# Bakhtin's Theory of the Literary Chronotope: Reflections, Applications, Perspectives

Nele Bemong, Pieter Borghart, Michel De Dobbeleer, Kristoffel Demoen, Koen De Temmerman & Bart Keunen (eds.)



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# **C**ONTENTS

Preface		III
PART I	STATE OF THE ART	I
Bakhtin's T	HEORY OF THE LITERARY CHRONOTOPE:	
REFLECTIONS	S, APPLICATIONS, PERSPECTIVES	3
Nele Bemong &	Pieter Borghart	
PART II	PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS	17
The Fugue (	DF CHRONOTOPE	19
Michael Holqui	st	
THE CHRONG	otopic Imagination in Literature and Film	
Bakhtin, Be	rgson and Deleuze on Forms of Time	35
Bart Keunen		
PART III	THE RELEVANCE OF THE CHRONOTOPE FOR	
	LITERARY HISTORY	57
HISTORICAL I	POETICS: CHRONOTOPES IN <i>LEUCIPPE AND CLITOPHON</i> AND	
TOM JONES .		59
Roderick Beaton		
	REALISM: DOCUMENTARY CHRONOTOPES IN	
	-CENTURY PROSE FICTION	77
Pieter Borghart	& Michel De Dobbeleer	
PART IV	CHRONOTOPICAL READINGS	91
THE CHRONG	OTOPE OF HUMANNESS: BAKHTIN AND DOSTOEVSKY	93
Gary Saul Mors	on	
HETEROCHRO	ONIC REPRESENTATIONS OF THE FALL:	
Bakhtin, Mi	LTON, DELILLO	III
Rachel Falconer		

#### II CONTENTS

"IT WAS NOT DEATH": THE POETIC CAREER OF THE CHRONOTOPE		131
PART V	SOME PERSPECTIVES FOR LITERARY THEORY	157
The Nineteen	ONOTOPIC GENRE STRUCTURES: ITH-CENTURY HISTORICAL NOVEL IN THE CONTEXT IN LITERARY POLYSYSTEM	159
THE CHRONOTOPE AND THE STUDY OF LITERARY ADAPTATION: THE CASE OF <i>ROBINSON CRUSOE</i> Tara Collington		179
Works Cited .		195
ABOUT THE AUTHORS		

# The Chronotopic Imagination in Literature and Film

# Bakhtin, Bergson and Deleuze on Forms of Time

#### **Bart Keunen**

In Bakhtin scholarship, there is general agreement about the polysemic nature of the concept of the chronotope, and about its ability to establish its presence on the different levels of a literary text (see Bemong and Borghart in this volume). Clearly, the multilayered nature of literary communication is leaving its marks in the debate on the concept. Nonetheless, this polysemy should never be a reason for employing the concept in an impressionistic or intuitive manner. It is my belief – and a key premise of this paper - that a fairly coherent philosophical position lies hidden behind it. It may be found in the observation that all definitions and aspects of chronotopicality seem to circle around the human faculty of imagination. In the "Concluding Remarks" added to FTC, Bakhtin suggests that the chronotopicality of literary phenomena has nothing to do with pure reason. On the contrary, abstract argumentations and informative passages are "binding' events, located far from the chronotope" that impress us as "dry information and communicated facts" (FTC: 250). With the concept of the chronotope, Bakhtin intends to reveal nothing less than the heart of literary aesthetics. For this purpose, he advances the notion of imagination, considering it to be the cornerstone of aesthetic experience. A chronotope only becomes a chronotope when it shows something, when it brings to mind an image that can be observed by the mind's eye. It would be fair to say that, in Bakhtin's view, a chronotope is the elementary unit of literary imagination.

In this contribution, I would like to examine the way in which Bakhtin, in the two essays dedicated to the chronotope, lays the foundations for a theory of literary imagination. Bakhtin himself, far from developing a systematic theory in these essays, appears to focus mainly on the historical shifts in literary imagination over the centuries, and on the ways in which imagination and practical reason have interacted (for example, he shows a keen interest in the view of mankind implicit in concrete chronotopes). In addition, one should guard against forcing Bakhtin into any kind of systematic straitjacket. Like many other early-twentieth-century philosophers – Bergson and Cassirer, for example – he opposed all theoretical coups on practical life. Instead, he attempted to display a modest, reserved attitude toward concrete experiential qualities. Nevertheless, because of its enormous potential, I believe it is still worth analyzing Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope in a comparatively rigorous manner. There are so few studies available that it almost seems irresponsible to fail to

seize the opportunity of granting Bakhtin a place in the history of philosophy as a true philosopher of the imagination. His concept of the chronotope may be interpreted as a contribution to a tradition in which Henri Bergson, William James, Charles Sander Peirce and Gilles Deleuze have been key figures. Like these four authors, Bakhtin is a philosopher in the school of pragmatism. His predilection for what Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson have called "prosaics" puts him right at the heart of a philosophical family that calls forth multiplicity against metaphysical essentialism, and prefers the mundane to the universal.

It seems wise to proceed carefully in the attempt to reconstruct Bakhtin's theory of imagination. In this contribution to the debate, I choose to develop a philosophical dialogue between Bakhtin and the above-mentioned philosophical family. More specifically, it seems to me that the ideal point of departure for examining the way in which Bakhtin attempts to get to the bottom of the mysteries of literary imagination is Gilles Deleuze's synthesis of Bergson's epistemological view on knowledge as "the perception of images", as well as Peirce's theory of experience based on a typology of images. In the following, I show that Bakhtin's view of the temporal-spatial constellations in literature demonstrates a strong affinity to the Bergsonian view that perception of the spatial world is colored by the lived time experienced by the observer. Based on this observation, I then develop a typology of images which places the concept of the chronotope in a more systematic framework.

#### Deleuze and Bergson on Movement and Change

Before entering into Bakhtin's specific contribution to the debate on imagination, I briefly outline the way in which Deleuze systematizes his theory of imagination. Following in Bergson's tracks, he insists that an adequate description of experience must respect the genesis of experiences. In his view, the necessary condition for any theory of experience is to focus on the fact that everything in everyday knowledge about the world is connected to change and movement. The static only exists within theoretical knowledge, where it can be observed to an extreme degree in the practices of mathematics and theology. Everyday prosaic experience is characterized by changes. In one of his last great philosophical works, Deleuze links this insight to the art of cinema. Cinema, he states, is the closest to everyday experience because it is the art of the changeable. Everything in cinema circles around movement and change because the art form only makes use of everyday material. In addition, cinema emphasizes that the observer of everyday dynamic experience is also movable and continually changing. Cinema's aesthetic set of instruments is wholly commanded by movable perception: camera movements, alternating camera positions and editing generate a perception that strongly resembles the way in which a human observer plays along with the experiential world. An observer changes during the process of observation, during his or her perception of change. In his theory of experience, Deleuze cuts across stubborn, everyday illusion. In everyday life, the observer will be inclined to ascribe

changes to stable objects, as if these had a property of their own, to wit: moving. Just like Aristotle, we are all inclined to interpret the world as a stable surface on which fixed entities are alternately resting and moving to a new position.

