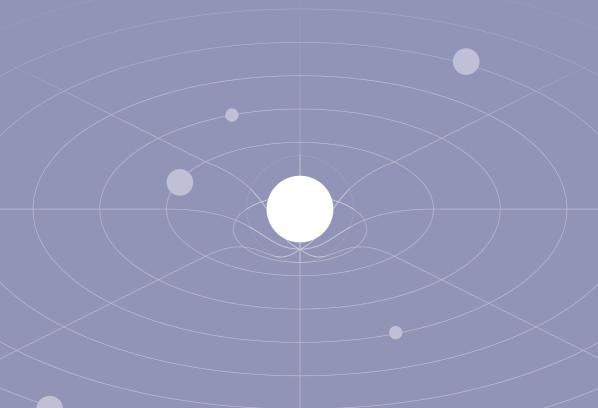Nele Bemong
Pieter Borghart
Michel De Dobbeleer
Kristoffel Demoen
Koen De Temmerman
Bart Keunen

(eds.)

Bakhtin's Theory of the Literary Chronotope

Reflections, Applications, Perspectives

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Preface

It seems appropriate to begin this volume with a quotation from Mikhail Bakhtin himself, taken from his brilliant essay "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel. Notes toward a Historical Poetics" – an essay that serves as a frame of reference throughout this collection of papers: "We do not pretend to completeness or precision in our theoretical formulation and definitions. Here and abroad, serious work on the study of space and time in art and literature has only just begun" (1990d: 85). Only a historian of the discipline or a speaker at a Bakhtin conference would dare to repeat that second sentence, which is by now terribly outdated. That this is the case is understandable. As is well known, the essay was originally written in the 1930s but published only in 1975, the year of Bakhtin's death, and was not translated into English until 1981. Given this lapse of time, it is rather surprising that an essay which explicitly admits to its lack of precision in theoretical formulation and definitions continues, some 70 years later, to arouse interest and to inspire scholars in several disciplines.

Bakhtin's avowal was no false modesty. The vagueness and openness that characterizes his theoretical and philosophical work, especially on the concept of the literary chronotope, has provoked – and continues to provoke – both enthusiastic imitation and skeptical criticism. But even those who belong to the "chronotoposkeptical" camp will (have) recognize(d) the magisterial insights and intuitions expressed in Bakhtin's work, as well as the undeniable value of recent studies inspired by the time-space concept, both within and beyond the field of Bakhtin studies.

For two reasons, research into the chronotope concept has been, and still is, a welcome addition to Bakhtin scholarship. Firstly, the field of problems relating to chronotopes transcends scholarly approaches in cultural studies of the 1980s and 1990s. Academic discussion of the concept of the "carnival" as the subversive undercurrent in modernity "discovered" by Bakhtin in literature from Rabelais to Dostoevsky, has neglected the particularities of literary imagination as well as the finer epistemological function of literary works. Bakhtin has shown how literature can help us to appreciate the fact that, in the course of cultural history, transformations of time concepts and spatial representations reflect radical changes in cultural attitudes and lived experience. The second reason is that the concept of the chronotope has helped us to understand more profoundly and more completely the concepts of "dialogism" and "heteroglossia" by connecting literary communication with concrete imaginative units and generic patterns. Literature, then, is not merely an ideational phenomenon, but has to be considered as a unique epistemological instrument that concerns intellectual, imaginative and emotional attitudes.

In addition, the value of the concept of the chronotope is also relevant outside Bakhtin criticism, because it can easily be linked with issues that play an innovative

role in literary criticism. Firstly, it can be adopted within the frame of postclassical narratology (as recently expressed, for instance, in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, 2007). Even if the concept itself has a bad reputation – and, given its frequent misuse as a means of dressing up outdated thematological research in more fashionable garments, with good reason – the basic intuitions of Bakhtin fit into the reflections on fictional world constructions which are central to recent narratological research. Secondly, Bakhtin's concept anticipates the ethical turn in literary studies. By pointing at the imaginative quality of literary representations, the study of chronotopes helps us to understand that literary mimesis is grounded in a valuated and emotionally experienced fictional world. Although Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope is often misunderstood as a pseudo-formalist tool, it does not refer only to the referential aspect of literature. It addresses not only the perception of the fictional world but also points at the spatial and temporal embedding of human action in order to offer a better understanding of how humans act in their biotopes and semiospheres. Although Bakhtin's theory is on this point rather underdeveloped and even premature, there are sufficient impulses in his writings to allow us to say that it serves as an analytical tool aimed at understanding how literature meditates on human action in a profoundly ethical fashion. Indeed, enquiry into the connections between chronotopes and action is probably one of the most promising lines of future research. In combination with the work of Thomas Pavel (e.g. *La pensée du roman*, 2003) and the later work of Michael Holquist and Gary Saul Morson, the idea of the chronotope has the potential to become a pivotal concept within this ethical turn in literary studies.

In the best chronotopical tradition, the first origins of this book can be traced back to a particular moment at a specific place. In September 2007, on a sunny Friday morning in a local park in Clermont-Ferrand, France, four Belgian participants at an international conference on comparative literature, who coincidentally were all presenting papers that in one way or another related to Bakhtin, decided to organize a round table on the concept of the literary chronotope. Back in Belgium, two more colleagues were taken on board as part of the organizing committee. Invitations were sent out to the world's leading Bakhtin scholars, and much to our pleasure and gratitude, many of them accepted. The resulting two-day conference was held in Brussels in June 2008, and turned out to be an agreeable and stimulating meeting, with many critical, constructive and fruitful discussions. The first drafts of most contributions to this volume were presented at that occasion. (In addition, a few scholars who had been unable to travel to Brussels, but had nevertheless expressed an interest in participating in the project, wrote contributions that were added later.) The words "first draft" deserve special emphasis. Before the conference, draft versions of all papers had been circulated to all participants. As a result, the sessions, conceived as they were to offer platforms for thorough and ample discussion among academic peers, functioned as collective editorial boards for the volume to come.

The collaborative intellectual efforts of those two days in Brussels have resulted in this scholarly tome. It exhibits a variety of theoretical approaches and concrete tex-

tual analyses, all centering upon the concept of the chronotope as initially developed by Bakhtin. After an extensive introduction that serves as a "state of the art", the volume is divided into four main parts: *Philosophical Reflections*, *Relevance of the Chronotope for Literary History*, *Chronotopical Readings* and *Some Perspectives for Literary Theory*. These thematic categories contain contributions from, among others, such well-established Bakhtin specialists as Gary Saul Morson, Michael Holquist, Tara Collington, Joy Ladin, Bart Keunen, Roderick Beaton and Rachel Falconer. Taken together, the papers explore the implications of Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope for a variety of theoretical topics such as literary imagination, polysystem theory and literary adaptation; for modern views on literary history ranging from the hellenistic romance to nineteenth-century realism; and for analyses of well-known novelists and poets as diverse as Milton, Fielding, Dickinson, Dostoevsky, Papadiamantis and DeLillo.

Both the conference and this volume were made possible with the financial and logistical support of several institutions: the Research Foundation – Flanders, the Faculties of Arts of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven and Ghent University, and the Royal Flemish Academy for Sciences and the Arts, the last of which also let us use their magnificent building as the conference venue. Last but not least, we would like to thank our publisher Academia Press for their faith in the lasting value of rigorously assessed publications.

Ghent and Leuven, April 2010

Part I

STATE OF THE ART

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

Nele Bemong & Pieter Borghart

Since western scholars became acquainted with his writings in the 1970s and 1980s, the Russian scholar Mikhail Bakhtin has been an indispensable figure in literary theory and a number of related disciplines in the humanities. It was, however, not for a further decade or so that his concept of the literary chronotope, one of the key notions for understanding Bakhtinian thought on narrative form and evolution, began to receive systematic scholarly attention. Since the conceptual innovation that Bakhtin introduced with this idiosyncratic view of temporal and spatial relationships in narrative could almost be regarded as a new paradigm, albeit a minor one, the explanatory potential of which has by no means been exhausted yet, this attention was certainly appropriate. Initially designed as an analytical instrument for establishing generic divisions in the history of the western novel, chronotopic analysis has recently been proposed as a conceptual tool for enriching such diverse fields as narratology (Scholz 2003: 160-5), reception theory (Collington 2006: 91-8), cognitive approaches to literature (Keunen 2000a) and even gender studies (Pearce 1994: 173-95).[1]

The aim of this introductory article, firstly, is to recapitulate the basic principles of Bakhtin's initial theory as formulated in "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes toward a Historical Poetics" (henceforth FTC) and "The *Bildungsroman* and its Significance in the History of Realism (Toward a Historic Typology of the Novel)" (henceforth BSHR). Subsequently, we present some relevant elaborations of Bakhtin's initial concept and a number of applications of chronotopic analysis, closing our *state of the art* by outlining two perspectives for further investigation. Some of the issues which we touch upon receive more detailed treatment in other contributions to this volume. Others may offer perspectives for future Bakhtin scholarship.

Bakhtin's Theory of the Literary Chronotope

But wherein exactly lies the conceptual advance offered by the concept of literary chronotopes? Unlike sheer formalist or structuralist approaches to narrative time and space, according to Bakhtin these two categories constitute a fundamental unity, as in the human perception of everyday reality. This "intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships" denoted by the term "chronotope" (FTC: 84) is tantamount to the world construction that is at the base of every narrative text, compris-

ing a coherent combination of spatial and temporal indicators. The famous passage in FTC in which Bakhtin comes closest to formulating some sort of a definition reads as follows:

> In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. The intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope. (ibid.)[2]

In sum, Bakhtin's basic assumption is the idea that narrative texts are not only composed of a sequence of diegetic events and speech acts, but also – and perhaps even primarily – of the construction of a particular fictional world or chronotope.

As Bakhtin himself points out, the epistemological origins for such a conception of narrative time and space can be traced back to both the philosophy of Emmanuel Kant and Albert Einstein's relativity theory.[3] From Kant Bakhtin borrowed the idea that time and space are in essence categories through which human beings perceive and structure the surrounding world, and hence "indispensable forms of cognition" (Morson and Emerson 1990: 367). As these categories in Bakhtin's view do not constitute "transcendental" abstractions but "forms of the most immediate reality" (FTC: 85), earlier commentaries often identified the philosophical component of his theory with a *Neo-Kantian view*. Bernhard Scholz, however, has convincingly argued that Kant and Bakhtin did not differ in their conceptions of time and space, but rather with regard to their focus of interest. Whereas Kant undertook a scientifically based attempt to gain *insight into the universal system* of human perception through time and space, Bakhtin was looking for *historical evidence* of such perceptual activity as manifested in literary texts:

> Natural science, if I may extend the Kantian image, is the act of designing and coercing nature; literature, as a corpus of texts, presents versions of nature designed and coerced in conformity to certain principles. Literature, as a historical phenomenon, is – like older stages of science – the repository of sedimented designs, of answers given to coercing questions of reason. (Scholz 2003: 155)[4]

Contemporary developments in mathematics and physics, meanwhile, provided Bakhtin with the strong belief that the nature of spatio-temporal configurations in narrative worlds, although not fully identical with Einsteinian time-space (time as the fourth dimension of space), does share a common ground with the principles of relativity theory. Firstly, as has already been noted, both in physical and fictional worlds there can be observed an intrinsic connectedness of time and space, because in both realms chronology cannot be separated from events and vice versa: "[a]n event", writes Michael Holquist, "is always a dialogic unit in so far as it is a co-

relation: something happens only when something else with which it can be compared reveals a change in time and space […]" (2002: 116). A second similarity can be found in the proposition that there exists a variety of senses of time and space. In mathematics, for instance, the alleged *universal* system of Euclidian geometry all of a sudden lost its monopoly when Lobachevsky developed his multi-dimensional geometry: "[f]or Bakhtin, what is true for geometries of space is also true of chronotopes" (Morson and Emerson 1990: 368). As Morson and Emerson have observed, it follows, then, that "[d]ifferent aspects or orders of the universe cannot be supposed to operate with the same chronotope" (ibid.). A representative example from the exact sciences can be found in the divergent rhythms according to which biological organisms and heavenly bodies evolve, and from the realm of literary history the chronotopes by which different aspects of human experience, such as the eternal alternation of the seasons (cyclicity) as opposed to the description of truly historical events (historicity), take narrative shape. In sum, "[…] the relation of 'chronotope' to Einsteinian 'time-space' is something weaker than identity, but stronger than mere metaphor or analogy" (ibid.: 367).[5]

Reflections

Our earlier use of the phrase "the famous passage […] in which Bakhtin comes closest to formulating some sort of a definition […]" hints at one of the most fundamental criticisms with regard to the chronotope essays: a *definitive* definition of the concept is never offered. Instead, Bakhtin starts off with the formulation of some initial remarks, and proceeds to alternate between concrete examples and further generalizations, as a result of which the concept seems to acquire ever new related meanings (see Morson and Emerson 1990: 366-7). Consequently, while most items in the glossary to *The Dialogic Imagination* (the collection of four essays by Bakhtin that includes FTC) contain a reference to pages in the essays where "useful illustrations or discussions of the [particular] concept occur" (Bakhtin 1990b: 423), no such page reference is given for the chronotope concept. Ladin formulates the problem as follows: "[Bakhtin] never provides a systematic definition […], nor does he present a clearly articulated protocol for identifying and analyzing chronotopes and the relations between them" (1999: 213). Scholz rightly remarks that "[the] meanings only gradually unfold as the argument progresses and the examples accumulate. Bakhtin's terms, in other words, are frequently encountered 'in use', without explicit statement of the rules governing such use" (2003: 146). It is therefore not surprising that Bakhtin scholars such as Stuart Allan, Tara Collington and Eduard Vlasov all give different answers to the question of how many chronotopes are discussed in FTC.[6]

This lack of analytical precision in Bakhtin's essays has led to a proliferation of heterogeneous chronotopic approaches to literature and, more generally, culture. This proliferation is already present in FTC itself. In the "Concluding Remarks", which Bakhtin added in 1973 as a tenth chapter, he situates "the significance of all these

chronotopes" on at least four different levels: (1) they have narrative, plot-generating significance; (2) they have representational significance; (3) they "provide the basis for distinguishing generic types"[7]; and (4) they have semantic significance (FTC: 250-1). In these "Concluding Remarks", the still relatively stable typology of the essay itself explodes into a veritable kaleidoscope where even the internal form of a word is held to be chronotopic (see Ladin 1999: 213). As a consequence, Bakhtin's *modus operandi* has led scholars to use a plethora of different terms to designate as chronotopes literary phenomena on different levels of abstraction: they speak of "minor" and "major" chronotopes, "chronotopic motifs" and "chronotopes of whole genres" (Morson and Emerson 1990: 374), "motivic" and "generic" chronotopes (Keunen 2000a), "basic" and "adjacent" chronotopes (Vlasov 1995: 44-5), "micro-", "incidental", "local" and "major" chronotopes (Ladin 1999), and so on. When we consider these different critical applications more closely, it seems to be possible to distinguish five significant levels of abstraction.

