

Hungarian University of Fine Arts
Doctoral School

Slaves of Reality

DLA Theses

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Let us start with a very ambitious claim, almost like a statement: I have a firm belief that it should not surprise us if the author of a DLA dissertation chooses to use an unusual form. On the contrary: we should more or less expect it. It's because we, artists can't do anything but approach the task as we are: as artists. And in our case the undoubtedly strong instinct to analyze and examine will be superseded by another: the basic instinct to *picture* the problem we are concerned with.

These considerations led me to choose *Roman à thèse* (thesis novel) as the basic form of my dissertation. The title of the novel is *Slaves of Reality*, and it serves as the central part of the text. Thesis novel is a literary genre of long history and rich tradition, the most well-known example may be Voltaire's satire *Candide*. Thesis novel, as the name suggests, raises a central proposition, theorem or *thesis*, and then attempts to verify, refute, or – at least – carefully analyse it.

In the case of a doctoral dissertation, we are used to expect the formulation of strict propositions which are then profoundly examined by the author, and, as an outcome, convincingly verified or refuted. My thesis novel – by definition – raises such a central proposition, namely: „Every statement, irrespectively of its source, inevitably contains less truth than falsehood.” Or in a different manner: every valid model presupposes its opposite. If we are familiar with logic we may notice that our thesis tries to avoid both the possibility of proper verification and of thorough refutation, being in itself paradoxical. Throughout the novel, it implicates further fundamental questions instead, like:

- is it theoretically possible to talk about *objective truth*?
- where are the limits of scientific knowledge?
- how do reality and the *interpretation* of reality refer to each other?
- what role art can have in gaining proper knowledge of the world?