar, who would have lived in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. He is given all the cultivated knowledge of his time, theology, jurisprudence, philosophy, astronomy; he focused mainly on occult sciences, such as astrology, chiromancy, and demonology. A wealthy

uncle having bequeathed him his fortune, he took the opportunity to indulge in all kinds of excess when his heritage was exhausted, he made, according to legend, a 24-year pact with the Devil. He received from him as a servant the demon Mephistopheles, who appeared in the form of a little grey monk, with whom he travelled and led a life of pleasure. When the pact expired, Faust was taken away by the Devil at Limling in Wurttemberg. Faust is given the innocent Marguerita, whom he had seduced, and as a companion a faithful valet, Wagner, who also had a particular demon Auerhahn. It is in the female character of Marguerita that this inner conflict is projected. She is the naïve young heroine seduced, passionately loved, but finally abandoned to her sad fate. Goethe's Faust is like a generation of angry men, with excessive dreams and all human weaknesses. In the end, Mephistopheles wants to take the soul of Faust. But this one is not damned but saved from hell thanks to the prayers of Marguerita. Between desire for all power and desire at all, Goethe's Faust represents man's eternal struggle between good and evil. From a psychoanalytic point of view, Faust's character is a figuration of internal curiosity (the quest for knowledge) and sexual passion (love for Marguerita) that could only be preserved by an act, one that opposes the repression. It is here that the figure of Mephistopheles, the Devil, also plays to oppose repressing speeches and morals. Faust is once the act accomplished (go to the depths, those of Nature and its secrets) and can represent the scientist who does not fear or flee Nature by taking refuge in Reason or established knowledge. Therefore, according to Bernat, "There would therefore be a whole set of identifications in Freud that could be summed up in this way: the identification of the Freud man with Faust's character (depicting the pindaric projects of life, science and an aspect of psychoanalysis); the identification of Freud psychoanalyst to the character of Mephistopheles (showing a technical position in rehab: to arouse the Faustian act in the patient), these two elements depicting the function Goethe in Freud".[8, p. 299] In fact, Freud and the other psychoanalysts identified themselves endocryptically with Goethe. From the Hachet point of view, surprisingly, his ideas of the global fantasy relationship can be compared to the five "primary words" that mark and dynamically structure the Goethe worldview. He points out, "The first idea of self-defence, that of concealment of oneself, would initiate the "chaining" to the poet, it would be a ghostly self-cleavage intended, in a contradictory way, to save oneself from knowledge and nevertheless to provide a solution. To Daimon (the Demon) would answer the second idea force: genital sexuality spotted. To Tykhé (the Chance) and Eros (Love) would answer the third idea force: regression in the archaic psychic life in its positive aspects, that is to say fertility, the psychic paradise of archaic childhood, innocence and youth found, narcissism and self-eroticism. In Ananke (Necessity) would answer the fourth idea force: oedipal torment, i.e. evil, death,

displeasure and guilt. Finally, to Elpis (Hope) would answer the fifth idea force: the snatching from the mortal grip of the archaic mother and the oedipal torments by the synthetic work of thought". [9, p.86] Unlike Goethe, Bulgakov places Marguerita centrally and moves a little further away from the original story of Faust. He is now a much less heroic character than before, manipulated and ridiculed by Mephistopheles. The main story, set in Moscow, alternates with a rewrite of the Passion, of which the character of Pontius Pilate and ancient Jerusalem are the center, but whose first storyteller is the Devil himself. Thus the characteristic of this myth lies in its ever-renewed modernity. So Bulgakov takes up the story of Faust but he also creates his own characters and colourful scenes, as if to contrast with the grey life of Muscovites under the communist regime. Another peculiarity of this novel is Marguerita's love for the Master that is presented at the highest post-mystical value. Here reflected another structural motive - the myth of the devil in the sacred-magic sense. Marguerita, who makes a pact with the devil and who uses the magic cream of Azazel becomes invisible and can fly over the streets of Moscow. Moreover, after the use of this cream Marguerita and his maid Natacha, became both sorceresses. In addition, Natacha, using some of this cream, turns their neighbour Nikolai Ivanovich into a pig and its bearer to move to the Satan's Rout. Note that the main appeal of sorceresses is the devil's tool to cause damage to persons. Marguerite takes advantage of the situation to organize a huge devastation in the House of DRAMLIT (home of literary playwrights in Moscow) and brutally ruins the apartment of the critic Latunsky, author of a negative and devastating opinion on the novel written by the Master. So Marguerita, "now a sorceress," takes up the myth of medieval Russian fairy tale sorceresses. One of the most epic characters is probably the big mischievous cat Behemot, a disciple of the devil who has the appearance of a cat and who alternates antics, black magic and absurdities. He wore around his neck a white evening tie, tied in a butterfly, and on his chest, at the end of a cord, a lady's hand-face in mother-of-pearl." In the novel Bulgakov then introduces the devil nicknamed Woland, as well as his burlesque acolytes, is not really endowed with the moral attributes of the Devil. The Devil certainly sows in its wake madness, chaos and destruction, but the picture that Bulgakov makes is much more nuanced. There is already the obvious sympathy that this character inspires to some readers, far from the clichés usually attributed to the Devil; but, above all, the Devil acts in a very particular context, that of the USSR of the 1930s. He distils humour and fantasy in an intractable and sad world, he introduces the irrational and the mystical into a society consumed by absurd rationalism and forced atheism, he fights against general stupidity, cultural levelling and intellectual stagnation. In a sense, the Devil is an opponent of the Stalinist totalitarian regime and its consequences on Soviet society. This clever Devil