(1) On the first level, we situate what Ladin has called "micro-chronotopes" (1999: 215). Language, Ladin argues, is "charged with chronotopic energy", and the vitality of language "grows, in part, out of the tension between the 'centrifugal' chronotopic implications of individual words and phrases, and the 'centripetal' forces [such as syntax] that subordinate these centrifugal energies to coherent overarching meanings" (ibid.: 216). Micro-chronotopes are generated out of units of language smaller than the sentence through the harnessing of these energies in literary texts. They and their role in lyric poetry are further discussed in Ladin's contribution to this volume.

(2) The so-called *minor chronotopes*, which are to be distinguished on a second level, refer to what Ladin calls "local" chronotopes (1999: 216). Bakhtin himself notes in the "Concluding Remarks" to FTC:

> We have been speaking so far only of the *major* chronotopes, those that are most fundamental and wide-ranging. But each such chronotope can include within it an unlimited number of *minor* chronotopes; in fact […] any motif may have a specific chronotope of its own. Within the limits of a single work and within the total literary output of a single author we may notice a number of different chronotopes and complex interactions among them, specific to the given work or author; it is common moreover for one of these chronotopes to envelope or dominate the others (such, primarily, are those we have analyzed in this essay) […]. (FTC: 252; emphasis added)

In FTC Bakhtin on occasion uses the terms *chronotope* and *motif* as synonyms, for example when he uses the phrase "chronotope of meeting" interchangeably with "motif of meeting" (FTC: 97). For this reason, Morson and Emerson have labeled these minor chronotopes "chronotopic motifs", while other scholars prefer the term "motivic chronotopes". Other motivic chronotopes that Bakhtin mentions, apart from the meeting, are the chronotope of the road, the castle, the salon, the provincial town, the threshold and the public square. These "building blocks" of narrative texts

are defined by Keunen as "four-dimensional mental image[s], combining the three spatial dimensions with the time structure of temporal action" (2001: 421). Morson and Emerson characterize them as "congealed event[s]", "condensed reminder[s] of the kind of time and space that typically functions there" (1990: 374).[8]

(3) The interaction between the concrete chronotopic units of a narrative eventually leaves the reader with an overarching impression, which we call *major* or *dominant chronotopes*. This central, "transsubjective" chronotope (Ladin 1999: 215) thus serves as a unifying ground for the competing local chronotopes in one and the same narrative text. Many Bakhtin scholars do not posit an intermediary level between minor (motivic) and generic chronotopes (see below), and simply equate the level of the dominant chronotope with that of the latter. However, not every dominant chronotope will generate a particular literary genre; there are dominant chronotopes that have not – yet – become generics.

(4) Conversely, narratives that in the course of the reading process yield a similar impression with regard to their fictional world can be assumed to share a similar major chronotope; major chronotopes can thus be divided into classes of still more abstract *generic chronotopes*. These chronotopes are what Ladin refers to as "chronotopes that […] can be abstracted from the individual works in which they appear and serve as the basis for categorization and comparison for those works" (1999: 232). On this particular level, the concept should be understood as what Bakhtin calls "a formally constitutive category of literature" (FTC: 84).

(5) Lastly, Keunen (forthcoming) has recently proposed a systematic framework that makes it possible to divide generic chronotopes into even more abstract classes. Central to his framework is the division into two different types of "plotspace-chronotopes", which illustrate two different kinds of temporal development in the abstract totality of the fictional world. *Teleological* – or *monological* – *chronotopes* characterize traditional narratives in which the entire plot moves towards the final moment (the "Eschaton"). Here, the curve of suspense is constructed as an alternation between chronotopes of equilibrium and conflict. Conflicts in these narratives are simply external obstacles in the course of the hero's journey to a state of equilibrium. Based on the position of the conflict within the narrative, Keunen distinguishes three subtypes: the *mission chronotope* (where the conflict is bracketed by two states of equilibrium; e.g. the adventure novel, the fairy tale, fantasy), the *regeneration chronotope* (where a series of conflicts is overcome in a final equilibrium; e.g. the picaresque novel, the gothic novel, the popular romance) and the *degradation chronotope* (where the initial equilibrium becomes lost in an unresolved conflict; e.g. the tragedies by Sophocles or Shakespeare).[9] In *dialogical chronotopes*, on the other hand, the narrative is not directed towards a final moment, to a "telos", but rather consists of a network of conflicting situations and junctions that communicate with each other – hence the term "dialogical". Here, the conflict chronotopes are predominantly psychological in nature, and what matters is not the telos that more traditional narratives are working towards, but the "Kairos": the criticial, decisive moments characteristic of modern

novels since the nineteenth century. Again, Keunen discerns three subtypes of dia-logical chronotopes, to wit the *tragic chronotope* (where conflict characters dominate), the *comic chronotope* (where balanced characters dominate) and the tragicomic chro-notope (no dominating characters).

Applications

Even though Bakhtin significantly broadens his perspective in the "Concluding Remarks" of FTC, the concept of the chronotope was initially designed as a contri-bution to genre theory.[10] This is manifest not only in the great emphasis put throughout the essay on the major chronotopes making up the history of the western novel – such as the adventure novel of ordeal, the adventure novel of everyday life, the chivalric romance, the idyll and the like; it is also clear from the repeated explicit acknowledgement given to the concept's generic significance: for example, "[t]he chronotopes we have discussed provide the basis for distinguishing generic types; they lie at the heart of specific varieties of the novel genre, formed and developed over the course of many centuries" (FTC: 250-1).

Bakhtin's assessment of narrative genres, moreover, contributes to a theoretical tra-dition that underscores the cognitive functionality of literary genres; the belief, that is, that fixed poetic and narrative structures should be understood as means for stor-ing and conveying forms of human experience and knowledge. As encompassing nar-rative structures which "[…] determine to a significant degree the image of man in literature" (FTC: 85), generic chronotopes are in recent Bakhtin scholarship equated with the *world view* of a text. In the "Glossary of Key Terms" to *The Bakhtin Reader*, for instance, it is stated that "[s]pecific chronotopes correspond to particular genres, which themselves represent particular world-views. To this extent, chronotope is a cognitive concept as much as a narrative feature of texts" (Morris 1994: 246).[11] Mor-son and Emerson, for their part, understand generic chronotopes as "an integral way of understanding experience, and a ground for visualizing and representing human life" (1990: 375).[12]

Critical accounts of the precise meaning of the term *world view* range from highly abstract to rather concrete. Studies exemplifying the former tend to regard the history of prose fiction either as a laboratory where humanity has carried out a series of exper-iments with combinations of time and space in order to adequately model exterior reality[13], or as narrative evidence for the existence of allegedly universal cognitive pat-terns based on the alternation between regularity and contingency (Keunen 2005; forthcoming). Conversely, Borghart and De Temmerman (2010) have shown how three diachronic manifestations of the same genre – to wit the ancient, the Byzantine and the modern Greek adventure novel of ordeal – can plausibly be linked with con-temporary attempts at establishing a *Hellenic* communal identity.

A third important aspect of Bakhtinian genre theory is embodied by his conception of generic evolution, in which the process of *sedimentation*[14] plays a role of paramount importance:

> [Certain] generic forms, at first productive, were then reinforced by tradition; in their subsequent development they continued stubbornly to exist, up to and beyond the point at which they had lost any meaning that was productive in actuality or adequate to later historical situations. This explains the simultaneous existence in literature of phenomena taken from widely separate periods of time, which greatly complicates the historico-literary process. (FTC: 85)

Over the past two decades, the process whereby chronotopes in the course of history become semantically unproductive or even inadequate, and subsequently enter the domain of popular culture, has received some critical attention. The creative recycling, for instance, of important features of the so-called *adventure chronotope* in many Hollywood movies is a case in point (Morson and Emerson 1990: 371-2). More recently, the possibility of a genuine revival of past chronotopes within the realm of literature itself has also been raised.[15]

The relative lack of critical attention to genuine chronotopic revival is more than likely the result of Bakhtin's teleological view of the history of narrative literature. The western novel, he argues, evolved from an initial state characterized by a total absence of historical time (e.g., the Greek romance), through a number of subsequent stages which steadily displayed a fuller sense of time (e.g. time with embryonic *biographical* significance in the Roman adventure novel of everyday life and in ancient biography), to eventually arrive at the ideal of nineteenth-century realism and the conception of *real historical time* internalized by its attendant chronotope: "[s]uch are the specific […] chronotopes that serve for the assimilation of actual (including historical) reality, that permit the essential aspects of this reality to be reflected and incorporated into the artistic space of the novel" (FTC: 251-2).[16] Notwithstanding Bakhtin's general philosophy of human creativity and openendedness, his teleological view of literary evolution almost seems to amount to the idea of *generic exhaustiveness*. Such an account, whether or not informed by the Stalinist ideology of historical materialism (Mitterand 1990: 83), is of course untenable. Lately, a number of scholars have hypothesized that some chronotopic configuration underlies every kind of narrative, however minimal, including jokes, strip cartoons, fairy tales, animal stories, narrative poetry and the like (see below). Therefore, instead of adhering to a closed and virtually normative genre system, it would be better to assume an *open system of numerous generic chronotopes*, the precise nature and history of many of which has yet to be determined.[17] Admittedly, among these a number of complex world constructions – which to a certain extent coincide with the typology established by Bakhtin – appear to be so productive that they not only make up genuine types of literary narrative but also, in the final analysis, often come to enrich the domain of popular culture as well.

From a purely methodological point of view, the possibilities for determining the dominant chronotope of a given narrative text, and thus the narrative genre to which it belongs, raise interesting questions. Recent Bakhtin scholars agree that major chronotopes should be conceived of in constructivist terms as supratextual entities, as impressions, that is, left in the mind of the reader through an aggregate of textual strategies, both of a narratological and thematic nature. Suvin, for example, holds that the chronotope "[…] is constructed by the reader's ideologically restrained imagination, it is a signified and *representamen*, to be clearly distinguished from the text surface, which is a signifier and *representans* […]" (1989: 40; emphasis in original). In other words, narratives that in the course of the reading process yield a similar impression as for their fictional world can be assumed to share the same generic chronotope. This implies, in turn, the possibility of categorizing a narrative text (representamen) on the sole basis of its display of a sufficient number of textual strategies (representans) known to be characteristic of a particular generic chronotope. Embarking on the *cognitive turn* in contemporary narratology (Ibsch 1990), some scholars have tried to bring the determination of generic chronotopes in line with the achievements of cognitive psychology (Keunen 2000a; see below), while more traditional narratological and thematic approaches have also been proposed (Borghart 2006; Bemong 2007).

The above discussion brings us smoothly to a second discipline within literary theory in which Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope has been tentatively but fruitfully applied: *narratology*. The basis for this connection is a rarely noted but important quality inherent in any chronotope. More than a decade before Bakhtin's theory became the object of systematic analysis, the science fiction specialist Darko Suvin (1986, 1989) amply demonstrated that the concept of chronotope could possibly be conceived of as the *differentia generica* of narrativity. He arrives at this conclusion through a detailed comparison between the biblical Parable of the Mustard Seed and the metaphor from which the gospels derived this narrative, a comparison in which both their qualities as *cognitive organons* conveying previously nonexistent meaning and their formal similarities involving a particular *possible world* are highlighted. As a consequence, Suvin goes on to argue that "[…] the main differences between a single metaphor and a fictional text would have to be correlative to the latter's quite different articulation" (1986: 57). Throughout his argument, Suvin convincingly draws a connection between this "different articulation" and the presence of a chronotope: "The central thesis of this paper is *that the necessary, and I believe the sufficient,* 'differentia generica' *between metaphoric and narrative texts can best be grasped by formulating it in terms of Bakhtin's chronotope*" (ibid.: 58; emphasis in original).

Suvin's thesis constitutes an excellent opportunity to introduce Bakhtinian literary theory into the ongoing debate among narratologists about the salient features of narrativity. A recent attempt to define the differentia generica of narrativity can be found in *Towards a 'Natural' Narratology* (1996) by the well-known narratologist Monika Fludernik. Taking into account postmodern narratives characterized by a lack of any

significant plot pattern, she rightly argues against the structuralist tradition which reduces narrativity to a mere sequence of two or more events (*sequentiality*). Instead, Fludernik proposes a minimal form of momentaneous human experience (*experientiality*) as the common denominator of the narrative genre (1996: 20-43). In his forthcoming monograph *Time and Imagination: Chronotopes in Western Narrative Culture*, however, Keunen demonstrates how myths about gods and the creation of the world, whose subject matter is rather disconnected from the contingency of human experience, give *narrative* shape to a number of timeless principles. He consequently arrives at the conclusion that such mythical *stories* display a highly specific world construction or chronotope. In this respect, Keunen's analysis seems to provide a valuable argument for adhering to Suvin's hypothesis and rejecting – or at least nuancing – Fludernik's.