Bergson and Deleuze, however, point out that this Aristotelian position is not an adequate representation of the state of things. The illusion that the world is changing and that we are unchangeable observers constitutes a form of reductionism. Variability in the circumstances of observation, for example among people walking down the street, strongly color the realization of the perception. It is not just that whether we perceive from a position of standing or walking determines the image we form of this situation. It is also that man is an imag(in)ing creature, coloring each perception with information stored in memory (the woman I observe on the street may attract my attention because she reminds me of the woman I once loved) and with information tied up with the projection of the current situation toward a next situation (the people I observe I see as people whom I know are on their way to work). The change in the world, in other words, is doubled by the changes my perception adds to it.

What is more, the perceptual dynamics often precedes the dynamics of the observed itself. The observation that the world is not alone to be characterized by a Heraclitean dynamics, but that the very observation of it is equally subjected to an unstable flux, constitutes the basis of Bergson's concept of *durée* or "duration". The concept of "Time", in Bergson's view, is the key to the study of human experience. Experience is not only changeable in its spatial dimension – Heraclites' flux is a whole of spatial changes – but also in a specific temporal dimension. Every observation, Bergson states, occurs from a changing observational consciousness; every state of things is colored by the observer's lived time. Together with the observation that our spatial environment implies a flux of changes, the attentive observer observes that he or she is subjected to change too. The latter form of change could be called "lived change". Bergson himself calls it "pure duration". A lasting experience is an experience in which the different spatial impressions melt together into an organic whole. Moreover, the older impressions linger on in this experiential situation and connect with new impressions. Bergson says:

Pure duration is the form which the succession of our conscious states assumes when our ego lets itself live, when it refrains from separating its present state from its former states [...] as happens when we recall the notes of a tune, melting, so to speak, into one another. (Bergson 2009: 100)

The experience of duration or "lived time" is a very everyday phenomenon and it characterizes the bulk of our everyday experiences. Only from an Archimedean, theoretical perspective, does lived time have no part to play. For example, whenever we confront the world with the time of a watch, we lose contact with the concrete experience, reducing the everyday to an abstract pattern.<sup>2</sup>

The Bergsonian theory of experience is of exceptional importance to the study of cinematic or literary imagination. Some movements in the human experiential world lend themselves easily to observation as purely spatial events in an Archimedean manner: the speed of a runner, for example, or the size of a building lot, possess all the necessary properties to make them spatial temporalities which can be calculated in this way. Human imagination, on the other hand, cannot be understood from a reductionist concept of time, because imagining is accompanied by a concrete experiential flux that can never be grasped by solely referring to the succession of spatial transformations in the world. Let me explain this by making a comparison with the way in which an image is experienced in cinema. In his study of cinema, Deleuze makes the assumption that a "shot" is the elementary unit of analysis. A shot is a mix of two dimensions, and change occurs on both levels. On the one hand, it consists of a series of spatial characteristics; the moving image is a set of elements that forms a closed whole. On the other hand, a shot is also tied up with a temporal aspect. The spatial whole evolves as the camera registers the set. In cinema, the closed whole is continually pried open and thus becomes a dynamic whole, both because the camera performs the movements, and also because the editing ensures that one shot precedes another shot that contrasts with the current image.

It goes without saying that literary imagination, too, meets Bergson's basic intuition. Just as with Deleuze's cinematic images, literary images may be considered as unities of time and space. When literary critics review a book, they refer to a passage and describe how this passage evokes an experience. A passage from a book generates and expresses experiences, and does this on the basis of temporal-spatial coordinates. Not all passages, however, are arranged in this way. Some are contemplative or offer dry information; others, however, are suitable for transmitting experiential qualities. This is why the concept of the chronotope is a revolutionary category in the study of literature. It is the ideal concept for those literary passages in which lived time occupies a central position, the most adequate term to designate the experience of change we go through when we are reading a book.

In some parts of his essays on the concept of the chronotope, it is clear that Bakhtin associates chronotopes with a temporal experience that is also central to Bergson's work. When he discusses real time in FTC, he invariably intends a time of becoming, of continuous anticipation of future events (on the basis of elements present in memory). Similarly, in BSHR he writes that real time is experienced as an "emerging whole, an event":

The ability to *see time*, to *read time*, in the spatial whole of the world and, on the other hand, to perceive the filling of space not as an immobile background, a given that is completed once and for all, but as an emerging whole, an event – this is the ability to read in everything *signs that show time in its course*, beginning with nature and ending with human customs and ideas (all the way to abstract concepts). (BSHR: 25; emphasis in original)

Bakhtin usually calls the lived time real time, historical time, or horizontal time. No influence is exerted on these temporal experiences by the abstracting mind, which is why theoretical reflections about the timelessness of principles and essences (the Platonic world placed vertically above the existing one as a parallel world) are absent. In historical time, the experience of the individual surges on with every new piece of information brought up by history. Time and again, the past is integrated in the current moment of consciousness. This explains why Goethe holds a central position in BSHR. Goethe allows the historical past to affect the present, and together they generate the future. The past "produces in conjunction with the present a particular direction for the future, and, to a certain degree, predetermines the future. Thus, one achieves a fullness of time" (BSHR: 34).

Bergson and Bakhtin equally concur in their criticism of every form of metaphysical reductionism with regard to experience. For both, this aversion is prompted by a philosophy of time. Bergson targets the spatialization of time as it has become common in Western rationalism, while Bakhtin targets narrative forms in which idealistic representations dominate temporal development. More specifically, he considers the abstract temporal development of the adventure novel, and its mechanical and arbitrary succession of moments of chance, as an expression of human experience that is all too reductionist. Just as Bergson, he believes that abstract concepts of time create the illusion that the past always determines the present. The abstracting mind reconstructs the present from the knowledge of the past and establishes causal relations between all possibilities of the present, on the one hand, and the existing condition on the other hand. Real experience, the experience we have when we undergo strong emotions or when we are in a Zen-like state, performs the opposite: it is a present that redefines the past as a whole of experiential data that can be re-interpreted. The existing moment is nothing other than a virtual rearrangement of the past. Abstract and concrete time, in other words, are interrelated in the same way as necessity and freedom.

Nevertheless, there is an important difference between the two philosophers of experience. Bakhtin does not focus solely on experiential consciousness in general, but on experiential situations in which these states of consciousness occur. In this sense, Bakhtin is more of a philosopher of art and culture than a metaphysicist. He examines experiences in order to learn something about the content of human consciousness. For this reason, he almost exclusively devotes his attention to aesthetic experiences. At the same time, he is well aware of the fact that, in his aesthetic experiences, man is a social and historical being. The aesthetic experiences which concern Bakhtin refer to temporal experiences (just as they do with Bergson), yet these experiences are characterized by a particular temporality of action. As Rudova writes: "Bakhtin divides duration into chronotopes, or time-spaces, which are concrete and historical" (1996: 183). Rudova rightly points out that Bakhtin had something particular in mind with Goethe's sense of temporality: "the world of 'eventness' not as an attribute of consciousness, but as a real entity endowed with concrete historical meaning" (ibid.: 183-4). In this respect, we may think of the way in which Bakhtin brings up

the parlor and the salon as a literary setting that was relatively new to the age of Stendhal and Balzac: "Most important [...] is the weaving of historical and socio-public events together with the personal and even deeply private side of life, with the secrets of the boudoir" (FTC: 247). In Bakhtin's view, chronotopes are the gateway to the specific temporal experiences with which art is concerned in its most elementary form. The aesthetic experiences expressed by artistic chronotopes combine the cultural context with the dynamics of human consciousness.