rhymes in “The Master and Margarita” with humour, creativity, fantasy, unbridled life, love and fight against the evils of censorship, suspicion and control. Woland, an expert in black magic, who promises to reveal his secrets during a show at the Variety Theatre (Chapter 12, "Black Magic Revealed"). This theatrical performance is the way to denounce the dummy character It brings chaos in the manner of Nietzsche: with the passion of life and creation. The Devil pretends to be the professor of Moscow society muzzled by Stalinism. This era was undoubtedly fond of this kind of show and it is not surprising that Bulgakov used this theme of magic to make his satire of Moscow society. What could be more powerful than magic tricks to make a mockery of certain characters — or even a whole system. It is not uncommon in "the novel The Master and Margarita" to see certain characters (docile servants and unscrupulous profiteers of the totalitarian system) turned into pigs, severed heads that continue to live, banknotes falling from the sky and women who find themselves shamefully in small lingerie in the streets of Moscow. It should be pointed out that, the demons are always there in the novel, we must know how to recognize them under new clothes, but also, beyond any imaginary, translate them into the language of science and share the idea that "our prosaic way" of fighting with the Demon is in this that we describe it as a scientifically observable object. Let us also remember that for Dostoyevsky this acceptance of the word "fantastic" does not refer us to the unreal, but rather to the depths of the intrinsic reality of our sense of life. In the novel 'Idiot' Dostoevsky writes, "Similarly the fantastic is the complementarity of reality and not its opposite, given that this fantasy is realized in history and the symbolic of current events." [10, p.158]. To understand the transition from the fantastic to the demonic we have to wait for the final phase of the novel, after the departure from Moscow of the Devil Woland, of his motley troupe with the Master and Margarita. It is in chapter 32 "Absolution and Eternal Refuge" that Bulgakov gives details of the true origins of Woland and his companions: " In place of the person who had left Sparrow Hills in shabby circus clothes under the name of Koroviev-Faggot, there now galloped, the gold chain of his bridle chinking softly, a knight clad in dark violet with a grim and unsmiling face (..)Behemoth's fluffy tail and his fur and scattered it in handfuls. The creature who had been the pet of the prince of darkness was revealed as a slim youth, a page-demon, the greatest jester that there has ever been (...) Azazello was now in his real guise, the demon of the waterless desert, the murderer-demon. Woland, too, rode in his true aspect. Margarita could not say what the reins of his horse were made of; she thought that they might be strings of moonlight and the horse itself only a blob of darkness, its mane a cloud and its rider's spurs glinting stars». [Ibid, ch.32]. From Assoun's point of view “The demon is one of the imaginary names for this effective cleavage between the self and the body and it is therefore

paradoxically this excess of the real (non-symbolizing) that the register "demonic" means". [11, p.81-88] For this reason in the novel "The Master and Margarita" the demon is doubled. The demon shows itself when this principle arises that seems to betray a malignant intention - principle of "evil" that is embodied in the "bad demon" (the one who kills head of the official literary section, Berlioz, and has fun with the resourceful Muscovites and helpful citizens of the totalitarian regime). But there are also "good demons", invested with a beneficial effect, assistance and "protection" (for example, the Devil and his motley troupe helps Marguerita find her lover, get the Master out of the psychiatric clinic, etc.). It also goes hand in hand with the question of the angel: duality of "good" and "evil" which must also have meaning. For Assoun "this comes to metapsychological expression in belief in demons". [11, Ibid, p.81-89]. This is where we can see the *uncanny* of "doubles" of the angel and the demon. Freud recalls it in his essay *The Uncanny* (1919): The uncanny as it is depicted in literature, in stories and imaginative productions, merits in truth a separate discussion. (...) The distinction between what has been repressed and what has been surmounted cannot be transposed on to the uncanny in fiction without profound modification; for the realm of phantasy depends for its very existence on the fact that its content is not submitted to the reality-testing faculty. (...)The story-teller can also choose a setting which, though less imaginary than the world of fairy tales, does yet differ from the real world by admitting superior spiritual entities such as daemonic influences or departed spirits." [12, chapter 3]. According to the various psychoanalytic interpretations, demons are for us wishes of desires (*Wünsche*) bad, reprobate, offspring of impulse motions refused or repressed. The demonic refers to this something both "uncontrolled and indestructible in the human soul" of the collision of the impulse and the forbidden. The demon is thus what comes back to the individual of his own impulse motion that passes through him. The individual thus sees the risky power of his sexual urges coming back to him, as ill-intentioned powers. The demon in this sexual dimension is one that confronts both one, "unsatisfactory satisfaction" and a confrontation of satisfaction with the requirement of the law of the super-ego. It seems to me that there is a conflicting composition here: on the one hand, belief in demons relieves the weight of anxiety and guilt, but on the other hand, it increases and aggravates it, to the extent that the aggressive power of demons is proportional to that of impulses, to which the individual cannot escape either internally or externally. So, this is even the very first human conception of the world, which is to perceive the things of the world as men themselves perceive themselves. This is the most direct way to understand the world is to populate it with spirits. The projection of internal perceptions to the outside world is a primitive mechanism, but it is when a conflict situation occurs that this mechanism is put into action. It is clear that a correlate is the "belief