Yet another attempt to attribute to the concept of chronotope the status of genuine narratological category is Scholz's proposal to revise the structuralist theory of story from a Bakhtinian point of view (2003). Taking up both Bakhtin's notion of a *historical poetics* and the concomitant view on generic chronotopes as "formally constitutive categor[ies] of literature" (FTC: 84), Scholz argues in favor of "a theory of 'story' which will be sensitive to historical change" (2003: 161). As an alternative to the allegedly universal formalist-structuralist opposition between *fabula* and *sujet* (*histoire* vs. *récit*), Scholz conceives of generic chronotopes as culturally sanctioned ordering principles capable of generating typical plot-structures. In doing so, he proposes to split the level of *story* (fabula, histoire) in two: (1) "into the concept of chronotope for referring to the generative principle of plot", and (2) "into the concept of plot-structure for referring to the chronotope-typical sequence of events ordered in accordance with that principle" (ibid.: 163). Unlike the quite arbitrary preference for linear chronology inherent in formalist-structuralist theories of narrative, a Bakhtinian approach to story takes into consideration the historical determination of plot-generating principles:

> It thereby manages to avoid having to sever the ties which link a particular plot, a particular plot-structure or a particular literary chronotope to the life-world in the context of which it was produced. Stronger yet, Bakhtinian analysis of narrative offers a means of conceptualizing that link without having to resort […] to postulating spurious homologies between social structures and plot-structures […] or, worse, having to take refuge in an aesthetics of mirroring. (ibid.: 162)

Finally, a few words should be devoted to the usefulness of the concept of the literary chronotope within the realm of *reception theory* and *hermeneutics*. Admittedly, as Collington has rightly remarked, "[l]e rapport entre le monde du texte et le monde du lecteur […] est la moins développée des interrelations proposées par Bakhtine, et les descriptions du rôle du lecteur dans le processus interprétatif demeurent vague" (2006: 93). To date, it is Keunen (2000a) who has undertaken the most concerted attempt to explain the mental process of reading a narrative in terms of a Bakhtinian

conceptual framework. The principles of such a cognitive approach to chronotopes can briefly be summarized as follows. In the course of their cognitive development, readers acquire a *genre memory* consisting of an aggregate of mental structures tantamount to varying generic chronotopes. During the reading process, one of these *memory schemata* will be activated, thus enabling the reader to recognize the relevant chronotope and its corresponding narrative genre (Keunen 2000a: 1-7). Within the same paradigm, Keunen makes a similar attempt to link motivic chronotopes with so-called *action schemata*, a concept that in cognitive psychology refers to mental structures regulating human behavior in stereotypical situations such as visiting a restaurant or attending a wedding party. Likewise, motivic chronotopes are assumed to activate stored knowledge, varying from factual knowledge about empirical reality to specialized literary knowledge, including intertextuality. The combination of both would result in so-called *memory organizing packets* (MOPs), which, he believes, direct the process of reading and interpretation (ibid.: 7-10).

Perspectives

In this last section, we would like to point out some interesting perspectives for combining Bakhtin's theory of the literary chronotope with other theoretical frameworks. As Bemong argues in her contribution to this volume, Bakhtin's views on literature and on the tasks of literary scholarship show strong resemblances to functionalist-systemic views of literature and culture, especially those of *Polysystem theory*, the systems-theoretical approach for which Itamar Even-Zohar laid the basis. Strangely enough, hardly any attention seems to have been paid to this affinity, either in Bakhtin scholarship or by systems theoreticians.[18] This is strange because the chronotope concept holds great potential for addressing one of the fundamental problems of systems-theoretical research, to wit how systemic principles might be translated into a manageable methodological framework. The main similarities in Bakhtin's and Even-Zohar's approaches to literature are situated on four different levels (and are largely due to the fact that both scholars were inspired by the writings of Jurij Lotman and by the so-called *dynamic functionalist* insights current in the 1920s in the writings of Jurij Tynjanov, Boris Eikhenbaum and others): (1) their relational view of literature and culture; (2) the importance they ascribe to the role of lower cultural strata; (3) the key role of generic sedimentation (see above); and (4) the importance of diachronic intersystemic relationships.

The primary characteristic that the two approaches share is a relational view on culture. A functionalist-systemic approach to literature is intent on revealing the specific synchronic and diachronic dynamics of literature within its global cultural and social constellation. Bakhtin, too, advocates the necessity of such a relational approach in his 1970 text "Response to a Question from the *Novy Mir* Editorial Staff", where he explicitly draws attention to "the interconnection and interdependence of various areas of culture" – both synchronically and diachronically – and emphasizes that "the

boundaries of these areas are not absolute, that in various epochs they have been drawn in various ways" (2002b: 2). Secondly, both Polysystem theoreticians and Bakhtin reserve an important role for the lower cultural strata in preventing cultural systems from stagnating, collapsing, or disappearing altogether. The presence of strong subcultures emphasizes the need for real competition, without which any canonized semiotic activity would gradually become petrified. Thirdly, Polysystem theory shares the Bakhtinian idea of generic sedimentation discussed above. Like the latter, it regards polysystems as essentially dynamic, evolving networks where "at any given moment, more than one diachronic set is operating on the synchronic axis" (Even-Zohar 2005: 39). Lastly, the attention in Polysystem theory to diachronic intersystemic relationships is also clearly present in Bakhtin's chronotope essays, especially in his view of the evolution of generic chronotopes. Thus, Bakhtin characterizes the "original", "Greek" chronotope of the adventure novel of ordeal as a chronotope that is already in itself clearly related intersystemically to several other (contemporary and older) systems, both literary and non-literary. While most elements of this chronotope were "derived from various other genres", they "assumed a new character and special functions in this completely new chronotope". Moreover, in their new unity, they "ceased to be what they had been in other genres" (FTC: 88-9). This view shows clear affinities with Even-Zohar's assertion that "[a]n appropriated repertoire does not necessarily maintain source culture functions" (2005: 65).

To finish our state of the art, we would like to draw attention to some remarkable but rarely noted similarities between Bakhtin's theory of the literary chronotope and the recently developed approach known as *Possible World-semantics*. Although devised in totally different historical and geographical contexts (Stalinist Russia vs. postmodern Northern America), the theoretical models share a number of relevant epistemological and conceptual affinities. First and foremost, Bakhtin and PW-semantics are similar in their criticism of the formalist and structuralist search for literary universals and the concomitant neglect of the semantic plane inherent in these traditions. Moreover, by explicitly theorizing the relation between text and context, both paradigms, independently, react against the merely text immanent approaches of formalism and structuralism as well (see for instance Pavel 1986: 1-10). The third, and most interesting, affinity concerns their treatment of fictional worlds. It is interesting because the two theories are strikingly different in their approach to this matter. On a conceptual level both Bakhtin and his postmodern colleagues set out to study fictional worlds and their constituents as a means of arriving at a general theory of narrative meaning. PW-semantics, on the one hand, has so far been mainly concerned with epistemological questions (e.g. what is the ontological status of fictional worlds?) and has taken a *bottom-up* approach to salient features of fictional worlds (e.g. in what manner and degree are they inhabited and furnished?) (see for example Doležel 1998: 145-84). As a consequence, PW-semantics presents itself as an analytical theory useful for determining the meaning of individual narratives. Adherents of Bakhtin's theory, on the contrary, have been devoting the lion's share of their critical attention to elaborating a theoretical model with explanatory qualities of a synthetic

nature. In such a *top-down* approach, the main focus of interest has been the description of encompassing narrative structures as a means to map out a series of narrative genres and their respective cognitive value. However, it is our belief that the two paradigms are bound to co-operate and mutually enrich one another in the near future: whereas the principles of construction and building blocks of fictional worlds determined by PW-semantics offer tools for more detailed and nuanced description of the characteristic features of generic chronotopes, the synthetic qualities of Bakhtin's theory have the potential to enlarge the applicability of PW-semantics in the fields of genre theory and literary history.

Endnotes

1. At the same time, it is also true that, both because of the lack of explicitness and conceptual clarity in Bakhtin's own writings and the still rather limited number of studies engaging with the literary chronotope – as opposed to those elaborating and applying well-known Bakhtinian concepts such as "dialogism", "heteroglossia"*,* and "carnival" – there still exists a certain "trouble with chronotopes" (Ladin 1999: 213-5; see also Scholz 2003: 145-8). Whereas one strand of Bakhtin scholarship acknowledges the conceptual advance offered by this theory and willingly engages in further elaborating its initial outlines, others argue that the Russian scholar was not a systematic thinker at all, assuming that the novelty of Bakhtinian thought lies precisely in its contradictory nature (Wall 2002).

2. In his recent study on Bakhtin and genre, Renfrew underscores the aspect of embodiment and corporeality in Bakhtin's definition of the chronotope. FTC, Renfrew states, "thus emerges as an extended attempt, on the grounds of extant literary material, to classify the means of finalization of the external image of the human subject, inseparable from but irreducible to the body that occupies space and moves through time. The principle of such classification will be the capability of the temporal and spatial values of any given fictional environment to facilitate the 'possession' of the eventness of being, to permit the representation of a living image, as opposed to one that might variously be described as 'abstract', 'fixed', or 'monological'" (2006: 119).

3. FTC: 84-5. The following discussion is based on Holquist (2002: 115-6), Mitterand (1990: 181-9), Morson and Emerson (1990: 366-9), Neff (2003), Scholz (2003: 149-56) and Collington (2006: 25-37). For a recent discussion of the influence of Einstein's theories on Bakhtinian thought in general, see Stone (2008).

4. Other recent research links Bakhtin's ideas on the temporal-spatial nexus with the notions of the neo-Kantian German philosopher Ernst Cassirer, who, in his *Philophy of Symbolic Forms*, distinguished between artistic, mythological and scientific strategies of knowledge (see Brandist 1997 and 2002; Poole 1998; Tihanov 2000a). In FTC (251), Bakhtin admitted to have been influenced by Cassirer's insights on the chronotopical nature of language (see the first volume of the *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*), but he was probably also inspired by the mythological treatment of time and space analyzed in the second volume of Cassirer's magnum opus.

5. Bakhtin himself legitimizes the introduction of this neologism into literary studies as follows: "The special meaning it has in relativity theory is not important for our purposes; we are borrowing it for literary criticism almost as a metaphor (almost, but not entirely). What counts for us is the fact that it expresses the inseparability of space and time (time as the fourth dimension of space)" (FTC: 84). Indeed, Bakhtin's usage of the term chronotope can itself be characterized as *quasi-metaphorical* in that it makes use of an already existing metaphor (which in turn sets out

to linguistically grasp the abstract mathematical formula $E=MC^2$) (Collington 2006: 25-31) as a cognitive organon for better understanding data from a qualitatively different field: for the transition from *physical* to *narrative* time-space is obviously accompanied by the necessity to take into account other determining factors such as plot and characters as well.

6. Allan distinguishes "more than a dozen distinct [sic] types of chronotope" (2003: 128), Collington (2006) discerns seven chronotopes in the essay itself and three more in the "Concluding Remarks", and Vlasov confidently states that in FTC "Bakhtin introduces his catalogued system [sic] of various chronotopes in the history of the novel. According to him there are eight basic chronotopes in the novel" (1995: 42).

7. Interesting in this respect is Tihanov's interpretation of FTC as an indirect involvement of Bakhtin with Lukács' discussion of the genre of the novel in *The Historical Novel* (Tihanov 2000b: 59-61).

8. A good example of a hermeneutic analysis of motivic chronotopes can be found in Deltcheva and Vlasov (1997). A creative use of the motivic chronotope in the context of landscape architecture is offered by Potteiger and Purinton (1998).

9. Departing from the notion "emplotment", which ever since Hayden White's influential *Metahistory* (1973) has been considered to be characteristic of historiography in general, De Dobbeleer has recently shown how Keunens classification of teleological chronotopes can be helpful in determining the particular "ideologized world view" underlying premodern historiographical (and epic) texts. Thus, by comparing the plot structure of three different "testimonies" of the fall of Constantinople (1453), he observes that different ideological "visions" (e.g. winners vs. losers) yield different "plotspace-chronotopes" (and their respective types of hero) for representing the *same* historical event (2008a). On another occasion, De Dobbeleer analyzes the narrative structure of the mission chronotope in an epic and historiographical account of the capture of Kazan (1552) in terms of the respective expansionist ideologies they were meant to perform (2008b).

10. Renfrew (2006: 118-30) provides a highly interesting discussion of the complex relation and continuity between Medvedev's work on genre and Bakhtin's theory of genre in the chronotope essays FTC and BSHR.

11. Other Bakhtin scholars who define the chronotope in this way are: Roderick Beaton, whose characterization of the chronotope as "the distinctive configuration of time and space that defines 'reality' within the world of a text, *as conceptualized within that world itself*" (2000: 181; emphasis in original) is very illuminating in this respect; Tzvetan Todorov, who characterizes it as "la représentation du monde" (1981: 140); and Bart Keunen, who uses the Dutch equivalent for world view ("wereldbeeld") in the titles of two of his book publications (2000b, 2005).

12. According to Tihanov, the most substantial difference between Lukács and Bakhtin lies in the active nature Bakhtin assigns to literary genres (and thus to the chronotope). For Lukács, "literary genres are entities which reflect the world, each of them from a unique point of view, in an unmediated fashion." For Bakhtin, on the other hand, "[g]enres no longer *reflect* the world, rather, they *represent* and model it" (Tihanov 2000b: 59; emphasis in original).

13. See e.g. Clark and Holquist (1984: 278), Morson and Emerson (1990: 366), Danow (1991: 46-7), Holquist (2002: 116) and Scholz (2003: 152-6). In the short theoretical section at the outset of FTC, Bakhtin gives a slight hint of such a conception of the cognitive value of narrative genres: "[i]solated aspects of time and space, however – those available in a given historical stage of human development – have been assimilated and corresponding generic techniques have been devised for reflecting and artistically processing such appropriated aspects of reality" (FTC: 84).

14. See also Tihanov (2000b: 160).

15. This possibility was left open by Bakhtin only in passing: "[s]emantic phenomena can exist in concealed form, *potentially*, and be revealed only in semantic cultural contexts of subsequent epochs that are favorable for such disclosure" (Bakhtin 2002b: 5; emphasis in original). See Borghart and De Temmerman's analysis of the reappearance of the ancient Greek adventure novel in Byzantine and modern times (2010).

16. See also FTC (84, 85) and BSHR (19, 21, 43). For a more detailed discussion of Bakhtin's teleological conception of literary history, see Mitterand (1990: 183-5), Morson and Emerson (1990: 372, 384, 388, 392), Morson (1991: 1082) and Collington (2006: 39-40).

17. Ladin is less optimistic, concluding that every attempt at establishing a typology of chronotopes – at whatever level of abstraction – will turn out to be vain, for such a reductionist approach, it is argued, necessarily excludes a whole spectrum of possibilities and variations: "To 'flesh out' the chronotope […] we must abandon Bakhtin's tempting vision of a complete taxonomy of chronotopes, a whole list of distinct space-times with specific generic, historical and ontological implications" (1990: 230).

18. The only instance we have found is Caryl Emerson's suggestion that "students of intergeneric shift could learn from recent developments in translation theory" (1986: 11), which is followed by a reference to an essay by Even-Zohar on translation theories.

Part II

PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS

The Fugue of Chronotope[1]

Michael Holquist

As the survey by Nele Bemong and Pieter Borghart introducing this volume makes clear, the term chronotope has devolved into a veritable carnival of orismology. For all the good work that has been done by an ever-growing number of intelligent critics, chronotope remains a Gordian knot of ambiguities with no Alexander in sight. The term has metastasized across the whole spectrum of the human and social sciences since the publication of FTC in Russian in 1975, and (especially) after its translation into English in 1981. As others have pointed out, one of the more striking features of the chronotope is the plethora of meanings that have been read into the term: that its popularity is a function of its opacity has become a cliché. In the current state of chronotopic heteroglossia, then, how are we to proceed? The argument of this essay is that many of the difficulties faced by Bakhtin's critics derive from ambiguities with which Bakhtin never ceased to struggle. That is, instead of advancing yet another definition of my own, I will investigate some of the attempts made by Bakhtin himself to give the term greater precision throughout his long life. In so doing, I will also hope to cast some light on the foundational role of time-space in Bakhtin's philosophy of dialog as it, too, took on different meanings at various points in his thinking.