## **Images of Affection**

As I have said before, the concept of the chronotope is related to the film shot because it expresses the experience of change. In addition, chronotopes are as many-sided as film shots. Both are imaginal constructions tied up with the experience of duration. This experience takes various forms. And it turns out that the various forms of chronotopes distinguished by Bakhtin in his essays correspond with the types of images conceived of by Deleuze in his study of cinema, to wit: images of affection, action and relation.

Deleuze's point of departure for this tripartite distinction is as simple as that of his source of inspiration, C.S. Peirce, who identifies three semiotic strategies by which reality can be analyzed. The first strategy is governed by the unitary: the image expresses a quality and demands to be judged for this quality. Observing a specific quality – a phenomenon that can be called "affection" – is the most elementary form of meaning, which is why Peirce called it "firstness". Images governed by the dual have a more complex meaning; these are images that call forth the question pertaining to the cause of the represented image (for example, an action that calls forth a reaction). The most complex form of interpretation arises in the case of "thirdness", when the relation between the two elements must be designated by way of a third element. This phenomenon occurs when the observation is only understandable through an abstract relation between the elements (e.g. the question of guilt that arises in the case of an image of conflict between two actors). In all three cases, a specific type of change in the represented image is involved. In the case of an image of affection the change is "to be moved"; in the case of images governed by the dual the dynamics of action and reaction ensure change, while the image of relation thematically develops changes of a more abstract nature, because the dynamics of "linking up things" are central to it. As the Deleuzian typology of images is connected with change, and the concept of chronotope also refers to change, the question arises as to whether Deleuze's tripartite distinction also applies to chronotopes. That it does so cannot be taken for granted. We need to ask the question whether Bakhtin's work permits such a parallelism.

To begin with, such a parallelism may be called problematic in the case of the images of affection. The changes that are central to the chronotopes mentioned by Bakhtin in his essay are exclusively focused on the presence of the concrete historical situation

in the literary image. At first sight, Bakhtin is not concerned with experiences of duration (lived time) of a personal and psychological nature. Nevertheless, keeping in mind his affinity with Ernst Cassirer's philosophy of culture (Brandist 1997; Poole 1998), we need not be surprised if some connotations of the concept of chronotope should correlate with Cassirer's take on the mythological aspects of human experience – an experience which he defines by pointing to man's emotional reaction to the world. In the mythical attitude, the world appears as saturated with emotional qualities. Myths do not belong to a remote past, but constitute an experiential given that informs culture – even modern culture. "Even in the life of civilized man", Cassirer says, myth "has by no means lost its original power" (1970: 89). Why then should the mythical-affective mode of interacting with the world be absent from modern literature?

Bakhtin seems to adopt this line of reasoning in the concluding paragraph of FTC. It is significant that he found it necessary to add some remarks on five specific minor chronotopes (the encounter on the road, the Gothic castle, the previously mentioned chronotope of the parlor or the salon, the provincial town and the threshold) when he reconsidered his essay in 1973. It may well be no coincidence that Bakhtin mentions precisely those images pertaining to contrasting representations of "lived time". These five particular chronotopic motifs underline the importance of psychologically relevant literary images in the more recent history of the novel. Ever since the English novel of the eighteenth century, history is increasingly made concrete in lasting, affectively charged images. Bakhtin was well aware of this, as is evident from the fact that, with the exception of a few digressions on older literary forms<sup>5</sup>, he only refers to works of art from the nineteenth century. It is also evident from the fact that, from these latter works, he only brings up those images that appeal the most to what Cassirer would have called "a world saturated with emotional qualities" and, at the same time, index a Bergsonian time concept. That being said, he undeniably emphasizes that in these images mainly historical experiences are represented. In the paragraph following his treatment of the five minor chronotopes, he explains to the reader that his aim is to gain insight into "the problem of assimilating real time, that is, the problem of assimilating historical reality into the poetic image" (FTC: 251). The aforementioned motivic chronotopes perform this task in such a way that "the epoch becomes not only graphically visible [space], but narratively visible [time]" (ibid.: 247).

Still, it is in the nature of these chronotopes that they do more than merely render history palpable; they also express the experience that goes along with this palpability. They are aesthetic images in the true sense of the word, in the Greek meaning of *aisthanesthai* ("feel", "experience"). In addition, from other statements it is evident that Bakhtin has an eye for the affective charge of the examples he announces. In the introductory paragraph, he talks about the unity of such aesthetic images, a unity in which temporal and spatial determinations are inseparable, and in which emotions and (e)valuations play an important part. To illustrate the affective charge of this new series of chronotopes, he briefly recapitulates his view of premodern literary images.

In contrast with these five examples, he considers the literary images with which he is concerned in the actual essay on (motivic and generic) chronotopes as purely abstract representations, breathing a different aesthetics. Although Bakhtin does not deny that the elements of the older literary imagination produce a certain aesthetic effect, he seems to deplore the absence of "lived time". Characters and their attributes, subjects such as betrayal and fidelity, references to activities and behavior, are vital to telling a good story. Yet when they are subjected to interpretation, they can only be represented in a neutral, distanced manner. In such a neutral interpretation, two operations are carried out, effectively extracting the "perception" from the image: on the one hand, time and space are treated as separate entities; on the other hand, they are dissociated from the values and emotions that such images spontaneously evoke. In short, the perception is lost: "Abstract thought can, of course, think time and space as separate entities and conceive them as things apart from the emotions and values that attach to them" (FTC: 243).

The five more recent minor chronotopes do not permit "such divisions" and "segmentation". By contrast, they give evidence of "living artistic perception (which also of course involves thought, but not abstract thought)" (ibid.; emphasis in original). In the living artistic perception – and it is no coincidence that Bakhtin emphasizes the adjective *living* – the spatial elements (the characters and their attributes, the setting) and the temporal elements (the characters' behavior, the heroic acts that express a certain abstract value) are reforged into a real experience, into a duration, into an image in which lived time becomes palpable: "the living artistic perception [...] seizes on the chronotope in all its wholeness and fullness" (ibid.). Bakhtin could hardly have expressed this in a more Bergsonian manner. Again, it is no coincidence that Deleuze employs notably cognate terminology when he describes images of affection in cinema. In highly Bergsonian terms, he states that each detail within a close-up taken in by a viewer (or an observing character) expresses an "indivisible quality". The grimace of a character in an expressionist film is an image of an actual state of things infused with experiences from the immediate past. The represented figure in the cinematic image is pure affection; it is a passive receptacle of all preceding experiences. Affecting details such as a grimace express an unbreakable unity of temporal and spatial changes, and are also experienced as such by the observer.<sup>6</sup>

In light of these considerations, I would like to conclude that Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope can be employed to discuss the aesthetic shifts in the recent history of literature. The analysis of the five motivic chronotopes that follows below may very well be highly un-Bakhtinian, yet it does show the importance of the concept outside of the context of the philosophy of culture that Bakhtin had in mind. The study of chronotopes, as carried out from a Deleuzian-Bergsonian perspective, may constitute an added value to a better understanding of purely aesthetic phenomena.