in the omnipotence of thought," which is found at work not incidentally in the modern neurotic (and obsessive) way of thinking. This is understandable only through the occult work the feeling of guilt. Thus the death drive is destined to become an evil demon. It is above all in the "uncanny" that this power of repetition is meant, bypassing the principle of pleasure. Everything that is repeated in an inflexibly and enigmatic way bears the imprint of the demonic and as such the imprint of the disturbing. In this sense, the order of the demons from the Bulgakovian imagination (which of course is nourished by many literary works, in particular Dostoyevsky novels, biblical and pagan narratives, his own medical professional knowledge) represents, in its delectable profusion, this register of the "supernatural" that assembles the fantastic and the demonic. In the essay *A Cure of Fantastic or Mikhail Bulgakov*, Nivat adopts first of all the view according to which the work in question is a novel with a "mythologistic trend" "that is a sum of mythologemes destined to reflect the repetitive nature of human history (to which corresponds the fundamental weariness of Bulgakov when faced with history). He writes precisely "The "apocryphization" of history is also one of the main elements of the book intended to fight any form of canonization. The incomplete plot, the appeal to Pushkin's refuge -- neither hell nor paradise -- are characteristic of this quest for rest within a world where no one is really settled. The article ends by a summary of neonationalist interpretations of Bulgakov in the present--day USSR". [13, p.248] As much as Bulgakov is well endowed with the ability to believe in the "supernatural" capable by himself to already provide many personal satisfactions; it is endowed with the creative imagination skills and cultural tools and Cartesian curiosities necessary to represent it in the novel "The Master and Margarita".

### **3. The moral and religious question in Bulgakov's View of Universe**

Bulgakov's novel "The Master and Margarita" questions the meaning of morality in the first place. Bulgakov's choice to address the subject of morality, by dissertation on the evidence of God's existence and by romanticizing the end of Jesus' life, was doubly provocative as the Stalinist regime imposed mandatory atheism in a country where the Orthodox tradition was particularly resistant to any attempt to desecrate God. The death of Christ is the basis of this reflection: Jesus is condemned to death by the Sanhedrin while he is an innocent. God accepts the unjust death of his son in order to wash away all human sins: here is the heart of the Father's problem analyzed by Bulgakov. God, the Father, is therefore indirectly responsible for an injustice, the death of an innocent son? This is the whole question that arises in Pilate: what is the moral meaning of Christ's death since there is a reversal of traditional moral criteria? This

question of good and evil haunts free spirits in "The Master and Margarita." From then on, morality loses its obviousness and the feeling of guilt torments both Pilate and the writer-the Master who in turn makes this discovery when writing his manuscript on the procurator of Judea. Recall that in the novel "Master and Marguerita" the main hero - the Master, recreates in his manuscript the history of The Judgment of Yeshua, while the Devil makes the link between the two epochs. Moreover, it is worth noting the complex parallel between Jerusalem and Moscow throughout the novel. Without finding the solution, the Master loses faith, he is no longer able to distinguish as easily as the rest of men good and evil. The religious question is so ostensibly asked in the novel "The Master and Margarita" and it has elicited so many answers and comments. Bulgakov's idea of romantically recounting an episode in The Life of Jesus was very audacious in the totalitarian land. On the other hand, the interpretation of the Gospel of Woland, this "novel in the novel" of "Master and Margarita", is voluntarily left by Bulgakov to the full freedom of the reader. Although the events of the Passion staged by Bulgakov certainly refer to the evangelical tradition, it cannot be concluded, for example, that, while distancing himself (partly for reasons of prudence) from this source, the writer inevitably adheres to a Christian metaphysics of good and evil. Bulgakov is therefore fundamentally aware of the ambiguity of human nature and at no time avoids the fact of personal responsibility, different from the Gnostics who make the Prince of Darkness "hat-bearer". Even the writer the Master, who is an unjust victim in this novel, finds in Marguerite, the companion, the narcissistic and combative ally, who pacts without hesitation, to save him, with the forces of evil. The first reading is that of David Frederic Strauss, whose "New Life of Jesus" dates from 1835, and Strauss submits each episode of the Gospels to the thesis/antithesis/synthesis scheme, the thesis being the "apparent data" of the text, the antithesis its rationalist explanation, and the synthesis taking place in the notion of myth. Bulgakov in this novel applies Strauss's method very precisely and, paradoxically, the fact applied by Yeshua in his interview with Pilate. It should be noted that the Straussian reading of evangelical accounts does not call into question a certain authenticity of these accounts, nor the historical existence of Jesus. The second Hegelian reading of these same accounts leads Bruno Bauer (radical rationalist, Hegelian and biblical critic) to conclude, after thirty-seven years of study : 1840-1877), that Christianity is not based on any credible testimony and that he regarded the evangelist Mark not only as the first narrator of the story of Jesus' life, but even as the one who had invented the whole story that was no longer a fiction and while Christianity was based on the inventions of one person, and so we are dealing with a myth whose historical basis is mystification. I add also he concluded that early Christianity owed more to ancient Greek philosophy (Stoicism) than to