Chronotope is an anaphoric designation in the sense that it takes its meaning from reference to another term, time-space.[2] I mention this embarrassingly obvious fact because the specific term "chronotope" is not the only form in which Bakhtin over the years wrestled with the central role that time-space play in human life. He worked on the monograph that seems to be the *ens originarum* of the specific locution "chronotope'" first from 1934 to 1937, in other words, during the period in the 1930s when he devoted all his energies to rethinking the nature of genre, and especially that of the novel.[3] Because he was a political exile at that time, the essay could not then be published. It saw the light of day forty years later, after Bakhtin's return to Moscow in his old age, appearing in a collection of his literary essays that appeared only in 1975, the year he died (Bakhtin 1975). Editing that anthology was among Bakhtin's very last efforts, and includes his own coda to the 1934 monograph on chronotope in the form of a tenth chapter of concluding remarks he wrote in 1973. I will have more to say about this concluding chapter below, but suffice it here that far from serving to sharpen Bakhtin's original definition, these comments had just the opposite effect.

The "Concluding Remarks" have this mystifying consequence because at the time they were written, Bakhtin had returned to the metaphysical interests of his youth when he sought to ground categories derived from German Idealism in the social and

physical immediacy of lived experience.[4] The tenth chapter thus expands the term chronotope from a (loosely) literary application (typical of his middle period) to an all-embracing epistemological category.

To account for clashes in meaning between the essay and its conclusion, we must look to a difference in chronology between the date of composition of the original nine chapters and the date of composition of the appended tenth chapter. The different dates of the two unequal parts of FTC represent varying – and in some measure contradictory – assessments of the significance of time-space in human existence. Much confusion has resulted from trying to extract a unitary definition of chronotope based on monologic readings of what are, in effect, two quite different versions of the term's meaning defined by Bakhtin himself. We here confront one of the central problems in any attempt to conceive a coherent account of dialogism: the gap between Bakhtin's intellectual (and decidedly non-teleological) evolution and the very different chronology of his works' publication dates. The two levels of meaning in the chronotope essay – essentially literary in the nine chapters written in 1934, and ascending to the metaphysical in the "Concluding Remarks" written 40 years later – are not irreconcilable. But their integration requires exquisite philological as well as theoretical sensitivity to internal differences if we are to arrive at a – dialogically – unified conception able to incorporate both.

As one possibility for pursuing such a course, I propose a musical metaphor that seeks to integrate both Bakhtin's life of thought and the chronology of when his works were published. Instead of the linear narrative pattern by which cumulative bibliographies and unidirectional calendars are organized, Bakhtin's career as a thinker is better grasped as itself a dialog, more specifically the particular kind of dialog known in musicology as a fugue. A fugue in the musical – not the psychological – sense is a contrapuntal composition in which a short initial melody or phrase (for which the term of art is "the *subject*") is introduced and then interwoven with others (technically called "*voices*"). As new entries come into the composition, the *subject* is repeated in different keys. Such entries are alternated until the "final entry" of the subject, by which point the music returns to the opening key, known as the "tonic", all of which is sometimes followed by a *coda*. In similar fashion, to pursue the melody of any particular idea in Bakhtin's works it is necessary to relate it to the nuances, variations, and interweavings it experienced in relation to its own recurrences and to other subjects in the larger composition of Bakhtin's total oeuvre. Time-space, as I have said, is a recurring concern in Bakhtin throughout his career, so it behooves us to consider the subtle shadings that accrue to the topic as it comes into the fugue at different points in its unfolding.

For purposes of this essay, it will be salient to consider time-space as one of – if not the – major subjects in a fugue with three parts. The first phase opens in the 1920s, a period concluding with Bakhtin's 1929 arrest. In this stage Bakhtin is immersed in German philosophy, specifically Kant, the immediate Idealist response to Kant, and early twentieth century neo-Kantianism. A second phase unfolds during the years of

wandering and exile when Bakhtin is preoccupied with novel theory. A third phase, ending with his death in 1975, comprises the aged thinker's attempt to restate the significance of the subjects that are woven throughout his various writings over the years, providing them with a valedictory coda. Time-space is, of course, a theme that is present in all of these, but with different timbre in each. In what follows, I will briefly parse time-space in each of these three movements. I will provide a more detailed treatment of the first movement, since it is the initial appearance of the subject, on which all later occurrences are variations.

Philosophical Background

The first statement of the theme of time-space in early Bakhtin is heavily influenced by the philosophical environment of the discussion circles in Vitebsk and Nevel' that were at the center of his life in the years immediately after the October Revolution. An important participant in these debates was Matvei Isaevich Kagan (1889-1937), recently returned from Germany, where he had been a favorite of Hermann Cohen himself. The subject of Kagan's 1914 Marburg dissertation – *The Problem of Transcendental Apperception from Descartes to Kant* – was crucial in meetings of what the members conceived as "the Nevel' school of philosophy". Thus, the environment in which the young Bakhtin developed was heavily neo-Kantian, more so than this brief account can adequately represent.

It will nevertheless help to gauge the distinctiveness of Bakhtin's own unique appropriation of Kant if we remember that by the early decades of the twentieth century, Bakhtin was entering a conversation that had already been in progress for centuries. Neo-Kantianism at the point where he encountered it was merely the latest chapter in a long history of reaction to Kant's revolution in epistemology that began very soon after the publication of the first *Critique* in 1781. Kant famously argued that we do not have immediate access to things: when we think we see something, what we really perceive are merely representations (*Darstellungen*) constructed through the interplay of a priori concepts (*Begriffe*) in our mind and a posteriori intuitions (*Anschauungen)* that come to us from the outside world. This was not only a radical view of knowledge, but of human subjectivity. It followed from Kant's epistemology that the perceiving subject was defined as an activity: his term for the subject is not a noun ("self") or a pronoun ("I"), but a verb: "I-think" (*Ich-denke*), that he treats only grammatically as a noun. Moreover, Kant's "I-think" is necessarily not a *unified* subject, a conclusion that horrified his contemporary audience. It is difficult now to imagine the sense of shock caused by Kant's insistence on the absolute cut off between mind and world, evidence of which I cite below.

How did Kant arrive at his role of epistemological Copernicus? In a late essay that sought to contextualize his own intervention in German philosophy, Kant characterizes the activity of his eminent predecessors Leibniz and Christian Wolff as unsuccessful attempts to overcome the absolute nature of the knowing subject as postulated

by Descartes. Defining his place in this ongoing project, Kant in the late essay references the distinction his first *Critique* posited between the "transcendental I" and the "psychological I". He points to the crucial difference between mere quotidian *perception* and the kind of consciousness he calls *apperception*, the consciousness (*Bewusstsein*) that it is *I* and not someone else who is having this perception (*Wahrnehmung*). The transcendental I merely sees a house; the psychological I exercises apperception to see itself seeing a house.

Kant's point is that neither of these selves is absolute, in the sense of being unitary. He says clearly: "That I am conscious of myself is a thought that already contains a two-fold I" (Kant 1983: 73). Already in the paralogisms of the first *Critique*, he had argued that "nothing is more natural and seductive than the illusion of taking the unity in the *synthesis* of thoughts for a perceived unity in the subject of *these* thoughts" (Kant 1988, Vol. 1: 402; emphasis added). And he further stigmatizes this misprision as *sophisma figurae dictionis*, the sophistry of a mere figure of speech (ibid.: 402-3). Bakhtin will argue, of course, that the self is indeed a figure of the kind of speech he calls an utterance.

The Kantian paradox of a subject defined as mere function, both split and invisible to itself in its own operation, is the ineluctable consequence of employing *apperception* as part of his explanation for how – despite the divided state of our selves – we nevertheless find it possible to create a unitary impression out of the constantly changing signals that come to us from the external environment (what Bakhtin will call heteroglossia). For consciousness to work as Kant describes it in his theory of knowledge, it must be located in *both* an "empirical I" – a subject that responds to the external environment – and a "transcendental I" that is able to organize such responses into a coherent mental representation on the basis of which the mind can then make judgments. And making judgments is how Kant defines thinking, the action of understanding.

Descartes' assumption that we are transparent to ourselves is decisively ruled out by the distinction that founds Kant's whole theory of knowledge which says that every act of perception is a synthesis (*Verbindung*). The section from Kant's first *Critique* that Bakhtin cites in FTC is significantly subtitled "On the Possibility of Synthesis in General" (1988, Vol. 2: 130), making it clear that the *fons et origo* of Kant's system is to be found in the act of joining a priori, transcendental categories in the mind with sensed intuitions coming from the external environment. This neccessarily creates a subject split between pure and empirical apperception. The classic formulation goes like this:

> […] all manifold of intuition has a necessary relation with the I think in the same subject in which this manifold is to be encountered. But this representation is an act of spontaneity, that is it cannot be regarded as belonging to sensibility. I call it the pure apperception in order to distinguish it from the empirical one, or also the original apperception, since it is that self-consciousness which, because it produces the representation I

think, which must be able to accompany all others and which in all consciousness is the same, cannot be accompanied by any further representation. (1988, Vol. 2: 132)

Put very simply, *the mechanism by which we see cannot itself be seen:* "Now it is very evident that I cannot know as an object that which I must presuppose in order to know any object" (1988, Vol. 2: 401-2).

The radical nature of this neccessarily bifurcated (and therefore invisible) subject must be judged in light of the whole Western metaphysical and theological tradition that had before Kant conceived the individual person as essentially defined by having a soul. This tradition is randomly questioned in isolated instances over the millennia in the West, but begins to crumble only in the Radical Enlightenment of the seventeenth century. So Kant (who after all died in the nineteenth century, 1804, the year Napoleon became emperor) is in a sense the late, but crushing[5] climax of this history. His bifurcation of the self culminates a process in the West that had for millennia glorified the singularity of the self in its doctrine of the soul.

For figures such as Augustine, the source of unity and wholeness was to be found only in a monotheistic God whose gift to men was an equivalent singularity in their souls. Christians were thus encouraged to see their fundamental identity, their selves, by looking into their souls. But at a later date, devout thinkers such as Pascal, the mathematician who despite himself helped TO bring the Radical Enlightenment into being, feared that humans might be quite different from Augustine's view. Pascal longed for such a soul, and after his conversion to Jansenism, he may have carried sewn into his coat "Fire. God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, not of the philosophers and the scholars […]", as legend has it, but he still feared there might be dark recesses in his innermost self that would not let themselves be seen. He was made anxious by the thought he was a "monstre inconpréhensible" and he cried out, "Où est donc ce moi?" (quoted in Bénichou 1948: 420, 323).

In the next century, Rousseau, despite criticism of Enlightenment dreams of the transparency of reason, wrote: "J'aspire au moment où délivré des entraves du corps, je serai *moi* sans contradiction, sans partage, et n'aurait besoin que de moi pour être heureux" (Rousseau 1964: 358).

For all his admiration for Rousseau, Kant exploded the very possibility of that undivided self for which Rousseau lusted. His claim that we do not have transparent knowledge of things in themselves set off a firestorm of anxious response. There was a rumor in Königsberg that his philosophy had driven a student insane. In Jena, two students fought a duel over interpretation of the first *Critique*. In the swelling wave of books directed at his work, it was claimed by other professors that Kant's works "unsettle the powers of the understanding, spoil good principles, and poison the source of human happiness" (Kühn 2001: 318-9).

The whole movement of German Idealism can be seen as a counter attack by other philosophers of the age against the proposition that knowledge is not immediate and that the self is divided. Thus, Fichte:

> Only in the self-intuition of a mind is there the identity of a representation and its object. Hence to explain the absolute correspondence between a representation and its object, upon which the reality of all our knowledge depends, it must be shown that the mind, insofar as it intuits objects, really intuits itself. (quoted in Beiser 1993: 12)

And he adds: "If this can be shown, then the reality of all our knowledge will be assured" (ibid.). But of course such a homogenization could in fact *not* be shown, neither by Fichte himself, nor by his opponents, Schelling and Hegel.

Schelling described himself on several occasions as a physician healing the deep wounds of consciousness, and while there are differences in his emphasis over his long life, it is clear from very early on that the specific wounds he has in mind are those inflicted on consciousness by Kant. This is most obviously the case in his 1803 *Vorlesungen über die Methode des academischen Studiums*, in which he argues that reality does not depend on an opposition between intelligence and nature (clearly alluding to Kant's distinction between categories and intuitions), but rather is guaranteed by the Absolute (grounded in Reason). The supreme law of reason, then, is not difference but identity, A=A, independent of temporal and spatial considerations. It was this ultra-monistic view that inspired Hegel to describe it as the night in which all cows are black (ibid.: 7).

Hegel's whole theory is based on the overcoming of Geist's alienation from itself. In a sense, he put Fichte's absolute ego into time – the subject might not be able to know itself today, but it *will* in the future. And when that absolute fusion of subject and object occurs, history will have exhausted its telos and time will be no more. It can be shown that from very early on, even in his early religious writings, Hegel assumed that Kant had seen a part of the truth, but only a part. It was his – that is Hegel's – duty to see the insight in Kant's blindness. Kant had argued that our thinking was legislated by categories in the human mind itself. Hegel agreed with this, but went on to argue that "the nature of our own thought and that of the reality to which Kant always contrasted it are in fact one and the same" (Guyer 1993: 171). His answer to Kant's insistence on difference was – as in Fichte – an expanded notion of unity.

First Period: Early Bakhtin

The Kantian gap between mind and world – and the consequent split between self and itself – are two aspects of a single topic that enters the Bakhtinian fugue as subject during the 1920s. In Bakhtin's first publication, the 1919 manifesto on "Art and Answerability" (Bakhtin 1990a), he posits the primordial fact of separation in human

existence and the consequent imperative to negotiate the distance between. For the rest of his life he will study at various different levels – art, ethics, metalinguistics – the utter *givenness* of this gap and the epistemological and ethical consequences that flow from it. In a major work of this period (roughly contemporaneous with "Art and Answerability"), Bakhtin goes out of his way to insist on the exceptional place that each individual human occupies in existence: "[…] only I – the one and only I – occupy in a given set of circumstances this particular place at this particular time; all other human beings are situated outside me" (Bakhtin 1990a: 23).