In order to demonstrate this added value, I would like to present a brief outline of the way in which Bakhtin's minor chronotopes can be reformulated as prototypes of the modern aesthetic experience. The five mentioned chronotopic motifs refer to four extreme forms of temporal experience that are frequent in nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature. They can be called "extreme" because, as Bakhtin says with respect to the chronotope of the threshold, they stand outside of biographical time: "In this chronotope, time is essentially instantaneous; it is as if it has no duration and falls out of the normal course of biographical time" (FTC: 248). In Bakhtin's work, the generic chronotope of biography is connected with the mathematical, spatialized representation of time: a reconstruction of private life without a historical dimension, an overview that does not take into account the forces from the historical environment that act on a consciousness and that orient the consciousness toward the future. The opposite of biographical time can be found in the experiences of *durée* that occupy a central position in modern literature and are addressed in the five minor chronotopes under consideration. These chronotopes show a subject that is closely involved with the world and is affected by its (social and physical) environment and the impressions left by it. They show a subject that is "caught" by (or "up in") things.

From a Bergsonian perspective, this "being caught" may be analyzed in such a way that four extreme experiential states become visible. The point of departure for such an analysis is the fact that an affection emerges from a dual process of change. First, there are the changes in the spatial processes. In one extreme case, the spatial situation barely changes and little new information presents itself; in the other extreme case, the spatial situation changes radically and new stimuli seem to continuously present themselves. In the first chapter of his book on cinema, Deleuze calls these two spatial phenomena "rarification" and "saturation" respectively. Secondly, there are changes that are concerned with the awareness of time itself. Sometimes, the observing consciousness halts the processing of information in such a way that an effect of slowing down occurs: at other moments, the impression of acceleration arises, because the consciousness reacts in an unusually alert way to the new information. In other words, the temporal processes that characterize an image of affection, slowing down and acceleration, are related to the way in which consciousness deals with memory and anticipation.<sup>8</sup>

Both play a part in each experience of "lived time", yet there are gradations in the way in which both processes occur. A consciousness that slows down changes is one in which memory plays an important part. The new stimuli seem to be absorbed by the information that is already present in the consciousness. Supported by prior knowledge present in memory, the subject has specific expectations with respect to the outside world. An accelerating perception arises when the consciousness awaits new information without fostering any expectations, when it acts in an anticipating manner without bringing in memory. From an awareness of the spatial and temporal processes of change we can derive four extremes of the temporal experience. The nature of the information (the amount of new stimuli) on the one hand, and the degree of activity and passivity (the pace of the state of consciousness) on the other hand are, in their mutual combination, responsible for the creation of four poles within which the human experience of time oscillates. As human beings we are

affected by four extremes: (1) a slowed down empty, (2) a slowed down saturated, (3) an accelerated empty and (4) an accelerated saturated affection.

Working from this schema, which is loosely based on the philosophies of Bergson and Deleuze, Bakhtin's five minor chronotopes can be systematized. Although, at first sight, Bakhtin's examples seem to be arbitrarily chosen, it is clear that they imply a great variety of temporal experiences. On the basis of contrasts in the quality of experience in these chronotopes, two oppositions can be distinguished. The first concerns the fact that the experiential quality of the "chronotope of the provincial town" is diametrically opposed to both the "chronotope of the encounter" (or "the chronotope of the road") and the "chronotope of the parlor" (or "the chronotope of the salon"). In the case of the first of these – for exemple the experience of "cyclical everyday time" as present in Emma Bovary's experience of boredom in Tostes – a rarification of information occurs; situations appear to endlessly repeat themselves, up to the smallest detail, which is why the observing consciousness is able to exert its influence of slowing down.

Time here has no advancing historical movement; it moves rather in narrow circles. [....] Time here is without event and therefore almost seems to stand still. Here there are no 'meetings', no 'partings'. (FTC: 247-8)<sup>9</sup>

In the case of "the chronotope of encounter" the opposite is true, as here a saturation of experience occurs: everything seems interesting and the consciousness is confronted with the absence of repetition, losing itself in a world of difference, and, consequently, the spatial situation causes it to oscillate wildly. Typical of this experience is a form of excitement, "a higher degree of intensity in emotions and values" (FTC: 243). The literary motif of the road, a chronotope that is derived from that of the encounter, expresses the same combination of saturation and acceleration; it is the literary symbol *par excellence* of the "flow of time": "time, as it were, fuses together with space and flows in it (forming the road)" (ibid.: 244).

A third motivic chronotope connected with saturation and acceleration is the "chronotope of the parlor" (or "the chronotope of the salon"). Parlors and salons are settings in which accidental novelties and stimulating subjects pop up, as such generating "encounters". In contrast with the encounters "on the road", however, the excitement is not so much caused by the accidental nature of the new stimuli as by the social and personal peripetias that the characters go through: "here the graphically visible markers of historical time as well as of biographical and everyday time are concentrated and condensed; at the same time they are intertwined with each other in the tightest possible fashion, fused into unitary markers of the epoch" (FTC: 247).

Summarizing, one could say that the first opposition involves two very different affective reactions to processes of change. In the first case, the change inclines toward the cyclical, to old information being resumed; in the second case, it inclines toward difference, toward increase in information. In addition, the first minor chronotope is accompanied by a force of deceleration (the fragmented, melancholic experience of

boredom and spleen), whereas the second series coincides with a rapid, agitated functioning of the consciousness.

The second opposition concerns the contrast between the experiential quality of the "chronotope of the threshold" and that of the "chronotope of the gothic castle". The latter, through its strong historical charge, generates a mysterious effect, impervious to reason, corresponding to the affection of fear, dread or the uncanny (das Unheimliche). The passage in Ann Radcliffe's The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794) where Emily sees villain Montoni's castle for the first time is a fine example. In this case, the temporal experience is dominated by the anticipation of an unknown danger, causing an effect of acceleration. At the same time, the entire description circles around very little new information. The menace never becomes concrete because the narrator employs only vague suggestive bits that all belong to the realm of the mysterious. The affection of fear, in other words, has a clear chronotopic structure.

The opposite of this chronotopic structure can be found in "the chronotope of the threshold". At the heart of this temporal-spatial construction is the will of the subject to process new information and to take new decisions, which is in conflict with "the indecisiveness that fails to change a life, the fear to step over the threshold" (FTC: 248). The subject, in an agony of doubt, freezes in the face of the new experiential data, compares these with previous, older experiences and is paralyzed by his or her inability to attune the two. In other words, this image of affection addresses the opposite of the image of fear. While the latter combines a certain vagueness and punctuality with an impulse of anticipation, the chronotope of the threshold is characterized by a saturation of information and a strong involvement with mnemonic material.