Judaism. Whatever Bulgakov's motivation in writing this novel he remains particularly faithful to his worldview and his national-Christian Russian identity. As Radtchenko-Draillard writes, "Christian orthodoxy and the tradition of the national community structure are the fundamental foundations of Russian identity" [14; p.118-119]. Regarding Bulgakov's point of view, Chudakova believes that "Bulgakov had two mental fractures in his life: in his youth and in the early 1920s. In adolescence, there was a change associated with the transition from a religious worldview to an ecstetic, from orthodoxy to atheism: the death of his father, the courses at the medical school, the new and strong impressions of Darwinian knowledge of the "Theory of Human Origin", the impact of the father-in-law-doctor, respected in the family, the influence of the time, which called into question what was unacceptable for Bulgakov's father. In the second fracture, Bulgakov, who overcame the intellectual crisis of disbelief and was disappointed by the positivist doctrines of modernity, turned to the philosophical ideas of Russian thinkers, including the writer's father, the theologian professor, A.I. Bulgakov"[15, p.487]. In my opinion during the work on the novel "Master and Margarita" Bulgakov, who survived two acute mental fractures, could turn to the works of Russian religious thinkers V. Solovyov and P. Florensky, in search of holistic knowledge, that is, the synthesis of the natural sciences and Christianity and which has created a moral and ethical philosophy. Precisely, in the second chapter of this novel by Bulgakov we can note the proximity of his vision of the world with philosophical works of Solovyov, (notably, the ideas of the meaning of love in the story of the heroes of the novel and the idea of immortality and unity). Then, looking at the images of the Devil-named Woland and his entourage, the problem of "good and evil" and the motives of the revelation one might think that Woland and his entourage are portrayed as a set of the magician and Antichrist in the works of Solovyov, but at the same time Bulgakov's Woland and Solovyov's antichrist do not quite coincide but they are correlated with the principle. Therefore, the problem of "good and evil" in Bulgakov's novel was explored in the light of Solovyov's idea. But unlike Solovyov, Bulgakov, using elements of Lev Tolstoy's work on Christ and the image of the absolute ideal as Prince Myshkin in Dostoyevsky's novel "The Idiot", created an egalitarian dialogue between Yeshua and Pontius Pilate. As for the motives of the Apocalypse, despite the similarities between the novel and the philosophical treatise, it is impossible to note the direct influence of Solovyov's ideas on Bulgakov: the novel describes not the end of the story, but the end of the individual life of the main characters –"The Master and Margarita". In this sense, it seems necessary to analyze in detail the influence on the novel of ideas of one of Solovyov's central works "Justification of Good". Regarding the third chapter of the novel we can see the influence of the worldview, set out by Florensky in "Imaginary

Geometry", "The Pillar and the Declaration of Truth" and "Iconostas" on the history and composition of Bulgakov's novel. It seems to me that Bulgakov could apply the theory of the double space of the world (in Moscow and Jerusalem) to the composition of the novel, and the theory of the triple outer space - to the story of the fate of the Master, Margarita and Pontius Pilate, by analyzing the "chrono-trope" of hell and considering the proximity of the understanding of the world in the path of "eternal salvation" between the writer and the philosopher. In this chapter, Bulgakov's concept of "death" is different with this concept of Solovyov, and it can be concluded that it is possible to find a common characteristic of the understanding of "death" between Bulgakov and Florensky: precisely, Bulgakov considered death as a means of transition to another world, borrowing from Florensky the theoretical basis of the transition to another sphere. In addition, one can think of the dream scene of poet Ivan Bezdomny in the epilogue of the novel echoes what Florensky represented in the book "The Iconostas", where sleep is understood as a boundary between earth and sky. On the other hand, Utexin considers that, "It is unlikely that the writer borrowed directly from them, because the novel is not an illustration of anyone's views, but an artistic construction, the embodiment of his own concept of the artist's world. Therefore, Bulgakov's novel must be explored without ignoring the differences between him and the philosophical works, thus revealing the peculiarities of the writer's worldview." Utexin adds further "On the other hand, any theology being refused, or perhaps simply ignored, which fills the theological void, they are more or less para-Christian systems, or made up of concepts and myths borrowed from Christianity — without being specifically Christian. Bulgakov is well aware of the two main developments that resulted from Strauss's reading and the Hegelian reading of evangelical narratives." [16, p.80-89] These two readings each have their followers in *The Master and Margarita*: Bezdomnyj is tempted to follow Strauss, while Berlioz is a supporter of Bauer, in religious and anti-religious discussion — from the first chapter to the beginning of the novel. As for Mikhail Bulgakov, everything happens as if he were adopting Strauss's thesis, following In this way the example of Renan, which leaves him entirely free to romanticize the history of the life of Jesus from the minimum data retained by liberal criticism and which are: Under Tiberius lived in Palestine Rabbi Yeshua who left the memory of a master of doctrine, a prophet and a soothsayer. Thus, the central, specific fact of Christianity, which is the redemptive function of Christ God and man, seems totally absent from the representation of Christianity of intellectuals who are keenly interested in the Christian religious phenomenon; the touchstone of Christianity is indeed faith in the death of the son of God made man as an atoning victim, and in his resurrection. It is not by virtue of their "merits" that men are saved, but by virtue of an act of faith in the fact that

Jesus Christ is the son of the Father-God had the death and resurrection of this exemplary victim summarizing all the "merits" and above all giving meaning to all the sufferings of men. Freud in his essay *Totem and Taboo* (1912-1913) gives very clear explanations about this "In the Christian myth man's original sin is undoubtedly an offence against God the Father, and if Christ redeems mankind from the weight of original sin by sacrificing his own life, he forces us to the conclusion that this sin was murder. (...) And if this sacrifice of one's own life brings about a reconciliation with god, the father, then the crime which must be expiated can only have been the murder of the father. Thus in the Christian doctrine mankind most unreservedly acknowledges the guilty deed of primordial times because it now has found the most complete expiation for this deed in the sacrificial death of the son. (...) In the same deed which offers the greatest possible expiation to the father, the son also attains the goal of his wishes against the father. He becomes a god himself beside or rather in place of his father. The religion of the son succeeds the religion of the father." [17, chapter 6]. Let us remember that Lacan introduces the question of the father into the registers of the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. The Father's function is also to articulate the subject to the Symbolic, for he is the body that admits to reporting on the question of the desire of the subject. Based on a founding myth of paternal function in the Freudian essay *Totem and Taboo*, Lacan defines the father (carrier of the Law) as a signifier. Lacan believes that this Law is sufficiently known as identical to an order of language: "For no power, without the appointments of kinship, is within reach of instituting the order of preferences and taboos that weave and weave through the generations the thread of lineages." [18, p.80]. He calls this meaning the Name of the Father and its function therefore concerns castration. To follow his example is to reconnect with men the bonds that will make humanity a great united body and give it happiness and peace. This is precisely the message Bulgakov puts in the mouth of his Yeshua — and I am here speaking out against the fairly widespread assertion that Yeshua, on the whole, would hold a Christian-style speech. While there is, of course, a certain "morality" to be inferred from the actions of Jesus in the Gospels, moralism is a very secondary aspect of Christianity; on the other hand, for the Christian man is certainly not naturally good: the need for a sacrifice of the calibre of the crucifixion of the Son of God eloquently proves the opposite. Finally, Christianity does not teach that humanity will one day achieve peace and happiness in this world (except in an old millennial dream that has not had an audience for a long time). The incompatibility of good and evil, of light and darkness, of spirit and matter, incompatibility which clearly tears man apart, is interpreted as the conflict of two kingdoms where dusts of individuals are embarrassed according to alternations of enlightenment and darkness where their will has nothing to do. The Gnostic is passionate about