Bakhtin went on to specify some of the ways time-space determined the individual's *Sonderstellung.* It is the outsideness (*vnenakhodimost'*) of my unique place in being that defines life as a task – the *dannost'* that impels our *zadannost'*, as it were. The site we occupy in being is not merely a site we occupy in space and time, but a *task*, the obligation to forge relations within ourselves and with the world we live in that will keep all the separate elements from devolving into chaos. Making sense of ourselves and of the world is (I apologize for all the big words) an ontologically imposed epistemological task from which we have no alibi. Bakhtin uses "alibi", the Latin word for "elsewhere", not least because having no recourse to any "elsewhere" in existence is a way to insist on the utter fatedness of our being in the particular place where we find ourselves – and very importantly also where *others find themselves* – at any given moment. As long as we live we can never be *elsewhere* from our unique place in existence.

Thus the young Bakhtin began his career by accepting many of the consequences that flowed from recognizing the twin separations Kant had identified – the gap between mind and world, and the gap between perception and self-knowledge. But in absolute opposition to the German Idealists[6], the young Bakhtin responds to Kant's challenge *not* by denial in the form of a new affirmation of unity and transparency. On the contrary, he militantly insists on the foundational importance of a divided subject. In a series of lectures he gave on Kant in 1924-25, Bakhtin says: "The genius of Kant consisted in the destruction of […] objective unity", and he further specifies this claim by remarking: "The main danger consists in the possibility that an image [of the unity of consciousness] may become something more than subsidiary; the forgetting of the fact that the unity of consciousness is only an image – this is the main danger for philosophy" (1993: 331).

From the very beginning of his intellectual life, it is evident, then, that Bakhtin was preoccupied by the problem of how to conceive a self that is both bifurcated and invisible to itself. It is equally clear that his approach from the outset was to frame the question in the context of time and space. In his long, uncompleted manuscript on "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity" – written during the same period he was lecturing on Kant – he concentrated attention on questions concerning the "spatial form of the hero" and the "temporal form of the hero" (Bakhtin 1990a: 22-52, 99-138). And, as we shall see, time-space continued to play a role in Bakhtin's thinking during the last years of his life as well.

What is most notable from the work of the 1920s is Bakhtin's use of visual metaphors as a way to dramatize the usefulness of time-space in defining the necessity of the other in formulation of the self. From a simple phenomenological analysis of two persons looking at each other, he defines two categories that will shape his approach to the conundrum of the bifurcated self. The first of these is what Bakhtin calls the "excess of seeing" (izbytok videniia/*избыток видения*):

> When I contemplate a whole human being who is situated outside and over against me, our concrete, actually experienced horizons do not coincide [why *space* is important]. For at each given moment, [why *time* is significant] regardless of the position and the proximity of this human being (человек) whom I am contemplating, I shall always see and know something that he, from his place outside and over against me, cannot see himself: parts of his body that are inaccessible to his own gaze (his head, his face and its expression), the world behind his back, and a whole series of objects and relations, which in any of our encounters are accessible to me but not to him. *As we gaze at each other, two different worlds are reflected in the pupils of our eyes* […] (Bakhtin 1990a: 23; emphasis added).

He references this most quotidian example of *seeing* to make what is essentially Kant's point about the *invisibility* of the perceiving subject to himself: "For cognition, there is no absolutely inconvertible relationship of *I* and *all others*" (1990: 22-3; emphasis added); "for cognition, I and the *other*, inasmuch as they are being thought, constitute a relationship that is relative and convertible, since the cognitive *subjectum* (субъект) does not occupy any determinate, concrete place in existence" (1990a: 23; emphasis in original).

Middle Period: Novel Theory

For reasons too numerous and complex to advance within the scope of this paper, the late years of the 1920s saw Bakhtin go through a number of transformations. He moves back to urban Russia after years in the hinterlands; the discussion and reading circles that had sustained him in Nevel' began to break up; and he now turns his attention from patently metaphysical subjects to matters of interest to a much wider population. Intellectually, it is significant that what might be conceived as the beginning of this period, 1929, saw the publication of two works that mark new voices that enter into Bakhtin's time-space fugue at this point. The first was *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. This text was published under the name of Bakhtin's friend – and fellow member of the Nevel' Circle – Voloshinov; the degree of Bakhtin's involvement in the work is still being argued, but most experts agree that it is at least heavily influenced by him. A second publication that year, *Problems in the Work of Dostoevsky*, was published under Bakhtin's own name.

1929 was also, of course, the year he was arrested. His subsequent exile nevertheless saw him continuing to meditate his constant themes of time, space, and dialog, but now in light of the new influences that came into his life immediately before his arrest. In his work with Voloshinov he drew new strength from a newly inspired turn to language, reflected in many of the projects that occupied him in the following decades as he and his faithful wife Elena Aleksandrovna wandered from the deserts of Kazakhstan to the cultural wilderness of Saransk.

From the thirties to the fifties Bakhtin continued to think and write. Virtually all the essays and monographs from these two decades complicate the fugal development of the obsession with time-space that goes back to the tonic of his first published work in 1924. FTC is perhaps not as theoretically powerful as certain other works of this period[7], but it is far and away the most cited by later readers.

The title of the essay would appear on the surface of things to be completely forthright in proclaiming its status as purely literary category: "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes Toward a Historical Poetics". And the initial definition is equally unambiguous: "We understand the chronotope as a formally constitutive category of literature […]" (FTC: 84). However, forty years later, when the essay did finally see the light of day, Bakhtin seems to have recognized that despite the exclusive focus on literature that he claimed in his subtitle, the vast scope of topics that he had *in fact* assembled under the rubric "chronotope" might nevertheless create confusion for any reader trying to grasp the term's precise limits. He thus added a coda of several pages that sought to address possible confusion about what he himself calls the most important problem associated with the term, "the *boundaries* of chronotopic analysis" (FTC: 257; emphasis added). Despite recognizing as much, he nevertheless goes on to define chronotope so broadly as to be almost boundaryless: "We […] endow all phenomena with meaning, that is, we incorporate them not only into the sphere of spatial and temporal existence, but also into the semantic sphere" (FTC: 258; Бахтин 1975: 406). He ends by saying, "[…] *every entry into the sphere of meaning is accomplished only through the gates of the chronotope*" ("[..] всякое вступление в сферу смыслов совершается только через ворота хронотопов") (ibid.; emphasis added).

By concluding with this turn to epistemology, Bakhtin signals the distinctive place that FTC plays in the evolution of his own thinking both early and late. Time-space coordinates serve to ground what is in effect a first philosophy: they are the fundamental constituents of understanding, and thus provide the indices for measuring other aspects of human existence, first and foremost, the identity of the self. As the Nobel prize winning poet Wisława Szymborska says in her "Life While-You-Wait": "I know nothing of the role I play. / I only know it's mine, I can't exchange it. / I have to guess on the spot / just what this play is all about" (1998: 169). Bakhtin's answer to this need to orient oneself in life is the ongoing work of extential chronotopic analysis.

While it is obvious that in 1973 the overwhelmingly ethical and literary thrust typical of Bakhtin's early period now gets subordinated to a new insistence on epistemology, it does so because he has come to realize there cannot be an ethics without an underlying theory of knowledge able to underwrite valid distinctions between values: in order to grasp the consequences of agency, we need to have an understanding of the subject.

The 1973 addendum might well be read as an attempt to compensate for the shocking brevity of the original chronotope essay's second footnote, which reads in full:

> In his "Transcendental Aesthetics" (one of the main sections of his *Critique of Pure Reason*) Kant defines space and time as indispensable forms of any cognition, beginning with elementary perceptions and representations. Here, we employ the Kantian evaluation of the importance of these forms in the cognitive process, but differ from Kant in taking them not as 'transcendental' but as forms of the most immediate reality [...]. (FTC: 85; 1975: 235: "[...] формы самой реальной действительности")

Whatever else this gnomic formulation portends for later commentators, it seems relatively unambiguous that Bakhtin was here seeking to make clear his conviction that time and space are understandable only – to use Kant's own terminology – as "pure intuitions". They are unconditioned in the sense that there is no perception, no thinking or understanding of the self or the world without them. In other words, when he says "we employ the Kantian evaluation of the importance of these forms in the cognitive process", he seems to be agreeing with Kant that the other categories listed in the first critique (such as quantity, quality, relation, etc.) are secondarily derived, conditioned as they are by the necessity of the prior existence of time and space.

Understanding time-space in these foundational terms helps to clarify the importance of these concepts in Bakhtin's early philosophical texts, such as those difficult sections of *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity* devoted to the temporal and spatial form of the hero. Perceiving the central role of time-space adds as well to our sense of continuity in Bakhtin's thought where they dominate the last essays and fragments, as in the "Notes from 1970-71", when Bakhtin is once again trying to calibrate similarities and differences between partners in dialog. It is time-space that defines the primordial distinction between I and the other he defines by invoking the Kantian terms of *given/created* (*gegeben/aufgegeben*, or *дан/задан*): "My temporal and spatial boundaries are not given for me, but the other is entirely given. I enter into the spatial world, but the other has already resided in it. The difference between space and time of *I* and the *other*" (Bakhtin 2002d: 147). I and the other are, of course, the two poles of any dialog. Why does Bakhtin assign priority to time-space in defining such a fundamental concept?

As we have seen, Bakhtin famously marks a distinction between Kant's usage of time-space and his own. He begins by saying: "[...] we employ the Kantian evaluation of

the importance of these forms […]". However, he immediately adds that he "differ[s] from Kant in taking them not as 'transcendental' but as forms of the most immediate reality" ("[…] формы самой реальной действительности") (FTC: 85; 1975: 235). The phrase I render as "most immediate reality" Bakhtin emphasizes by using both Western (реальность) and native Slavic terms (действительность). He does so to drive home his point that time-space are at the heart of knowing.

His rejection of Kantian transcendence is Bakhtin's way of defining another version of the subject who – or which – is the ground zero of perception, the experimental laboratory where understanding is produced. That is, like Kant, he sees time-space as defining of the knowing subject. But Bakhtin differs from Kant in understanding the nature of the subject so defined.

Obviously, much hangs on how we interpret "transcendence", so it is well to remember that it is a term that Kant uses in many different contexts. In FTC, Bakhtin himself refers us to an early section of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (henceforth CPR), the first part of the *Transcendental Doctrine of Elements* given the heading – in both editions of CPR – *Transcendental Aesthetic*. It is characterized by Bakhtin as "one of the main sections of the CPR" (FTC: 85), and indeed it is, for it is in these passages Kant establishes the rationale for the categories that are the fundamental building blocks of his system. Bakhtin draws attention to these passages in particular because they contain Kant's argument for the purity, or the *priority* of the specific concepts of time and space.

"Transcendental" in these early pages of CPR is introduced as part of the argument explaining why the categories are necessary in all acts of understanding. "Transcendental" can best be understood as meaning "beyond, or not based on experience", insofar as time and space are given *a priori*, independent of any particular instantiation of them. By definition, then, "transcendent" stands over against "empirical", a term Kant reserves for any intuition that contains sensation from the experienced world. And since such an intuition is available to mind only *after* it has been processed by the categories (especially time and space), it is always *a posteriori*.

Now, remember Bakhtin's claim for the decisive power of time-space in human beings: "*every entry into the sphere of meaning is accomplished only through the gates of the chronotope* […]" (FTC: 258; 1975: 406; emphasis added). If chronotope is understood in such all-embracing terms, does it not seem to be making something very similar to the claim for universal priority that Kant labels transcendental?

The answer must be both yes and no. However you parse them, time-space are ineluctably intertwined with the concept of *perception*, so one way to grasp the subtle, yet crucial difference Bakhtin wishes to make in his allusion to Kant, is to ask the question "*where* does time-space have its agency?", that is, "for *whom* are time-space distinctions relevant?". If we pursue this line of inquiry, it quickly becomes apparent that what is at stake in Bakhtin's dismissal of Kantian transcendence is really a difference between the two about the nature of the self.

To fully grasp the complex nature of that difference, it helps to remember two premises both thinkers begin by sharing. First, each makes the non-intuitive assumption that the subject at the heart of identity, the agent of perception, is invisible to itself. And secondly, the only self that *is* visible to the individual subject – despite its defining task of bringing the manifold variety of the world into a meaningful unity – *is not noumenal. It is a construction, moreover a construction that is itself not singular.* For Bakhtin, "self" belongs to that class of words that includes "twin": when we identify someone as a twin, we recognize that his identity is derivative: as such, it depends on the existence of another self, the secret sharer who is the other twin.

Bakhtin thoroughly absorbed Kant's lesson that there is a gap between mind and the world, but disagreed with Kant about what characterized that gap. Kant's sense of this epistemological space was that it was created by wired in mechanisms that were universally supplied to humans. But insofar as they had to be universal, they could never be particularized in experience, and so they were by definition transcendental, always outside the bounds of any possible sensibility. Bakhtin, while agreeing that a gap between mind and world exists, characterizes it in terms that are both textual and personal. He does so by invoking *transgredience*, rather than transcendence as defining the nature of the gap in being. Transgredient is a recondite term deriving from "transgress", going beyond the bounds.

Bakhtin's favorite illustration of transgredience, repeated throughout his works, is based on what he called the surplus of seeing that I mentioned earlier; when you and I face each other, I can see things behind your head you do not see, and you can see things behind my head that I cannot see. In other words, the things I cannot see are not outside experience as such, they are merely outside – they transgress – the boundaries of what is available to my sight in a particular moment. If we switch places, that which was invisible to me in my former position comes into sight, and the same happens for you when you do the same thing. Transgredience, then, is the name of a boundary that through interaction (our changing places) can be overcome – transgressed – in experience.

Bakhtin comes back to this illustration again and again because it demonstrates the self's need of the other – from the physical environment, of course, but especially a need for other people. He calls transgredient interaction between subjects an event, which permits him in Russian to play with words: event (sobytie) is a word that combines the prefix indicating sharedness "so-" with the stem that signifies "being", "bytie", which explains the frequent occurrence in Bakhtin's texts of the term translated into English as "the event of being", or "sobytie sobytiia". Use of event also helps bring out the – always relative – virtues of outsideness (vnenakhodimost'), another term that is crucial in defining the Bakhtinian subject. I can never encompass everything, thus I am condemned to being outside much – indeed most – of the things and people – and ideas – in the world. But in this condition of needing constantly to negotiate various degrees of outsideness and insideness (what Bakhtin calls appropriation, usvoenie) lies the guarantee of my freedom. As in Kant, the world is

not given to me, in the sense that so much of it is outside me and thus in need of being creatively organized into my life.