From the above observations, we can conclude that the chronotopes to which Bakhtin refers in his "Concluding Remarks" are perfect illustrations of what Bergson calls experiences of "duration". Although Bakhtin does not discuss them for the purpose of illustrating Bergson's theory, they nevertheless elucidate the fact that modern literature is heavily focused on the staging of temporal experiences and on the evocation of concomitant affective states. <sup>11</sup> Moreover, my examination shows that such minor chronotopes can be analyzed as specific entities of imagination. By paying attention to Bergsonian-Deleuzian parameters, one can apply Bakhtin's concept and theory of chronotopes to give shape to a theory of aesthetic experience.

#### **Images of Action**

In (literary) narrative, images of affection never occur as isolated instances. In lyrical texts, the use of suggestive metaphors usually suffices to evoke a lyrical time-space. Prose, however, combines images of affection with representations of action. Near the end of FTC Bakhtin's discussion of a number of motivic chronotopes is preceded

by a comment on the relation between actions and chronotopes. He points out that the representation of an action (he uses the word "scenes") is founded in a pattern of experience (characterized by "dense" and "concrete time markers", and by "well-delineated spatial areas") that proves to be more fundamental than the actions (the "events") that need to be represented:

the chronotope [...] provides the ground essential for the showing-forth, the representability of events. And this is so thanks precisely to the special increase in density and concreteness of time markers – the time of human life, of historical time – that occurs within well-delineated spatial areas. It is this that makes it possible to structure a representation of events in the chronotope (around the chronotope). It serves as the primary point from which 'scenes' in a novel unfold. (FTC: 250)

In the section that follows the quote, Bakhtin does not discuss the actions as much as he does the emotional and evaluative value of the images. On the contrary, ample attention is paid to action images in the main part of the essay. By way of digressions on, among other things, moments of coincidence (which rule the key moments of the world of romance) and processes of growth (which occupy central stage in the "Rabelaisian chronotope"), Bakhtin explains how the actions of characters are closely related to the temporal-spatial aspects of imaging.

As far as those images of action are concerned, the parallelism between a Bergsonian and a Bakhtinian analysis is even clearer than for images of affection. Images of action are "abstracted" images for both thinkers. The Deleuzian theory of imagery gives two reasons for this abstract character. The first is that images of action derive their meaning from a "dramatic" situation. Deleuze defines an action image by way of two component parts, to wit

milieux and behaviors, milieux that actualize and behaviors that incarnate. The action-image is the relation between the two, and all the varieties of this relation. (2005a: 196)<sup>12</sup>

To understand images of action, one has to interpret the relation between man and setting. The dramatic interaction between two characters or between a character and his surroundings turns the image of action into a mimetic image in the Aristotelian sense of the word: "the imitation of behavior". From an Aristotelian perspective, human actions are goal-oriented, a fact which leaves its marks on the images of action. By stressing the teleological aspect of human behavior, an image of action always risks a loss in quality of experience. The second reason for the abstract character of representations of action is that an image of action is the result of the editing of different images; it only shows itself in a series of images. Whereas images of affection can express the singularity of an affect in one (cinematic) shot or in one (literary) descriptive passage, action images are characterized by a causal series of images. In other words, a greater interpretative activity is needed, thus granting the image a higher degree of abstraction.

The combination of goal-oriented behavior and a causal chain of action moments means that images of action become abstract constructions. Both Bergson and Bakhtin consider these images as products of the "idealist" impulses of human consciousness. Bergson defines the linear representation of temporal processes as a teleological abstraction imposed on the heterogeneity of experience, causing it to be reformed into a homogenous, geometrical, and mechanical order. The linear, teleological processes observed by human beings when they "map" behavior constitute an assimilation of time to spatial categories ("l'assimilation du temps à l'espace"; Deleuze 1966: 108). Bergson considers such an interpretation of processes to be an impoverishment of the real experience of time; if an experience is converted into a rational pattern, it loses all concreteness, no longer able to even claim the name of "experience of time": "the idea of a reversible series in duration, or even simply of a certain order of succession in time, itself implies the representation of space, and cannot be used to define it" (Bergson 2009: 101). In his commentary on the Greek novel, Bakhtin is equally hard on this coup committed by theoretical thought on everyday experience. The actions occurring in these novels are labeled in terms reminiscent of those of Bergson, such as "reversible" and "abstract": "The adventure chronotope is [...] characterized by a technical, abstract connection between space and time, by the reversibility of moments in a temporal sequence, and by their interchangeability in space" (FTC: 100). Like Bergson, Bakhtin associates the generic chronotope of the adventure with mathematical rationality. Adventure time is characterized by an "elementary clear, formal, almost mathematical character" 13 and Bakhtin dubs it as "of course highly abstract" (ibid.: 97).

The opposite of this typical view of time can be found in the fantastic stories of folkloric tradition. The world of imagination that shines through in early-modern popular culture is closer to concrete experience, because it describes human action as a dynamic event: "a direct and straightforward growth of a man in his own right and in the real world of the here-and-now, a growth process without any inauthentic debasing, without any idealized compensation in the form of weakness and need" (FTC: 150). From this quote, one can deduce that Bakhtin looks down somewhat on the teleological fixation of man, who, in his or her problem-solving behavior, cannot help but think "abstractly". The will to survive ("weakness and need") forces man to design future projections, organizing his or her activities along a goal-oriented, linear line. 14 In the most free form, however, a human being is an imagining creature that unites the heterogeneity of his actions in a lived moment of time. A "lifelike" representation of human actions which shows man his state of "freedom" is properly founded in a concrete representation of an experience of durée. 15 The individual that liberates himself from the abstract calculus and linear de- or reformations of experience, discovers that the real experience consists in the fact that past, present and future are interrelated in an endlessly transforming movement. 16 The fact that Bakhtin emphasizes to such an extent the folkloric tradition and the temporal concepts present in this tradition, can be interpreted as a plea for a literature in which images of action are linked more closely to images of affection. In Bakhtin's view, only non-theoretical man is able to do this. Consequently, the individual has to draw lessons from folk culture's elementary philosophy of time, a philosophy that is closer to the emotionally charged representation of the image of affection:

Folkloric man demands space and time for his full realization; he exists entirely and fully in these dimensions and feels comfortable in them. Therefore, the fantastic in folklore is a realistic fantastic: in no way does it exceed the limits of the real, here-and-now material world, and it does not stitch together rents in that world with anything that is idealistic or otherworldly; [...] Such a fantastic relies on the real-life possibilities of human development. (FTC: 150)

Just as in the image of affection, the unity of time and space is at the heart of folkloric representation of human action, of folkloric "images of action". Just as in the image of affection, those images of action involve a "living artistic perception". It was in literary milieux that a feeling for a non-abstract philosophy of time started to grow. Bakhtin observes that, in the era in which Western literature developed the *Bildungsroman*, abstract time is increasingly replaced by a representation of the concrete dynamics of experience. As he writes in BSHR, the changes that the hero of the modern novel goes through occur in "real historical time, with all of its necessity, its fullness, its future, and its profoundly chronotopic nature" (BSHR: 23).