light and spirit, he hates, fears, refuses, all that is the material world. On the other hand, and as compensation for an innate inability to experience transcendence (an experience that gnosis reserves for the Savants, which Christianity is accessible to all), Bulgakov seems extremely gifted at freeing himself in the sphere of fantasy and symbolism. It is clear that by retaining Matthew the Levite as his only disciple, Bulgakov is still demonstrating his erudition in terms of criticism of sources. Matthew the Levite is represented by Bulgakov as an enthusiast of this calibre; it is not surprising that he sees in Yeshua a piece of divine light, and the insistence with which he tries to persuade the person concerned is itself very Gnostic: the whole drama is indeed not to "see" the light; even the emanations of divine light, the parcels of the Soul of the world are prone to "forget" their true nature when immersed in matter. According to Nivat, Matthew the Levite's dialogue with Pontius Pilate (Chapter 26, "The Burial") corresponds to the Master's dialogue with his contemporaries. Crucified under Pontius Pilate, his disciples believed him and proclaimed resurrected. In the last part of the book, Matthew the Levite comes to announce to the Devil that Yeshua has read the Master's manuscript, and that he asks him to grant eternal refuge to the Master (Chapter 29, "The Fate of the Master and Margarita is Decided"). Another strangeness in the novel "The Master and Margarita" appears as a trace of Gnostic religiosity inherited from symbolism: it is this rupture of continuity that is observed between the Yeshua of "Woland Gospel" and the Heavenly Lord who holds destiny in his power, and whose messengers are Woland and Matthew the Levite. This is the original mythological development invented by Bulgakov in describing a couple Yeshua -Matthew the Levite. In the human world plagued by these paroxysms, there is no doubt that Bulgakov's *Weltanschauung* opposes a stable world of peace and light that he likes to symbolize by the sky and by the stars: note the Platonic and neo-Platonic coloration of this symbolism also reused by the. Regarding the level of their influence on human beings, Freud gives his version of influence of the View of the Universe in in his *lecture XXXV -The Question of a Weltanschauung* (1932): «Of the three powers which may dispute the basic position of science, religion (...). Art is almost always harmless and beneficent; it does not seek to be anything but an illusion. Thus it fulfils three functions. With the first of them it satisfies the human thirst for knowledge; it does the same thing that science attempts to do with its means, and at that point enters into rivalry with it. It is to its second function that it no doubt owes the greatest part of its influence, Science can be no match for it when it soothes the fear that men feel of the dangers and vicissitudes of life, when it assures them of a happy ending and offers them comfort in unhappiness. In its third function, in which it issues precepts and lays down prohibitions and restrictions, religion is furthest away from science. (...) The doctrine is, then, that the universe was created by a being

resembling a man, but magnified in every respect, in power, wisdom, and the strength of his passions-an idealized super-man". [19, p.161-162]. Then Freud adds that religion gives for human beings information about the origin and coming into existence of the universe, it assures them of its protection and of ultimate happiness in the ups and downs of life and it directs their thoughts and actions by precepts: «Thus it fulfils three functions. With the first of them it satisfies the human thirst for knowledge; it does the same thing that science attempts to do with its means, and at that point enters into rivalry with it. It is to its second function that it no doubt owes the greatest part of its influence, Science can be no match for it when it soothes the fear that men feel of the dangers and vicissitudes of life, when it assures them of a happy ending and offers them comfort in unhappiness. (...), it would be most unjust to deny that it is a powerful helper to men (...). In its third function, in which it issues precepts and lays down prohibitions and restrictions, religion is furthest away from science. [19, Ibid, p.162]. Freud interprets here the vision of the religious world as a projection of the childhood needs of men in the search for the love of a symbolic father, the ideal of the self. It is the celestial world, not chance, which, in a mysterious way, seems to govern for Bulgakov the world of men: dependence of an astrological type (composite, both astrological and Christian in "The Master and Margarita": we remember this "moon path" that Pilate takes, on the indications of compassionate Yeshua (Jesus, son of God). It should be noted that in the last part of the book, Matthew the Levite comes to announce to the Devil that Jesus has read the Master's novel, and that he asks him to grant eternal rest to the latter and his beloved Margarita. That the destinies of our world ultimately depend on this transcendent entity is in any case what Bulgakov hopes, desires, and perhaps believes. This desire is reflected in the feeling of fullness that inspires his characters in the contemplation of the sky and by the choice of places of the outfit somehow raised, close and imagined from the sky, for the key episodes of the novel: the Sparrows Hill and Bald Hill, various ancient terraces of Jerusalem and modern Moscow restaurants; it manifests itself in the crucial role attributed by the writer to the messengers of the world from above to the world from below (Woland and Matthew the Levite) , in the Selenite symbolism (the moon, cosmologically, is the transition star between the celestial order and the earthly disorder, the first planet...) and the gloomy earthly reality (Stalinist repressions and prohibitions, ruses denounces and malices of citizens - profiteers of the totalitarian system, etc.). I can conclude that the novel "The Master and Margarita" appears to be a passionate and cognitive quest for Truth, Morality and Absolute. This universal quest that imposes itself on the writer, to which he devotes himself with great constancy and great happiness, is the writing

of this novel. It is, in the end, a feat of writing that is illustrated in "The Master and Margarita" and which proves to be perfectly redeeming.