Thinking – experience – is a task for Kant, a series of never ending judgments. The tools for accomplishing the task are a priori categories and a postiori intuitions. For Bakhtin, the event of being is also a task, but the tools for accomplishing it are the subtleties of time-space. Dialog is not just a relation. Like all relations, it requires boundaries, and the tools for establishing these are for Bakhtin time and space conceived as chronotope: Bakhtin's neologism introduces a new degree of *specification* into the general understanding of time-space. First of all, as characterized by transgredience rather than transcendence, time and space in the chronotope are never divorced from a particular time or a specific space. Dostoevsky has the Underground Man use the formula 2x2=5 to insist on the importance of singularity, the ineffable unrepeatability of unique events in existence (as opposed to the normative repeatability of 2x2=4 in theory). Bakhtin introduces chronotope to name the existential immediacy of fleeting moments and places.

Thus the chronotope is, like Kant's categories and intuitions, an instrument for calibrating existence. I use the word calibrate in its technical sense, whose meaning is "to adjust experimental results, to take external factors into account or to allow comparison with other data". But, it will be asked, what would the technology look like in which chronotope is an instrument of such exquisite sensitivity? What is the *means* which permit time and space in general to take on the degree of temporal and spatial specificity demanded by the uses to which Bakthin wishes to put chronotope?

Another huge difference between Kant and Bakhtin will help us answer this question. For all of his obsessive attention to the workings of the mind in its interaction with the world, Kant famously never raises the question of language's role in negotiating appearance. For Bakhtin just the opposite is the case: he is as focused on language as Kant was dismissive of it.

Late Period: Time in Language and Language in Time

How is that relevant to our topic? Because it is precisely human language that underwrites the effectiveness of chronotopes in human cultures. The Kantian categories of time and space are so transcendental that their application – even in the most abstruse logical or mathematical formulae – already compromises their status as pure categories. Nevertheless, if time and space have their "natural" home in logic and science, chronotopes have their natural – their only – home in language. In our daily use of chronotopes the abstractness of time-space is domesticated when we deploy them in speech. The formal means for expressing subjectivity occupy a unique place in all languages. As Benveniste has pointed out, "I" is a word that has no referent in the way "tree", for instance, nominates a class of flora. If "I" is to perform its task as *pronoun*, it must itself not be a noun, i.e., it must not refer to anything as other words

do. For its task is to indicate the person uttering the present instance of the discourse containing "I", a person who is alwas changing and different. "I" must not refer to anything in particular, or it will not be able to mean everybody in general.

In Jakobson's suggestive phrase, "I" is a shifter because it moves the center of discourse from one speaking subject to another. Its emptiness is the no man's land in which subjects can exchange the lease they all hold on meaning in language by virtue of merely saying "I". When a particular person utters that word, he or she fills "I" with meaning by providing the central point needed to calibrate all further time and space discriminations: "I" is the invisible ground of all other indices in language, the benchmark to which all its spatial operations are referred, and the Greenwich mean time by which all its temporal distinctions are calibrated. "I" marks the point between "now" and "then" as well as between "here" and "there". The difference between all these markers is manifested by the relation each of them bears either to the proximity of the speaker's horizon (here and now), or to the distance of the other's environment (there and then).

This the way that language makes possible my dialog with the world from my unique place in it: the first person pronoun, coupled with indicatives such as "then", "now" and "here", "there" serve to calibrate positions in abstract space and time that are always conditioned ("thickened") in the event by the specific values that society attached to them in any particular time and place. Bakhtin praises Dostoevsky for creating a "Copernican Revolution" (1984: 49), precisely because Dostoevsky's polyphonic version of novel structure brought to the fore the complexity and utility of the first person pronoun as it is deployed in defining a self.[8]

This is the condition, which Bakhtin has in mind when he writes in his famous footnote that he differs from Kant in taking time and space "not as 'transcendental' but as forms of the most immediate reality".

Endnotes

1.   A different version of this paper will appear in a Festschrift for Nina Perlina.

2.   In "Dialogism", of course, all words are perceived as anaphoric. However, some are more semantically determined by their relation to other, specific words.

3.   The novel was at the center of everyone's attention at this time – including the government's. It achieved a kind of über-genre status as the pre-eminent example of the official aesthetic of Socialist Realism, especially after the Communist Academy's conferences on theory of the novel in 1934-35, in which Lukács played a significant role (see Tihanov 1998).

4.   For a more detailed account of these years, see Holquist and Clark (1984).

5.   During his lifetime, Kant was known (and feared) as "der Alleszermalmer".

6.   And with the hindsight gained from immersion in such later thinkers who contested Kant, such as Dilthey, Simmel, Bergson, and Cassirer.

7.   One thinks of the still under appreciated "Discourse in the Novel", from roughly the same years as the much more influential FTC.

8.   It is significant that the Dostoevsky book, as Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan has pointed out, is Bakhtin's most sustained attempt to understand the problems confronted by a subject defined by its relation to an other who *nevertheless* essays an autobiography. Professor Erdinast-Vulcan's invocation of Derrida's concept of "otobiography" in this essay is most illuminating.

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).[1] 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 inter-preted 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 spe-cifically, 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 constel-lations in literature demonstrates a strong affinity to the Bergsonian view that per-ception 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 con-cept 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. Fol-lowing 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 mathe-matics 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 chang-ing. Cinema's aesthetic set of instruments is wholly commanded by movable percep-tion: camera movements, alternating camera positions and editing generate a percep-tion 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 stub-born, 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.[2]

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.[3] 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.[4] 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[5], 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.[6]

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).[7] 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.[8]

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)[9]

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.[10] 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.[11] 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)[12]

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, there-fore, 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 men-tal 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 dissolv-ing 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 progres-sion 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 glo-bal 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 rela-tion image is a concept that grants unity to a series of affective conditions.[17] 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.[18] 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.[20] 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)[21]

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

1. 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.

11. Between the four types of temporal experiences, other oppositions may be identified. Fear and 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 idyllic 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.

Part III

THE RELEVANCE OF

THE CHRONOTOPE FOR

LITERARY HISTORY

Historical Poetics:
Chronotopes in *Leucippe and Clitophon* and *Tom Jones*

Roderick Beaton

Bakhtin's essay on the chronotope is unique, so far as I know, in presenting the history of the novel as inseparable from the theory, or "poetics", of the genre. Even today, only a minority of literary historians are prepared to consider the whole chronological development of fiction from the ancient Greek novels to the consolidation of realist conventions in the nineteenth century, from which all more recent developments derive. Although many details of Bakhtin's historical knowledge have been overturned since his own day, and his detailed working out of the theory of the chronotope in relation to the ancient Greek texts has been challenged, nonetheless I believe that the chronotope provides a valid basis for a new "historical poetics" based on corrected facts, and extended to include texts, such as the Byzantine and Early Modern Greek "romances", that were unknown to Bakhtin.

Such a "historical poetics" is necessary because the novel, lacking any theory of its own before the modern period, can only be defined, as a genre, through an understanding of its history. And that history remains, today, remarkably contested. Does the novel begin in eighteenth-century England, in seventeenth-century Spain, in northern France in the twelfth century, or in Greek under the Roman empire? Each of these starting-points has had its proponents, each proposed starting-point has in turn, implicitly or explicitly, defined everything that followed.[1] This is grounded in a way of thinking that goes back to antiquity: if we find it unproblematic to define all subsequent epic with reference to Homer, all subsequent tragedy with reference to Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, all subsequent comedy with reference to Athenian New Comedy (with appropriate nods back to the "Old Comedy" of Aristophanes), then it is pretty well inevitable that, according to our choice of starting point, we will define the novel in terms of Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding, *or* of *Don Quixote*, *or* of Arthurian romance, *or* of the ancient Greek (and perhaps also Roman) prose fictions of the first centuries CE. The choice of starting-point determines everything else.

Bakhtin's approach takes the long view. But even more important than that is his insistence that history and theory are inseparable. We will never understand either the history or the nature (poetics) of the novel if we look only at either one of them. The unique promise of Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope is that it offers the possibility of tracing the history, not of individual novels or novelists, nor even of a genre, but of the *poetics* underlying all of these. How does the concept of representing

human, individual experience in language, through narrative, change over long periods of history?

That, it seems to me, is the question that Bakhtin addresses, particularly in his long essay on the chronotope (FTC). Such a project has a curiously complementary relationship to that of Auerbach, in *Mimesis*, that was generated at almost the same time, under the shadow of a different totalitarian system but the same world conflict, and also looks "in" at European culture from a position of geographical and cultural exile. Auerbach, too, insists on the historicity of both writing and experience, and sets out to trace their interrelation through what he calls "imitation". As he puts it:

> Imitation of reality is imitation of the sensory experience of life on earth – among the most essential characteristics of which would seem to be its possessing a history, its changing and developing. (Auerbach 1953: 191)

Auerbach's approach is complementary to that of Bakhtin (apart from the differences between the two scholars' backgrounds) because *genre* was precisely what Auerbach was *not* interested in, indeed the tyranny of ancient genre-theory emerges as the "villain" of Auerbach's story. Perhaps for that reason, Auerbach has almost nothing to say about the ancient Greek novel.[2]

This paper forms part of a larger, ongoing project, to investigate how certain narrative possibilities that seem to have crystallized for the first time in the ancient Greek novel have proved persistent and productive over time, undergoing subtle transformations during formative later periods in the history of the genre, notably the twelfth century (simultaneously in Old French and in Byzantine Greek) and the eighteenth (the time when, according to a narrower definition, the novel is said to originate). For the present, my more limited aim is to revisit the two main essays in which Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope (and of the "historical poetics" of the novel) are developed, and to extrapolate what seem to me to the most significant and productive lines of his approach, both in general, and with specific reference to the ancient Greek novel. I will then attempt simultaneously to apply and to modify Bakhtin's model, in the light of a reading of Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon* and with reference to previous critiques. The final part of the paper examines how this approach can be productive for a reading of a much later text, often regarded as "foundational" for the modern development of the genre, especially in English, Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749).

Bakhtin's Concept of the Chronotope, Particularly with Reference to the Ancient Greek Novel

The discussion that follows is based principally on Bakhtin's long essay on the chronotope, written in 1937-38 but with the final part added as late as 1973 (FTC), with some reference also to the surviving portion of his lost study of the *Bildungsroman*,

dating from 1936-38, but not published until the 1970s (BSHR). Among critiques, one of the most valuable, which also extends the possibilities of the concept in directions not directly followed up here, the relevant chapter in Holquist's monograph stands out.[3]

In the most general terms, Bakhtin's "historical poetics" charts a continuous and creative evolution from the static ancient forms (the ancient Greek novel, the Roman novel, ancient biography) to what in the *Bildungsroman* essay he calls the "novel of emergence": "Man's emergence is accomplished in real historical time, with all of its necessity, its fullness, its future, and its profoundly chronotopic nature" (BSHR: 23).

We are entitled to wonder to what extent, or in what sense, this is to be seen as an evolutionary process, or even in the Marxist sense a teleological one. I believe that a history of the novel *should* be an explanation of how the current state of affairs came into being – or perhaps more usefully, how the novel came to arrive at the high-point of European realism in the mid-nineteenth century, from which all later offshoots derive. Bakhtin is not explicit on this, as on much else too. But I would want to emphasize the evolutionary, rather than teleological, model: change is built into the process, though not necessarily continuous. It is reasonable to look for overarching trends (from simple to complex, from static to dynamic, for instance), but just as with biological evolution, we should not be surprised to see a high degree of complexity in the earliest forms (Chariton's *Callirhoe*, I believe, provides a perfect example of this). Similarly, we should not assume that change is always for the "better", or even always in the same direction. Again, just as in biological evolution, we should expect to find "hopeful monsters" – patterns of change that died out early (there are examples of this phenomenon in late Byzantine and Early Modern Greek, for instance).

The other general point to make is that Bakhtin's term "chronotope" points directly to the two most fundamental components of any narrative: position and movement in space, and their interrelation with the passage of time. At the beginning of the essay Bakhtin himself makes passing reference to Einstein's theory of relativity, which established time as a dimension of space, but he himself downplays this cosmological background, and it has been suggested that the relations that define the chronotope have more to do with Kant than with Einstein.[4]

To turn now to the theory in more detail, Bakhtin asserts:

> In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. (FTC: 84)

Elsewhere he tells us, "the chronotope […] defines genre and generic distinctions" (ibid.: 85). "A literary work's artistic unity in relationship to an actual reality is defined by its chronotope" (ibid.: 243). "That is, we get a mutual interaction between the world represented in the work and the world outside the work" (ibid.: 255). Chronotopes, moreover, "are the organizing centers for the fundamental narrative events of the novel" (ibid.: 250); they "serve for the assimilation of actual temporal (including historical) reality, [and] permit the essential aspects of this reality to be reflected and incorporated into the artistic space of the novel" (ibid.: 252).

What all this would appear to mean is that, first of all, the chronotope is to be understood as the distinctive configuration of time and space that defines "reality" within the world of the text, *as conceptualized within that world itself*. But there is a further dimension, which emerges mainly from the addendum to the essay, written in 1973. Here the chronotope emerges as *also* being the relation between that imagined world and the real, historical world, similarly constituted (because for Bakhtin reality is never "given") out of a perceived relation between space and time, at the point in historical time where the work is either written or read (see especially FTC: 243-58).

The main part of the essay defines nine different chronotopes, more or less in historical sequence, starting with the ancient Greek novels (the "Greek romance" in Bakhtin's terminology, as translated) and ending, with a touch of circularity, with the "idyll" in the fiction of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A tenth chronotope (perhaps subdivided) would seem to be implied by the essay on the *Bildungsroman*, which although apparently written first, brings the story to connect fully with the triumph of realism in the nineteenth century (see Morson and Emerson 1990: 405).

To focus now on what he has to say about the first of these, the chronotope that defines the ancient novel, this is, according to Bakhtin, "the adventure novel of ordeal" (ibid.: 86). Its characters' experiences "affirm what they […] were as individuals, something that did verify and establish their identity"; they pass "the test" (ibid.: 106-7). The plot of the ancient novel takes place in "adventure time" (ibid.: 87 and passim). The world in which the hero and heroine endure their adventures is "an alien world in adventure time" (ibid.: 89, 102). This world of adventure is "abstract" (ibid.: 101), which is why it appears to be ruled by Chance (ibid.: 95ff). Intriguingly, "adventure time leaves no defining traces and is therefore in essence reversible" (ibid.: 100, see also 110). Space, too, is interchangeable: "what happens in Babylon could just as well happen in Egypt or Byzantium and vice versa" (ibid.). It may be concluded, then, that "The adventure chronotope is thus 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" (ibid.; emphasis in original). The entire chronotope of adventure lies in the "gap, the pause, the hiatus that appears between these two strictly adjacent biographical moments" (ibid.: 89).