In Bakhtin's view, there are at least two types of action images. First, there are images, such as the minor chronotope of the meeting, that emphasize a more abstract time, as in older texts such as the Greek or chivalric romance. Secondly, there are images of a completely different nature, typically found in modern literature (for example, in the form of four of the five motivic chronotopes that Bakhtin refers to in his "Concluding Remarks"). The reason for this lies in the fact that the image of action follows a psychological logic that may be associated with a more or less Bergsonian concept of time. By distinguishing different types of action images, it becomes clear that, for Bakhtin, action images (and the motivic chronotopes they instantiate) are important analytical tools for delineating textual genres in the history of literature. For us to arrive at a rich definition of textual genres, however, an additional tool is needed: the major chronotope or overarching plot construction, which I would like to associate with Deleuze's "image of relation".

### **Images of Relation**

The image of relation is the type of imagery that is best known to literary scholars. It is often the only type of image that is considered in literary analyses. To be sure, an image of relation is nothing other than an interpretation of a series of action or affection images; in terms of the discussion here it is "thirdness", the semiotic phenomenon which Peirce said denominates secondness (and via secondness also firstness) and

arranges it in the "symbolic order". With images of relation, we find ourselves, therefore, on the level of the mental, the level of intellectual construction, or — within a Bakhtinian framework — the level of dominant and generic chronotopes. That is why literary studies prefers this type of image; they are images that only exist in the world of conventions and symbols. Consequently, they can become the object of a thematic analysis of a work of art.

Applied to Bakhtin's thought, it may be said that the survey of chronotopes at the outset of BSHR is a descriptive account of different images of relation, in this case generic chronotopes. The chronotopes articulated by the travel novel, the novel of ordeal, the biographical novel and the novel of emergence constitute a series of mental images that diverge from each other. In various ways, these images have given direction to the history of Western-European literature. In Deleuze's philosophy of cinema, these more abstract representations may receive a place next to the types of images that are grounded in the senses. In addition, this detour may sufficiently explain why it is simply impossible to attribute an unambiguous definition to Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope. As is the case with Deleuze's types of image, the different aspects of the concept cannot be separated from each other. For us to describe their functioning adequately, we need to continually relate them to each other. This activity involves levels of aesthetic experiences that are constantly dissolving into each other and are distinguished from each other by the contemplator in an artificial fashion.

The mental image that Deleuze denotes by the concept of image of relation, can best be described by referring to the tropes which filmmakers employ in their work. In response to Eisenstein's and Pudovkin's views on "dialectical editing", Deleuze sheds light on the problem of the abstract logic behind cinematic images in the following way:

For them the dialectic was not a pretext, neither was it a theoretical and ex post facto reflexion: it was primarily a conception of images and their montage. What interests Pudovkin is the law of quantity and quality, of the quantitative process and the qualitative leap: what all his films show us are the moments and discontinuous leaps of a dawn of consciousness, in so far as they assume a continuous linear development and a progression in time, but also react upon them. (Deleuze 2005a: 184)

This analysis of editing in Russian cinema offers a fine account of the difference between images of relation and the two other types of image. Mental images are global concepts that originate from the relations between images. It is important to note that these global concepts of mental representation arise from the two other types of images. The relation image, as interpretation of an (aggregate of) action image(s), conceptualizes an intellectual logic that the contemplator discovers in the series of environments and behaviors represented in a work of art. At the same time, the relation image is a concept that grants unity to a series of affective conditions. <sup>17</sup> The two

usually come together in a relation image: actions are viewed as colored by an affect, and affects are interpreted as the basis (or the result) of one action or another. In addition, an image of relation always goes one step further, because actions and affects are compared with each other and subsequently abstracted into a symbol, into a statement about the global relations between the actions, the affects, and the actions and the affects together. <sup>18</sup> In literary theory, symbolic meanings of this sort take up the principal part of the literary analyses. Literary theorists are inclined to work with series of motifs and themes. Usually, they place these in series that could be called plot patterns.

In FTC Bakhtin often discusses "plot" and thematic phenomena. Yet it is striking that he consistently takes care not to autonomize these mental constructions. Whenever he talks about the meaning of the travel novel and the novel of ordeal, he discusses in one and the same breath the moments of tension that are evoked by the chronotopes at the level of the motifs or action-episodes. In other words, his characterization of the dominant chronotope is invariably rooted in the images of action that are typical of this sort of text. Thus he writes about the adventure novel that "time is deprived of its unity and wholeness - it is chopped up into separate segments, each encompassing a single episode from everyday life" (FTC: 128). Bakhtin does not draw this conclusion a priori, but derives it from a thorough description of the action logic in the texts. In the case of the adventure novel of everyday life, he emphasizes the "motif of the meeting", and, more particularly, the mathematical-formal aspect of adventure time: "A time of exceptional and unusual events, events determined by chance, which, moreover, manifest themselves in fortuitous encounters (temporal junctures) and fortuitous nonencounters (temporal disjunctions)" (ibid.: 116). Adventure time, Bakhtin claims, is related to an image of action that has been constructed around a chance disjunction occurring at the moment of an encounter.

This line of reasoning makes it clear that Bakhtin's chronotopical analysis runs more or less parallel to the Deleuzo-Bergsonian levels of imagery. The same could be said about the typology he develops of different "mental images" in Western literary history. Indeed, here we can detect a relation of tension that is strikingly Bergsonian. In modern literature, Bakhtin observes a shift from novels that are based on the linear arrangement of images of action toward novels that are based on a plot structure relying on more complex images of relation. 19 Evidently, older novels, too, give rise to certain images of relation, but they are strictly limited to a teleological perspective of plot development; they interrelate a number of images of action, but not the experiences that the acting characters go through. Bakhtin's argument regarding this type of plot construction may be called Bergsonian, as he associates it with an external relation between the individual and the changing world: "the connection between an individual's fate and his world is external" (FTC: 119). In a linear, teleological vision, observer and world change independently from each other. Movement in the world is perceived as an event of spatial order, and movement in the individual is nothing other than the reconstruction of the linear trajectory that he goes through in this

space. About the adventure hero and the adventure space, Bakhtin writes: "The individual changes and undergoes metamorphosis completely independent of the world; the world itself remains unchanged" (ibid.).