#### **4. The Roots of the Evil of Totalitarianism and the Psychopathology of Everyday Life**

First conceived as a fantastic work, the novel "The Master and Margarita" was dubbed by Mikhail Bulgakov, during a tormented genesis of his writing. Thus Bulgakov, overwhelmed by the prohibition of his other works and by the attacks of the official Stalinist critics, destroyed much of the first rather satirical version, he gradually filled his novel with symbolism and realism on the life of the artist and the life of Moscow society at the time. It should be remembered that in the face of this outpouring of events, the Soviet authorities had an unfortunate tendency to psychiatrize in the form of Stalinist totalitarian repression free intellectuals and writers who expressed themselves outside communist doctrines. In these cases, psychiatry in the Soviet Union at the time was presented as a prison where the patient concerned was treated very little but where the unsubmitives were locked up so as not to harm the communist outside world. Thus, and more precisely, the narrative in the novel takes place on two planes that eventually converge. The main action takes place in the spring in Moscow, at an unspecified time that takes place in both the 1920s and 1930s. From the beginning, in the square in central Moscow, an influential director of the official Soviet magazine Berlioz and a young proletarian poet Ivan Bezdomny, who was free-spirited, discussed the religious poem written by the latter: instead of showing that Jesus never existed, the poet was wrong to portray him "perfectly alive", although very unsympathetic. A mysterious stranger then comes to mingle with the conversation. As a denial of what has just been said, he undertakes a narrative that takes us twenty centuries earlier to Jerusalem. Supporting the idea that man is not in control of his destiny, the stranger who presents himself as Professor Woland, a specialist in black magic, announces to the magazine director that he will have his head cut off by a woman, a prediction that comes true very soon after when his interlocutor slips under a tram. From this moment the stranger is considered the Devil and fantasy of the novel settles into the real. It unfolds uninterruptedly and like the reverse double of reality. Upset, Ivan Bezdomny, the poet, chases the man he considers a foreign spy. But, after a chase of the stranger and his companions, increasingly fantastic and imaginary, he causes a scandal in the sumptuous restaurant Griboedov, reserved for official Soviet writers. The Soviet militia and one of his colleagues, the writer, took him to a psychiatric clinic where he tried in vain to explain to psychiatrists the events that took place after the appearance of the mysterious stranger Woland, before getting

to know his roommate, the Master, who was treated for schizophrenia, who told him his story: his secret affair with Marguerite, the Stalinist persecutions after his presentation of the book. It should be noted that the main hero, the Master, an embittered author, desperate for the official censored rejection of his novel about Pontius Pilate and Christ, to the point of having thrown the manuscript into the fire before turning away from the world, including his beloved Marguerite. The Master recreates in his novel the story of Jesus' judgment, while the Devil named Woland makes the connection between the two epochs. I want to clarify that for Lacan (1966), a band of Mobius would be cut into the "holding-place of fantasy", would function as a window on the Real being reduced, like the Real, to the "cut itself Lacan". Thus, in the novel the thesis of love is interacted with the theme of terror and especially hatred. From Zafiropoulos's point of view, it is the lights of love that are dominant in human activity: "As far as love is concerned, it will be noticed from the outset that this feeling is well linked to the symbolic function (constitutive of the social) since obviously the forms of love vary historically and geographically (...) There would therefore be a Knowledge about love that takes place over time and gives rise to a true scholarly or ordinary transmission. But are there treaties dedicated to hate? (..) This immediately makes us aware that while love and hatred form a couple of anonymities, each term of this couple does not seem to develop completely in the same register. In the first- love- writing, transmission, covenant, social consecration and finally light. In the second - hatred - would seem to be better suited to social disintegration and darkness. » [20, p.158-159]. The exciting metaphor is continued in the section "The Dream of Nicanor Ivanovich" (Chapter 15), where the latter, interned in a psychiatric refuge after being accused by the political militia of holding foreign currency, dreams that he must take the stage of a theater for a parody of trial. The victims of the farces of the Devil and his accomplices have the common trait of being shabby in this gloomy and totalitarian real world and Nicanor Ivanovich, described as a greedy and concupiscent being, is no exception to the rule. As president of the tenants' association of a building, he is at the bottom of the ladder of holders of the bureaucratic authority that Bulgakov lambasts. It is not only the Soviet system that the author challenges, but any form of authoritarian power, including religious power. The free adventure of the organic text of the author's life to have occurred in multiple events, by episodes interrupted along a thread always repeated, to the rhythm of the succession of his personal events and the contextual chaos of his health and career under the supervision of the political militia, works episodically seized at his home during searches, those thrown away (the author in 1930 in a letter of protest to the government evokes the beginning of a novel about the devil whose manuscripts he would have thrown away). It is not even a representation, for example of good