Some of these generalizations by Bakhtin about the ancient novel have fared better than others at the hands of modern scholarship. That the ancient novel was about a

test or ordeal was recognized long before Bakhtin and is not contested; the same can be said about the predominance of adventures and the role of chance (but also of a "fate" or "providence" on which Bakhtin has less to say). The more original, and promising, separation between what happens to the lovers in "adventure time" and the "biographical moments" in which they fall in love and are subsequently (re-) united as man and wife, seems to be echoed, from quite a different perspective, by Winkler (1994: 28): "the entire form of the Greek romance can be considered an elaboration of the period between initial desire and final consummation". Konstan's (1994: 45) influential proposal, elaborated from Foucault, that the novelty of the novel (in the ancient world) lies in its establishment of the new concept of "sexual symmetry" also seems, at one point, to concede that the world of adventures portrayed in them is paradoxically static (see also Ballengee 2005: 136). But in general, it is the "abstract" and "reversible", or "interchangeable", qualities of time and space in "adventure time" that have come in for most criticism.[5]

In order to see how Bakhtin's ideas may still be productive, and also where they may be in need of modification, I turn now to the novel that Bakhtin seems to have had most in mind when writing this part of his essay, *Leucippe and Clitophon* by Achilles Tatius.[6]

Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon*

Time in this novel is represented in a generally linear fashion, consonant with the novel's first-person narration (although the narrator's viewpoint is frequently violated), except for the representation of certain key events which are in effect narrated twice. These have to do with the apparent deaths of the heroine, of which there are no fewer than three in the novel; the first two of these, but not the third, are explained retrospectively and revealed to have been illusions. As for space, the action is concentrated into three main locales: the city of Tyre where the narrator, Clitophon is at home and first falls in love with Leucippe; the Egyptian Delta, where the pair undergo the most obviously dramatic of their adventures; and the city of Ephesus, where their continuing trial by ordeal assumes more urban, and urbane, guise. Each of these locales is separated from the previous one by a liminal space of contrasting sea-voyages. This, at its simplest, is how time and space are interwoven to create the narrative fabric of *Leucippe and Clitophon*.

At this point it will be useful to make explicit a distinction that derives from Bakhtin's terminology but is not applied explicitly or consistently by him in his discussion of the ancient Greek texts. The adventures which make up the greater part of each of these texts, according to Bakhtin, take place in what he calls "adventure time". Logically, this expression ought to be understood as shorthand for "adventure time-space", since the theory of the chronotope binds time and space into a continuum (see FTC: 84, quoted above). What happens in this time-space Bakhtin contrasts with what he terms "biographical moments". Implicitly, then, the world

depicted in these texts can be separated into two kinds of time-space: "adventure time-space", where the adventures happen, and "biographical time-space", in which the characters are at home, fall in love at the beginning, and live happily ever after at the end. This is the distinction that I propose to employ in the discussion of *Achilles Tatius* that follows.[7]

Biographical Time-Space in *Leucippe and Clitophon*

At home in Tyre, Clitophon falls in love with the beautiful Leucippe, his cousin from Byzantium. They attempt to make love and almost succeed. Frustrated, the pair elope by sea. The narration of these events takes up most of the first two of the novel's eight books (1.3-2.31). Everything that follows belongs in the (biographically) infinitesimal gap between desire and consummation, which comes in the final paragraph (8.18), amid a perfunctory résumé of final travels that in a few sentences take the reunited lovers back to Byzantium (her home city) for their wedding, then to Tyre (his home city) for the winter, before returning once more to Byzantium.[8]

Throughout these portions of the text, the characters do change and develop. Actions have consequences; their effects are irreversible. The process of falling in love is narrated with some detail that includes fundamental changes to the characters, particularly the first-person narrator. These changes are not reversible in the way that the apparent deaths of Leucippe later, in adventure time-space, are reversed. Had Leucippe and Clitophon subsequently fallen out of love, become indifferent to one another, or fallen in love with other people, each of these (biographical) possibilities would have necessitated a further, and again irreversible, set of changes; it could not have been represented as the simple *reversal* of what had gone before. Similarly, and more obviously, events that befall minor characters in Books 1 and 2, and which can be said to mirror aspects of the main story as it will develop later, have an unquestioned finality that contrasts with the outcome of similar events in "adventure time-space". The death of Charicles, the hero of an abortive homosexual subplot, includes graphic detail and emphasizes the destruction of the beauty of the beloved, anticipating the false deaths of Leucippe and Clitophon's laments that will follow them (1.13, p. 15). But no miraculous revelation will reveal this death to have been an illusionist's trick: Charicles remains dead. Similarly, when Clitophon's intended bride, Calligone, is conveniently removed from the story, by being abducted by pirates, no miracle, chance, or fate intervenes to restore her. She reappears in the narrative only at the very end, when the hero and heroine are briefly returned to the "biographical space-time" with which they began.

This, then, is biographical time-space. And Achilles Tatius may be one of the first to represent it, at this length, in fiction.

Adventure Time-Space in *Leucippe and Clitophon*

Spatially, this divides up into two main locales, where contrasting types of adventure take place, separated from the preceding "biographical time-space", and from each other, by sea-voyages, again of markedly contrasting character. Schematically, the spatial distribution of Leucippe's and Clitophon's adventures after their elopement can be represented like this:

> Voyage from Tyre to Egypt: storm, shipwreck (2.32-3.5);
> Egypt: extreme, outlandish adventures, including apparent evisceration and decapitation of the heroine (3.6-5.14);
> Voyage from Egypt to Ephesus: calm sea and a new kind of threat to the lovers' constancy, in the form of erotic temptation (5.15-5.17);
> Ephesus: urban(e) intrigue introduces greater complexity and a correspondingly more human/ credible scale of action (marital infidelity, masters and slaves, court drama) (5.17-8.18).

There can surely be no better example of Bakhtin's "empty time-[space]" than this. All the action which lies between the lovers' elopement near the end of Book 2 and the concluding sentences of the final paragraph in Book 8 separates, in Bakhtin's phrase, "two strictly adjacent biographical moments". The first such moment occurs when the hero and heroine first attempt to sleep together, the second when they are married. What lies between is precisely a *test,* an ordeal akin to initiation, which takes place, in relation to the "biographical" world experienced by the characters, not chronologically at all (the passage of time in these portions of the narrative is unimportant) but, as it were, thematically.

Not only that, but in "adventure time-space" the world in which the lovers have to act, and in which things happen to them, appears to obey different rules from the world they have left behind. This is most apparent in the episodes that stretch realism to the limits, associated with the fake deaths of Leucippe, but more interesting is the abrupt change in the norms of sexual behavior that comes about once they are launched upon their adventures – and which logically is the opposite of what might have been expected. In the biographical time-space of the first two books, a man and a woman can risk going to bed together, and at worst risk disgrace and might have to flee their home, as Leucippe and Clitophon in fact do. The prohibition on sex before marriage that is often assumed to be a convention of the entire genre conspicuously does not appear to be in force in Clitophon's Tyre; it is introduced suddenly at the beginning of Book 4. It is paradoxically the leap into adventure time-space, motivated as an escape from the (relatively mild) constraints of Tyre, that imposes on the lovers an entirely new rule of sexual abstinence. For the heroine in particular, in the world of their adventures, the penalty for unchastity is understood to be separation and death.

Bakhtin's theoretical distinction between biographical and adventure time-space (even though not articulated quite so explicitly in his essay) works well for this novel, and helps to explain why the characters behave differently at home in Tyre and abroad on their adventures. In this novel, at least, it can be argued that in adventure time, "time *is* reversible", as happens with the first two false deaths of Leucippe, each literally reversed as the illusion is explained. On the other hand, it is not quite true that "what happens in Babylon could just as well happen in Egypt or Byzantium and vice versa". While *specific* locations are not important and could easily have been changed, different kinds of action are associated with different spaces, whether rural or urban, on land or on the sea. It may also be no accident that *Leucippe and Clitophon*, like all the five ancient novels that have survived complete, tests its hero and heroine in each one of these clearly differentiated *kinds* of space.

How, finally, can the time and space represented in the fictional world of the characters be mapped in relation to the time and space in which the novel must have been written and first read? Here, as with all the ancient novels, we are hampered by having no useful or trustworthy information about the author, even less about his intended readership, and by considerable imprecision about the time and place of writing. So far as is known, the novel was written c. 150-200 CE. Its author is associated by tradition with Alexandria and was probably a "Greek with Roman citizenship", "a Hellenized Roman Egyptian" (Morales 2001: xii-xiii, xvii).

In relation to that (approximate) point in history and in historical geography, as we understand these things today, we can say that all the places mentioned in the novel are real, in the sense that their names would have been recognizable to readers of that period as belonging to the same world that they themselves inhabited. The things that happen in the novel's three main cities – Tyre, Alexandria and Ephesus – could all, more or less, be imagined as possible in the late first century (though one might hope that the decapitation of female captives on shipboard was not a daily occurrence in the harbor of Alexandria!). The same can be said of the novel's voyages: storm, shipwreck, and idyllic conditions were certainly among the real possibilities to be faced at sea at the period, as was the risk of capture by pirates. Extreme violence, when it occurs in the fictional time-space of the novel, is largely confined to the Nile Delta, presented as a wild no-man's-land infested by robbers and pirates (the *boukoloi* of the narrative). Most probably, the world depicted in books 3 and 4 represents an urban dweller's nightmare of what life *might* be like, *out there*. There are other reasons, too, for supposing that the novel's first readers are imagined as belonging to an urban, educated elite – and these include the detail that the hero himself is a reader of books (1.6, p. 8). But even in the novel's most wildly improbable episodes, there is no role for the fantastic. Unlike Odysseus or Jason before them, Leucippe and Clitophon never stray off the map of the real world altogether. There are instances of the uncanny, certainly, manifested in ways that would have been quite in keeping in a late nineteenth-century novel too: pictures, dreams, and on one occasion a divine epiphany foretell a future which then comes true; a supernatural lie-detector near the

story's end gives the right answers, but the text does not insist on the mechanism employed.

The time of the action can best be summarized as vaguely non-present in relation to its readers. The violent world of the Nile Delta is further distanced by the temporal indication: "*At that time*, the whole of the coastal region [of Egypt] was under the control of pirates" (3.5, p. 47). But in general the temporal distance that has led some commentators to describe the ancient Greek novel, as a whole, as a form of "historical novel" (Perry 1967; Hägg 1983) is absent or understated in *Leucippe and Clitophon*, particularly by comparison with *Callirhoe* or the *Aethiopica*. On the other hand, in *Leucippe and Clitophon*, as in all five complete ancient Greek novels, not a single mention is made of the *political* geography of the time when it was written and must first have been read: every one of the locales mentioned had for most of the previous two centuries been under the rule of imperial Rome (Hägg 1983, 1988). When this fact is remembered, the chronotope of all five of these novels takes on a further dimension: the world they create *resembles* that of their authors and first readers in many respects, but is in fact an imaginative construct. The biographical time-space in which the characters fall in love and marry, no less than the adventure time-space in which they are tested almost to destruction, are both of them fictional projections of an idealized Hellenistic world. In that world, Greek language and Hellenic culture are predominant, and the contemporary political reality of Roman rule has never existed.

Tom Jones

In order to suggest how such a re-reading and partial modification of Bakhtin's theoretical template could prove productive for a new "historical poetics", that would include both ancient Greek fiction and its modern counterpart, I turn now to a text which has often been regarded as "foundational" for a much narrower reading of the genre's history.

The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling, by Henry Fielding, was first published in 1749.[9] Bakhtin, in his study of the *Bildungsroman*, assigns it to the category which he terms the "early biographical novel of emergence" (BSHR: 24, see also 18; see also Morson and Emerson 1990: 408, 410). Even Bakhtin, then, sides with the majority which sees Fielding's novel as looking forward to the rapid and far-reaching developments in fiction that took place between the late eighteenth century and the middle of the nineteenth. In the view of many English-language historians or theorists of the novel, who have followed in the footsteps of Ian Watt's influential study of 1957, *Tom Jones* belongs among a handful of texts of the period that mark a decisive break with the older tradition of the "romance", and the beginning of the novel proper.

The counter-case was made as long ago as 1976, but does not seem to have been seriously followed up by specialists.[10] According to Miller (1976: 9), "*Tom Jones* is in all major essentials a 'romance' and vitally profits from earlier modes of fiction, indeed, cannot be adequately interpreted – or 'decoded' – unless the conventions of romance are imaginatively comprehended". I believe that this is true; but the case made by Miller is a very generalized one and assumes a curiously undifferentiated history of what he calls "the Romance Tradition" from the ancient Greek novels (which he seems to know mostly through Perry), via the medieval romance of chivalry, to the popular French romances of the seventeenth century which were Fielding's particular *bête noire*; Miller focuses mainly on romance paradigms drawn from the sixteenth-century *Amadís de Gaula*, though he also makes telling use of Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, a text with which the eighteenth-century innovations in fiction are more commonly contrasted than compared.

Following Miller's lead, but making a much more direct connection to the ancient genre and its chronotope than is suggested by his study, I propose that despite Fielding's overt and often-repeated claim to be creating something entirely new in what he insists on calling a "history", part of the game implicitly played out in this most playful of fictions is surely to map the time-space of the fictional foundling's history on to that of the best-known predecessor in the genre then known as "romance": *Leucippe and Clitophon*.[11]

The novel's eighteen "books" are grouped into three roughly equal "parts", of six books each. Schematically, the structure of the novel can be represented as follows:

I   Jones' early years spent on Squire Allworthy's estate (at one point named "Paradise Hall");
II   Wanderings and adventures of Jones and Sophia on the road, in search of one another;
III Wanderings and adventures continued, but now in London (with return in the final chapter).

Already this structure invites comparison with that of *Leucippe and Clitophon*, as summarized above. Squire Allworthy's estate corresponds to Clitophon's home city of Tyre, the wanderings of Tom and Sophia to the two sea-voyages that bring Leucippe and Clitophon first to Egypt, for the most outlandish of their adventures, and then to the new, but still foreign, urban environment of Ephesus. The last of these, of course, corresponds to the final testing of Tom and Sophia in London.