Modern literature is characterized by a completely different concept of plot and a different form of thematics, so that it is no longer possible to flawlessly connect the teleological reconstruction of a linear timeline, which Bergson denotes by the concept of "temps", with the development of time. The novel in modern times has undergone a Kantian revolution. This revolution implies a new conceptualization of time – to put it in the words of Arthur Schopenhauer: "Before Kant we were in time; now time is in us" ("Vor Kant waren wir in der Zeit, seit Kant ist sie in uns"; 1969: 424). Bakhtin seems to mirror this view of the Kantian revolution when he characterizes the construction of the novel of emergence:

Changes in the hero himself acquire plot significance, and thus the entire plot of the novel is reinterpreted and reconstructed. Time is introduced into man, enters into his very image, changing in a fundamental way the significance of all aspects of his destiny and life. (BSHR: 21)

In the history of the novel, Bakhtin observes a shift toward a plot that constructs its thematic core around the characters' processes of consciousness. In the modern novel characters and their dialogue with their environment (social forces as well as the psychological forces inherent to the character) are central. As a result, the "closure", the teleological focus on a final resolution of the story, is devalued. Teleology is still possible, yet this principle no longer dominates the composition. In the modern novel, change on the level of the plot – the essence of an image of relation – becomes a matter of relations between states of consciousness. Anyone required to make a summary of *Crime and Punishment* will quickly notice that the novel is entirely constructed around moments of crisis, moments in which the character must make a judgment. The guilt originating from a decision propels the character and carries him toward new moments at which judgments again have to be passed (about conceding to guilt and proceeding to repentance). In this way, the character is no longer the plaything of the world he inhabits. Instead, it becomes a world *sui generis*:

The consciousness of the solitary Raskolnikov becomes a field of battle for others' voices; the event of recent days (his mother's letter, the meeting with Marmeladov), reflected in his consciousness, take on the form of a most intense dialogue with absentee participants (his sister, his mother, Sonya, and others), and in this dialogue he tries to 'get his thoughts straight'. [...] Raskolnikov's idea comes into contact with various manifestations of life throughout the entire novel; it is tested, verified, confirmed or repudiated by them. (Bakhtin 1984: 88, 89)<sup>21</sup>

Note that Bakhtin's representation of plot development bears strong resemblance to the figure ascribed by Deleuze to filmmaker Pudovkin's view of art. Here, the mental image that emerges from action and affect images acquires a meaning of its own. It can easily be considered a third level – a level that "makes use" of images of affection expressing a crisis: the minor chronotope of the threshold.

#### Conclusion

The preceding arguments show that Bakhtin and Bergson are nothing less than soulmates, at least as far as their view of experience and the representation of time is concerned. Whether this philosophical affinity can be attributed to the fact that Bakhtin was an avid student of Bergson, and whether the Bergsonian interpretation of the concept of chronotope is legitimate, needs further research. The utility of the tentative comparative study I have just presented lies elsewhere. By relating Bakhtin to Bergson's philosophy of time, a more nuanced approach to the concept of chronotope becomes possible. In addition, my overview of the three levels of imagery, and the three different possibilities of application I have associated with these, show that Bakhtin's multiform use of the concept of chronotope does indeed do justice to the human faculty of imagination. The preconceptual, affectively charged motif (image of affection), the action logic of a literary scene (image of action), and the thematic overtone of a plot pattern (image of relation) make up a continuum of aesthetic experience. Only with great difficulty can this continuum be divided into separate phenomena. It follows that human imagination – and a fortiori the artistic imagination - should be considered as an "emerging whole, an event", and its expressions as "signs that show time in its course, beginning with nature and ending with human customs and ideas (all the way to abstract concepts)" (BSHR: 25). No small wonder, then, that Bakhtin made little effort to present a rigorous definition of the concept of chronotope. An adequate description of artistic imagination is only possible if one takes into account both the ways in which the types of image engage one another, and the nuances of temporal representations that are associated with them.

#### Endnotes

- Other contributions to this volume rightly emphasize that Bakhtin's work on chronotopes shows affinity to what Erich Auerbach had in mind in *Mimesis*. In addition, a number of papers pay attention to the way in which the study of chronotopes meshes with Kant's third critique, *The Critique of Judgment*.
- 2. This is what Deleuze calls "l'assimilation du temps à l'espace" (1966: 108).
- 3. More adequate is the French concept of "plan", as "plan" can designate both a shot as spatial unit and also a take as temporal unit. In Deleuze's view, cinema extracts movement from things. It articulates a perspective in time, expresses time as a perspective, as a moving observation. It is an observation that is of a certain duration and thus observation as duration (2005a: 25).
- 4. Cassirer's philosophy of the symbolic forms distinguishes an elementary level that is associated with the mythical, with a "sympathy of the whole": "Myth and primitive religion are by no means entirely incoherent, they are not bereft of sense or reason. But their coherence depends much more upon unity of feeling" (1970: 89).

- 5. The first-mentioned chronotope of the road contains many references to older literature. Nevertheless, it is striking that Bakhtin, in his discussion of it, distinguishes between the lived everyday reality of the picaresque novel according to many literary history textbooks the ancestor of the modern novel and the abstract meaning attributed to the road in the baroque adventure novel and the Greek sophist novel, thereby indicating that Bakhtin, in his "Concluding Remarks", has in mind the new view on realist aesthetic experiences of more recent times.
- 6. Each change that an image of affection goes through advances a new quality, a new reality. This does not imply that the image of affection is set to resemble an object moving through a space. Each change undergone by an image of affection changes the image itself. With each change through space, another image arises. An image of affection, says Deleuze, "will only divide by changing in nature (the 'dividual')" (2005a: 140).
- 7. The term "duration" in this quote is not used in a Bergsonian sense; here, duration refers to the interval of time on a linear timeline.
- 8. In his theory of film, Deleuze distinguishes two states of consciousness: acceleration (covering more space, altering more for some time) and deceleration (traversing less space, remaining relatively uniform).
- 9. One of the three types of images of affection distinguished by Deleuze refers to the "emptiness" in the close-ups of expressionist films. This phenomenon is illustrated even better by the empty sets in symbolist poetry. Baudelaire's *Les fleurs du mal* and *Le spleen de Paris* contain an abundant many-colored palette of urban images, in which the empty city is more norm than exception. Notable in them is the presence of modulating adjectives ("lonely benches" or "lonely parks"), while the fictional space is frequently marked by emptiness and absence of human figures. In *Assommons les pauvres!* the narrator moves around in a setting that is designated as a "banlieue déserte". Apart from lonely suburbs (*Mademoiselle Bistouri*) and graveyards (*Le Tir et le cimetière*), it is mainly parks (1869: 21-2) that function as the instrument for Baudelaire to express the non-hectic, non-dense aspects of the urban condition.
- 10. "There, said Montoni, speaking for the first time in several hours, is Udolpho. Emily gazed with melancholy awe upon the castle, which she understood to be Montoni's; for, though it was now lighted up by the setting sun, the Gothic greatness of its features, and its mouldering walls of dark-grey stone, rendered it a gloomy and sublime object. As she gazed, the light died away on its walls, leaving a melancholy purple tint, which spread deeper and deeper as the thin vapour crept up the mountain, while the battlements above were still tipped with splendour. From those, too, the rays soon faded, and the whole edifice was invested with the solemn duskiness of evening. Silent, lonely, and sublime, it seemed to stand the sovereign of the scene, and to frown defiance on all who dared to invade its solitary reign. As the twilight deepened, its features became more awful in obscurity; and Emily continued to gaze, till its clustering towers were alone seen rising over the tops of the woods, beneath whose thick shade the carriages soon after began to ascend" (Radcliffe 2009: Vol. 2, Ch. 5). As Bakhtin notes, the awareness of time indeed concerns the historical dimension of the building. There is a clear connection between an old building and the mysterious. A house is built to protect human beings, but also to keep certain things out of sight – hence, the term "keep". A building literally closes off certain spaces, and thus it is logical that the older the building - in the Gothic novel, the castle is old by definition - the more spaces have been hidden and/or forgotten (Williams 1995: 44). As Bakhtin noted previously, the connection between the keep and the past must not be ignored. The spectres wandering around in the keep are often ghosts from the past in the shape of deceased ancestors, often in the form of a curse resting on the family (FTC: 246). Still, this past is never a personal past. Personal memory, if at all, plays hardly any part in this experience of time.

