

and mythological types of characters as well as literary historical patterns of narration” (Sander, 2007: p. 122). Problems in a scope of readings within this field arise, when the novel has to be classified. For instance: it is more or less agreed that Döblin was involved in what is known as the German expressionism. But – as I mentioned above – it is debateable to what extent the novel itself conforms to a particular “paradigm” of expressionism. Benjamin took almost for granted this descriptive concept. Another point of discussion is how much the narration in the novel can be compared to Joyce’s “stream of consciousness”, no matter how much the author was actually fond of Joyce. It is less controversial aspect that connections to Brecht had some impact. However, we may say that literary theory did not really finish the job of canonisation of the novel and its author. An explanation for this is, to say the least, its complexity.

Sociological and historical reading of *Berlin Alexanderplatz* is invited by the topic and by the polymorphous plot of the novel and its depiction of urban environment in a conjunction with theory of culture and even some strains of anthropology, what we should broadly call sociological reading of this novel. The novel is taken as a representation of a functioning of mass culture in its earlier modern “phase”. This is also a specific aspect, which brings Döblin close to Benjamin as the author, who decisively changed fundamental concepts of art and aesthetics in a context of mass culture. It is not unimportant that Benjamin took film as the ultimate form and machinery of and for this culture. Of course, also some more recent sociological theories could make use of the novel. Bourdieu’s concept of *habitus* and its imprint in the formation of a social agency, as well as in the constitution of an individual, seems utterly illustrated by the novel. The concept of social (and/or symbolic) space, which Bourdieu developed through his theorising of complexities of urban society, enters the same framework. Further on, an idea such as Danilo Martucceli’s (2002) exposition of the sociological deciphering of a “grammar of an individual” in a field of such concepts as subjectivity, reflexivity and identity, could be easily applied to the novel. Political aspects, considering Döblin’s explicit political involvements, make part of any sociological interpretation of the novel. The novel moves its narration between inside and outside of subjective field. The reader accepts that the text mirrors reality, but it is obvious that due to the form of narration of *Berlin Alexanderplatz* even the most naïve reading is turned into a reflexive activity of coming to terms with a rough and superficial psychology of the characters, which includes taking positions on their morals. Ac-