and evil, which would imply a minimum of stability that the novel does not present, since the same can accomplish the worst or the best (compared to the others). So a book necessarily unfinished even if it took shape several times in a row, and once and for all by the last publication from post-Soviet Russia, let alone posthumously. Undoubtedly, Bulgakov's context was inspired by the great upheaval in Soviet history and consequently the writer renounced to be a doctor in contact with the bruised flesh and social misery in the last years of Tsarist Russia and at the beginning of the Russian revolution, he began to write as a journalist and writer. This novel is, finally, in the context of Soviet Russia, a manifesto for the freedom of artists and against conformism and cowardice. I would like to point out that without speaking openly about the Stalinist terror that is taking hold in the country, Bulgakov mentions several cases of arrests in Moscow by the Soviet militia of well-known and intellectual personalities, mysterious disappearances, without leaving traces, of different people in Moscow, probably these are the deportations that have begun to multiply in the country. On the other hand, Bulgakov describes with a sarcastic irony corrupt and docile people, especially in the literary environment or in the civil service, who serve the totalitarian regime and at the same time, try to make their profits using lies, betrayals, denunciations of others - in short, he denounces here this disturbing and coercive crowd that has well grouped around its leader-Stalin. So as Freud observes in his essay *Group psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. (1921) "The uncanny and coercive characteristics of group formations, which are shown in the phenomena of suggestion that accompany them, may therefore with justice be traced back to the fact of their origin from the primal horde. The leader of the group is still the dreaded primal father; the group still wishes to be governed by unrestricted force; it has an extreme passion for authority; in Le Bon's phrase, it has a thirst for obedience." [21, p141]. It is exactly these people who fight and destroy the Devil under the name Woland and his gang. Later Solzhenitsyn in his essay *the Gulag Archipelago* indicated that the presence of the archipelago in the USSR embodies, provokes and accentuates the characteristics that dominate the society of the time" 1) fear, 2) enslavement, 3) concealment, 4) mistrust, 5) ignorance, 6) snitching, 7) treachery, 8) inner decomposition, 9) lying, 10) cruelty, in short it is the psychology of slaves." [22]. Sauvagnat considers that the acts of such individuals were then a way of escaping an oppressive feeling of guilt: "The movement is then: the oppression caused by the feeling of guilt was resolved at least in part by the act (...) the sense of guilt pre-existed at fault, and had already manifested itself before." [23, p.117] According to Radtchenko-Draillard "In the so-called Stalinist communist regime, this phenomenon has narrow limits, due to the clear assertion of the primacy of the party and the reduction of the state to the status of an enforcement organization. The

determining point is that the party and the state are both mechanisms of the cult of a leader who, while promoting the gradual affirmation of the former, use them alternately or jointly according to the intended purpose and the situation given" [24, p.221]. As Arendt writes, "Stalin liquidated the factions, abolished democracy within the party (...). All measures have the obvious utilitarian purpose ... the total obedience required of each member and the absolute power held by the chief were not the inevitable consequences of practical necessities." Freud's critical stance towards Marxists can also be seen. Freud notes: "A critical examination of Marxist theory is forbidden, doubts about its accuracy are punished as in the past heresy by the Church (...) Marxism (...) has developed illusions itself that are no less problematic and innumerable than the old ones." [25 p.149-150]. It is important to remember that Freud takes his critical judgment on radically opposing ideologies, especially when he analyzes Soviet politics. In *Civilisation and Its Discontents* (1930), Freud gave his very critical opinion about Stalinist power "...it is intelligible that the attempt to establish a new, communist civilization in Russia should find its psychological support in the persecution of the bourgeois. One only wonders, with concern, what the Soviets will do after they have wiped out their bourgeois. If civilization imposes such great sacrifices not only on man's sexuality but on his aggressivity, we can understand better why it is hard for him to be happy in that civilization". [26, chapter 5]. On the other hand, according to Balzamo in the face of such social upheavals it is necessary to ask to what extent the known organizational dimensions of the psychic space are still valid. It states, "Two hypotheses can follow: according to the first, our societies are finding it increasingly difficult to assume the process of subjectivation, "in a crescendo of destructiveness that breaks the established bonds"; according to the second, unease also increases due to the gradual emergence of new forms of subjectivation [27, p. 191). From Bulgakov's point of view, in the novel fantastic and diabolical manifestations participate in the representation of his desire to find, at the cost of his own life, The Master, the unlucky Soviet writer engulfed by the whirlwind of a totalitarian reality and , forcibly locked in one of the Moscow psychiatric institutions, without his knowledge. On the other hand, Faust's character would be a figuration of inner curiosity (the quest for knowledge) and sexual curiosity (love for Marguerita) that could only be preserved by an act of one who opposes repression. This is where the figure of Mephistopheles plays, the devil obviously pushing (which will be a Freudian definition of Eros) to oppose totalitarian repressing speeches and mores. From this point of view to translate Bulgakov's explanations in this novel is thus to convey what could only be "Truths"; on the side of Reason (understanding, judgment, intelligence), on the side of the sciences that enrich Knowledge: philosophy, psychology (between oneself and the world) medicine (between

oneself and body), and literature (between the senses and the verb), on the side of ethics and religion (mind, concept and morality), they are all holders of the "truths" they deposit in this book. Then everyone can go only in his own step, towards himself, in the lights through his darkness. No doubt it is worth seeing Bulgakov's work of focus spanning several years for this novel "The Master and Margarita". Then, everyone can go only in his own step, towards himself, in the lights through his darkness. No doubt it is worth seeing Bulgakov's fine-tuning work spanning several years for this novel "The Master and Margarita". According to Barratt "Analyzing The Master and Margarita from an autobiographical perspective may cause the critic to insert autobiographical elements where the author may encourage a reading of the novel as an entirely self-conscious autobiographical work wherein everything becomes a reference to the author rather than fictional elements designed to further the narrative's multiple plots" [28, p. 78]. Finally, forced by the Soviet regime and in absolute secrecy, Bulgakov made many modifications for several years until his death which made this masterpiece very complete, beautiful and harmonious.