- Between the four types of temporal experiences, other oppositions may be identified. Fear and 11. excitement interrelate similarly with respect to "pace", yet differ on the level of spatial transformations (the amount of new information). The same similarity and contrast goes for boredom and doubt. All the oppositions may be summarized by means of a semiotic square. As in the subtle mechanisms of meaning that Greimas attempts to map by way of such a square, the case of temporal experiences also concerns a whole of extremes and oppositions. Given the exceptional wealth of experiences that can be linked to this schema of images of affection, it should not come as a surprise that many literary mechanisms of meaning can be mapped by means of this schema. The opposition that dominates Les Fleurs du Mal, between spleen and idéal, can be explained as a lyrical game with human consciousness of time. The subject of Madame Bovary, often summarized as the opposition between boredom and materialistic excitement, can be viewed as the staging of two extreme experiences of time. Other texts, for their part, play with the idea of repetition, as opposed to difference. The idealic opening and closing situations of an adventure novel (which is governed by repetition, expressing "cyclical everyday time") contrasts with the excitement of danger that dominate the larger central part of such narratives.
- 12. Deleuze's examples of images of action are dynamic series of consecutive images. He talks about the "grande forme" of the image of action, for example in John Ford's westerns, when he wants to designate the distance between an opening fight and a closing duel. The hero gradually matures until he is prepared to take up the battle in the final scene.
- 13. Compare with: "duration, as duration, motion, as motion, elude the grasp of mathematics: of time everything slips through its fingers but simultaneity, and of movement everything but immobility" (Bergson 2009: 234).
- 14. Because temporal processes are easily expressed in spatial categories, geometrical terms are usually employed for the representation of human events: the lifeline, the way of life, the cycle of life, etc. In a recent study, the Austrian narratologist Monica Fludernik says: "we are all tempted to see time as an objective, measurable and unambiguous category that can be pictured as a dotted line progressing from past to future" (2003: 119).
- 15. "Every demand for explanation in regard to freedom comes back, without our suspecting it, to the following question: 'Can time be adequately represented by space?' To which we answer: Yes, if you are dealing with time flown; No, if you speak of time flowing. Now, the free act takes place in time which is flowing and not in time which has already flown. Freedom is therefore a fact, and among the facts which we observe there is none clearer. All the difficulties of the problem, and the problem itself, arise from the desire to endow duration with the same attributes as extensity, to interpret a succession by a simultaneity, and to express the idea of freedom in a language into which it is obviously untranslatable" (Bergson 2009: 221).
- 16. The same argument can be used regarding the spatial aspects of chronotopes. Morson (not accidently the author of a work entitled *Narrative and Freedom*) and Emerson contrast Bakhtin's view of spatial expansion with the absolutist view of space in premodern cultures. They point out that Bakhtin transposed the movement made by Euclidean geometry (which held a monopoly for over 2500 years) when it evolved into Lobachevsky's multidimensional geometry to the field of narrative imagination: "for Bakhtin, what is true of geometries of space is also true of chronotopes" (Morson and Emerson 1990: 368). In the Rabelaisian chronotope, time and space cease to be a geometrically structured and fixed Euclidean space. They rather become a dynamic whole where time is continuously affecting the spatial constellation. It is perfectly possible to translate this thesis into Bergsonian terms. In *Le Bergsonisme* (1966), Deleuze defines the subjective experience as a mixed structure in which "duration" connects with "space". Depending on the emphasis put either on duration or on space, it can be said to denote subjective or objective knowledge respectively. In the former the characteristics of duration are emphasized: "Duration presents us with purely internal succession, without any exteriority". In the latter it is space, "an

exteriority without succession," that is emphasized (Deleuze 1966: 29; personal translation from the French original). The experience of time in elementary narrative forms is characterized by a mixed structure of the subjective experience and is focused on the succession in exteriority: it is not the experience of time which is the centre of attention but rather the staging of the spatially ordered temporal structure. In Rabelais, on the other hand, a space is created in which simultaneity and mutual symbiosis of time moments (and not succession) hold the central position.

- 17. "Thirdness gives birth not to actions but to 'acts' which necessarily contain the symbolic element of a law (giving, exchanging); not to perceptions, but to interpretations which refer to the element of sense; not to affection, but to intellectual feelings of relations, such as the feelings which accompany the use of the logical conjunctions 'because', 'although', 'so that', 'therefore', 'now', etc." (Deleuze 2005a: 201).
- 18. My reading of the "image of relation" here is only partially in keeping with Deleuze's definitions. In his theory, the aspects of thirdness of action images (the mental image that originates because a goal or implications are ascribed to action, or that is comprised of the global image that results from editing images) and images of affect (the awareness evoked by an image of affect) are never considered as relation images. In Deleuze's view, a genuine image of relation results exclusively from "making the mental the proper object of an image, a specific, explicit image, with its own figures" (2005a: 202). In contrast with Deleuze, whose intention is to integrate a "historical poetics" of cinema into his theory of image, I opt for a more stringent semiotic interpretation of the types of image because I want to respect the analytics of Bakhtin's theory of literary chronotopes. Thus, my use of the term "image of relation" partially overlaps with Deleuze's concept of "figure" (an aspect of the image of action).
- 19. Note that Deleuze would use the term "image of relation" exclusively for the more complex forms of mental images. He illustrates this type of image by means of an excursus on the cinema of Alfred Hitchcock a filmmaker who was fascinated by relational networks.
- 20. "One of the primary targets for many nineteenth- and twentieth-century novelists has been closure itself. [...] I would argue that many realistic writers prefer endings in which the full consequences of the events portrayed [...] are neither worked out nor clearly implied" (Rabinowitz 2002: 307).
- 21. Ricoeur rightly observes that modern literature, interpreted in Bakhtin's sense, establishes a new form of narrative organization, to such an extent that he even sees "the emergence of a dramatic form in which space aims to eliminate time" (1984: 184; personal translation from the French original) as an undesired side effect of Bakhtin's concept of literature. The fact is that Ricoeur agrees with Bakhtin when the latter interprets modern literature from the perspective of the dialogical structure controlling discourse, thought, and self-awareness. At the same time, he considers Bakhtin's view of this principle of composition to be dangerous, wondering "whether the dialogical principle [...] is not at the same time undermining the foundation of the structure, that is to say the organizing role of the plot" (ibid.: 183; personal translation from French original). As shown above, Ricoeur's critique is based on a misunderstanding (the dialogical novel possesses a non-teleological chronotopical structure). Nevertheless, it is a meaningful misunderstanding, because in his reading of Bakhtin Ricoeur reveals his own reductionist view of literature. He is unable to think of time in a non-Aristotelean way.

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