## **Conclusion**

This Bulgakov masterpiece is an imaginary, fantastic and symbolic novel, a hallucinated text, with Gothic symbolism, but also with a lot of humour, sarcasm of the spectrum of reality and satirical spirit. By examining "The Master and Margarita" and demonstrating that the novel is partly autobiographical and through the criticism of the "Massolit" (Moscow Union of Writers) one can define the major conception of literary creation of Mikhail Bulgakov. In my study by analyzing the proceedings used to transform autobiographical events into "literary facts" (delimitation, absurd, imaginary, symbolic, real) I have just shown that this novel is deeply autobiographical and proves to be a response to a Stalinist regime. Moreover, using elements of the Carnavalesque and the Menippean satire of Mikhail Bakhtin's formalist literary theory (1895-1975), some literary critics read the novel "The Master and Margarita" as a satirical critique of the Soviet Union of the Stalinist era. It should be noted that according to Bakhtin's carnival theory, which uses "an atmosphere of horse play, raw humour, farce and sarcastic rejoicing" in a narrative, the author also disseminates his grievances, turning the social and moral order. In addition, The Menippean satire uses a mixture of literary styles (historical, mythological, philosophical and fantastical, etc.) that distort time and space, and allow

alternative realities to exist in the work in the form of diseases, desires and dreams. With this technique in the novel, Bulgakov probably wanted to target Soviet institutions and authority figures of power without fear of reprisal. At the same time, the Devil's arrival in Moscow tends to confirm the dilemma of the moral sense given at the beginning of the novel. As for the characters, one cannot help but look for hidden and symbolic meanings. The love story only arrives in the second part of the novel, the first remaining focused on the totalitarian terror reigning over Moscow of the 1930s; the arrival of the Devil and his three accomplices with magical powers playing towers blameable to the inhabitants of the city on the basis of the legend of Faust. The penultimate scene is the release of Pontius Pilate, who had been waiting 2,000 years to join Yeshua (Jesus). It is towards the end of the text that the three actions of the book meet, since we find the initial characters, the end of the story by the Master of the story of Pontius Pilate, and the major event that is the ball. This sequence of plots is all the more advanced because the text contains its own commentary on the course of the action, and the "abysmal setting" of the novel written by the Master plays an essential role in the composition of the whole. This novel is, finally, in the context of Soviet Russia, a manifesto for the freedom of artists and against conformism and submission to the Stalinist regime. Of course, the novel was strongly influenced by Goethe's novel "Faust" and the themes of cowardice, betrayal, open-mindedness and curiosity, as well as redemption, take precedence. The influence of the Russian writer Gogol is also noticeable from mostly illustrative details to composition and certain elements of the Master's character suggest that he is a mixture of Bulgakov himself and Gogol.

. The author It is not insignificant that the scene where the Master throws his novel into the fire reminds us of the real episode of Nicolas Gogol's life where he burned the sequel to his novel "The Dead Souls" «Мёртвые души- in Russian». It is easy to draw a parallel between the depression that led the Master following the non-publication of his novel and the many rejections Bulgakov had for some of these works during a period of his life. Thus, where Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky often deserve a precise introduction before they can fully enjoy their works, Bulgakov's "The Master and Margarita" can easily be read from the first pages. The Dostoyevskian sensitivity and in-depth analysis of the human natures of the heroes enriches the text of the novel favourably. The lyrical and harmonious fullness of Tolstoy's novels influences the writer and makes his main heroes moving and sensual. The interaction of natural elements and forces, such as fire, water, air, earth and destruction, are elements, to which must be added the powerful contrasts between light and darkness, noise and silence, sun and moon, thunderstorms and tranquillity. Bulgakov uses highly differentiated tones depending on the various parts. The chapters in Moscow have a rejoicing, almost farcical rhythm, while those

where the action takes place in Jerusalem are written in a style of rigorous symbolic realism. Two thematic outlines spring from the story of love stolen between the said Master, writer, and Marguerita, a young woman, tired of her dull marital life with another man. At the same time, we read, through the novel being written by the Master, to the analysis of what is unbearable for the Roman procurator Pontius Pilate faced with the most damning decision of mankind - to authorize to kill an innocent man. It is an impossible call to God - as much for the Procurator of Judea as for the Master, a character through whom Bulgakov seeks to disengage from the discourse of Stalinist power. It is towards the end of the text that the three actions of the book meet, since we find the initial characters, the end of the story by the Master of the story of Pontius Pilate, and the major event that is the ball- Satan's Rout. Among the people Woland (the devil) will meet are the Master, an author disappointed not to see his novel about Pontius Pilate published as well as Marguerite who is passionately in love with the Master. It is therefore not surprising that with this kind of satire "the Master and Margarita" was banned from publication (in its full version) until 1973 and the near end of the communist regime in Russia. The story is that of the appearance of the Devil in human form (as well as his acolytes). It was necessary, in the unconscious logic, to go through the Devil incarnation of the impulse danger to situate in its reverse, the angelic version. The curious thing is that beyond evil, there is the anguish of good, which, cured of its demonic neurosis, rid of its demons, discovers a most stinging anguish: that of Good - which gives the true measure of the complexity of the subject, stretched between angel and demon, to rediscover, via the knowledge of the unconscious, as the immanent version of otherness. In summary, I can consider several sides: identification with Goethe, identification with Faust and identification with Mephistopheles and finally identification with Nikolai Gogol, Feodor Dostoyevsky and Lev Tolstoy. Finally, this contemporary version of the "Faust myth", transposed to modern Moscow in the 1930s, Mikhail Bulgakov's "The Master and Margarita" is also one of the most beautiful, most romantic and most exciting love story described in Russian literature.

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