Just as Konstan (1994) has argued for the ancient Greek novel, so too the story of *Tom Jones* is based upon the idea of "sexual symmetry". Fielding questions many things in his narrative and in his frequent digressions, but never this: the only possible outcome of the plot (other than a tragic one) is the mutual happiness of a man and woman in marriage. In keeping with the rhetoric of the ancient novel, Jones even vows "eternal constancy" to Sophia; if he does not quite keep that vow, as we shall see, neither did Clitophon.

Just like the ancient novelists, too, Fielding plays games with chance (called "Fortune"), and implies a providential role for the author of his fiction (see e.g. I. I, p. 31; IV. XII, p. 172; XIII. VI, p. 619). The choice of the name Dowling for the minor character whose long-delayed revelations bring about the resolution of the plot, with its echo of the term "dowel" (referring to an invisible means of forming a joint in carpentry), in turn echoes the role assigned in several of the ancient novels to a "providence" that is often more or less explicitly to be identified with the ingenuity of the author (particularly by Heliodorus).[12]

Even the theme, obligatory in the ancient genre, of *Scheintod* (false, or apparent, death) is not absent from *Tom Jones*. On no fewer than three occasions, one of the lovers is briefly believed to be dead (the same number as the false deaths of Leucippe). Naturally these play a much smaller part in Fielding's narrative than they do in *Leucippe and Clitophon*, with the result that they are easily overlooked. But the fact that Fielding troubled to include such an inherently non-realistic element in his fiction is surely further proof that he is consistently playing with the conventions of the older genre. Immediately after the youthful bout of fisticuffs between Jones and his rival for Sophia's affections, Blifil, Sophia herself appears on the scene and faints. "Miss Western is dead", several bystanders immediately cry out, which prompts Jones to a precocious recovery from his injuries; picking up Sophia in his arms, "he had carried her half ways before they knew what he was doing, and he had actually *restored her to life* before they reached the waterside" (V. xii, p. 229; emphasis added). Often in the ancient novels, too, the theme of *Scheintod* is followed by a figurative (or parodic) intimation of a return from the dead. Later, at Upton, in a brawl provoked by an insult to his feelings for Sophia, Jones is knocked unconscious and thought to be dead (VII. xii, p. 328). Later still, in London, Sophia is tested with a false report of Jones's death, an episode that more closely recalls the third false death of Leucippe, in a false report given to Clitophon (XV. III, pp. 693-4; see Ach.Tat. 7.2-3 = Whitmarsh 2001: 113-4).

As for the theme of the test, in *Leucippe and Clitophon*, as we saw, chastity was imposed on the lovers once they set out on their adventures. The heroine passes the test fully, despite severe threats. Clitophon succumbs on a single occasion, when he sleeps with the widow Melite after all, just when it had seemed that he had successfully resisted her attentions (5.25, p. 97). Exactly the same pattern is followed by Fielding. Sophia's chastity is absolute, even in the face of temptation followed by attempted rape (XV. ii, pp. 688-92; v, pp. 698-9). Jones is tempted not once, like Clitophon, but three times – successively by Mrs. Waters at Upton, by Lady Bellaston, and again by Mrs. Fitzpatrick in London. On the second of these occasions certainly, and probably also on the first, like Clitophon he succumbs.[13]

Even the element of the exotic is not absent, as Jones makes his way across the home counties of England, although once again the parodic element is striking. Three of Jones' encounters along the road deserve to be singled out under this heading: with the strange "Man of the Hill", who seems at first to be associated with witchcraft;

with a band of gypsies, represented as enjoying a kind of miniature utopia, under their king, even called (directly recalling Achilles Tatius) "Egyptians"; and perhaps, more briefly, at the very end of the road, with the highwayman near London who ends up begging for mercy from his would-be victim.[14]

Finally, the description of Sophia takes up most of a chapter whose parodic nature is overtly declared in its title: "A short hint of what we can do in the sublime, and a description of Miss Sophia Western". The mock-ekphrasis of the heroine includes the following sentences, which can be quite closely paralleled in Achilles Tatius' ekphrasis of *Leucippe*:

> […] She was most like the picture of Lady Ranelagh; and, I have heard, more still to the famous Duchess of Mazarine [famous court beauties] […] Her eyebrows were full, even, and arched beyond the power of art to imitate. Her black eyes had a lustre in them, which all her softness could not extinguish. […] Her cheeks were of the oval kind; and in her right she had a dimple, which the least smile discovered. Her chin had certainly its share in forming the beauty of her face; but it was difficult to say it was either large or small, though perhaps it was rather of the former kind. Her complexion had rather more of the lily than of the rose; but when exercise, or modesty, increased her natural colour, no vermilion could equal it. (IX. ii, p. 135)

Compare the description of Leucippe:

> She looked like a picture I had once seen of Selene on a bull: her eyes were blissfully brilliant; her hair was blonde, curling blonde; her brows were black, unadulterated black; her cheeks were white, a white that blushed towards the middle, a blush like the purple pigment used by a Lydian woman to dye ivory. Her mouth was like the bloom of a rose, when the rose begins to part the lips of its petals. (Ach. Tat. 1.4.3, transl. Whitmarsh 2001: 6-7)

The point of making these comparisons is not just to argue that Fielding was consciously positioning his work in relation to the ancient "romance", and in particular in relation to its probably best-known exemplar at the time, *Leucippe and Clitophon*. Rather, once the common underlying template is recognized, it becomes possible to measure how far Fielding has traveled from his ancient predecessor in his use of it. An obvious measure, here, is the element of parody, which is ubiquitous in *Tom Jones* and needs no special illustration. Another, that I think has not been examined before, is the representation of space and time, that is to say, in Bakhtin's terms, of the novel's chronotope.

Biographical and Adventure Time-Space in *Tom Jones*

A greater proportion of Fielding's novel than of Achilles Tatius' is taken up with bio-graphical time-space. The whole of Part I is presented as the biography of the hero, from the first discovery of the infant in Squire Allworthy's bed, to his expulsion from the protected environment of the squire's estate at the age of twenty. But that trau-matic event precipitates the hero, just like his ancient Greek counterparts, into a world of unpredictable wanderings and adventures. The same applies to the heroine, too, with only the small difference that in most of the ancient novels the pair set out on their adventures together, and are then separated, whereas in *Tom Jones* Sophia leaves home separately, but with the same aim: to find her lover and be reunited with him. Part II of *Tom Jones* unmistakably plunges both Jones and Sophia into a differ-ent world from the one that they (or the reader of the novel thus far) have been used to: a world of "adventure time-space". True, most of the "adventures" are, in Field-ing's own term, "mock-heroic" rather than heroic, and as we shall see shortly, the extent of the displacement is bathetically small, compared to the wanderings in four out of the five ancient novels, that encompass the whole of the eastern Mediterranean and its hinterland. But in principle, what Bakhtin writes of "adventure time" holds good for Part II of *Tom Jones* also: what happens could happen anywhere, in any order; what appears to be the case is very often reversed by subsequent revelations (time is, in that sense, "reversible").

This actually holds true not only of Part II but of Part III, up to the middle of the last chapter, as well. Here we are in London, but in the big city the wanderings, mis-understandings, and seemingly random, "testing" adventures continue until the final unraveling of the plot brings about the long-delayed reunion of the lovers and their return (as in *Leucippe and Clitophon*) to their starting-point. To an extent, the urban world of London is less strange and (only superficially) less threatening to the lovers' wellbeing than the hazards and privations of their respective journeys. But this is true of the corresponding adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon. These also centre upon the space of a city and its immediate environs, and also culminate in a complex set of revelations. Only in the concluding pages of *Tom Jones* does the biographical thread resume, from the point where it had been arbitrarily broken off at the end of Part I.

Read in this way, Fielding's novel does not only parody its ancient precedent, it also gives new life and vitality to a genre whose imitations had by the mid eighteenth cen-tury become hackneyed indeed. If *Tom Jones* is an "early biographical novel of emer-gence", it *becomes* one by virtue of exploiting possibilities that were already latent in one of the earliest surviving texts in the genre. For all the author's bold assertions in the programmatic, self-reflexive opening chapters of each book, that he is creating a new kind of writing, different from epic and romance and closer to history – asser-tions which ever since seem to have been accepted at face value by criticism – the way in which Fielding actually sets about telling the supposedly *real* history of a *unique* individual is by reverting to some of the oldest conventions in the genre. Like the best

parodies, *Tom Jones* does not only subvert what it mocks, it validates and perpetuates it too.

The Time-Space of the Novel's Writing and First Readers

It is in this aspect of the chronotope that Fielding's originality most strikingly stands out. As we have seen, the world of the ancient novel is distanced from that of its authors and first readers in terms of *political*, though not spatial, geography (the suppression of the reality of Roman rule) and of historical time. Fielding, while otherwise following ancient conventions, inverts these, to the extent that if we were to define what is new about the "chronotope" of *Tom Jones* (and indeed of most realist fiction since) it must surely lie in the collision between the world represented in the text and that inhabited by author and readers. At first sight, this is no more than to restate an obvious truth, one usually taken for granted in any discussion of realism in fiction during the last two centuries. How radical this collision is, in terms of the "historical poetics" of the genre over time, only becomes fully apparent when *Tom Jones* is set side by side with the chronotope of the ancient novel.

To take time first: Fielding was not the first to make claims for a work of fiction as being a form of history, indeed it is quite likely that the ancient novel itself began as a form of "apocryphal" history. But Fielding brings to his task a self-awareness, and a consciousness of precedents, that were naturally not available to his ancient precursors.[15] Fielding has much to say in his introductory chapters on this, asserting, for example, his liberty to linger or to leave things out at will (II. I, pp. 67-8). Almost more provocative is the use of headings for books and chapters which often do no more than denote intervals of time. This is one sense in which, as Bakhtin puts it, of the ancient novel: "Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible"; but denoting the passage of time was a preoccupation for ancient novelists too, who are perhaps at their most insistent on specifying the alternations of days and nights when the time they represent is at its most "abstract" or "empty".[16]

But Fielding, unlike any ancient novelist, or any author in the "romance" tradition, confronts his characters with historical situations which were contemporary with the writing of the book, and would have been familiar memories to its first readers. The 1745 Jacobite rebellion is first mentioned early on in Part II; it would appear that the first chapters of the novel had already been written before these events even took place (VII. xi, p. 321; see Bender 1996: xv). Later, a frisson of real danger to Sophia is introduced, through a false report of a French landing in England in support of the rebels (XI. vi, pp. 515-16). Time, by the end of the novel, has come round so that the characters are reported to be living in the same present tense in which the author addresses his readers. On the last page we are told that the happy couple have "*already* produced two children", of whom the younger is "a year and half old" (XVIII. "THE LAST", p. 870).

Similarly, as was mentioned above, the space in which all the action unfolds, whether in "biographical" or "adventure" time-space, is homely and can be presumed to have been familiar to the majority of the book's first readers. Fielding's achievement here has been to map on to a landscape that is inherently the opposite of the exotic, adventure world of "romance", a sequence of adventures which mirror those of earlier "romances". As a consequence, in *Tom Jones* it is only the boundaries of the text that mark off the textual space and time inhabited by the fictional characters from the time and space in which Fielding, his publisher, and his readers also live.

So despite its parodic relation to the ancient novel (and Bakhtin's model helps us recognize this), Fielding moves towards a type of representation that is radically different from the "static" type found in *Leucippe and Clitophon*. As Bakhtin summarizes the chronotope of the *Bildungsroman*:

> The hero himself, his character, becomes a variable in the formula of this type of novel. 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)

Theoretical Implications

This parallel reading of *Leucippe and Clitophon* and *Tom Jones,* in the light of Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope, highlights the persistence of the ancient Greek novel as a narrative template even, or especially, in a text which has usually been valued for the explicit distance that it creates between itself and the older "romance" and has consequently been read as a foundational text for the subsequent development of the genre.

In their opening chapter, Bemong and Borghart propose five different "levels of abstraction" at which the concept of the chronotope can be (and has been) understood. Evidently enough, the discussion of *Leucippe and Clitophon* can be situated on their level 4: the chronotopic characteristics discussed serve to define the genre (or at least the subgenre) of the ancient Greek novel, as well as text-specific deviations from it or elaborations on the given template. But what of *Tom Jones*? The persistence of chronotopes, more or less fossilized, over long periods of time is remarked on by Bakhtin himself as well as by influential commentators (FTC: 85; Morson and Emerson 1990: 371-2; Bemong and Borghart in the present volume). But Fielding's use and adaptation of the chronotope of ancient fiction goes far further than the "creative recycling" or "revival" implied by Bakhtin and discussed explicitly elsewhere in this volume (Bemong and Borghart in the present volume; see also Borghart and De Temmerman 2010). It would be perverse, surely, to insist that the chronotope which defines the (sub)genre of *Tom Jones* is the same as that which defines the ancient

Greek novel, since most readers have followed Fielding's own injunctions in the introductory chapters to each book to read his text otherwise. This is where Bemong's and Borghart's third level, the "major" or "dominant" chronotope can be especially valuable, since it "serves as a unifying ground for the competing local chronotopes in one and the same narrative text" (Bemong and Borghart in the present volume). Thus, schematically, one might propose that Fielding more or less deliberately overlays a radically new, not yet fully formed, chronotope, that of the "novel of emergence", upon the inherited chronotope that once defined ancient fiction, and still perhaps did define its avatars down to the seventeenth century.

In this case, "the simultaneous existence in literature of phenomena taken from widely separate periods of time" certainly does "greatly complicate […] the historico-literary process" (FTC: 85). This brings me to the second, closely related, theoretical implication of the present discussion: can a chronotope be "transhistorical"? This was an issue debated productively, but I think inconclusively, at the conference on which this volume is based. Even in the sense of the "stubborn existence" of chronotopes, long after they have ceased to be "productive" (the French seventeenth-century romances so derided by Fielding, for instance, or the Byzantine and modern Greek novels adduced by Borghart and De Temmerman 2010), it is by no means certain that the same patterning of events in space and time, encountered in texts written at widely separated historical moments, represents the identical *chronotope*.

That the chronotope in such cases is the same after all would seem to be supported by some of Bakhtin's own comments ("they continued stubbornly to exist") and, for example, by the intriguing, but in the end I suspect limiting, proposal of Scholz to bring the chronotope within the framework of formalist/structuralist analysis and extrapolate it as "referring to the generative principle of plot".[17] On the other hand, a rigorous reading of Bakhtin's essay, and particularly of its final part, would suggest that precisely what is most valuable about the concept of the chronotope is its *historicity*. Chronotopes do not merely organize space and time within a text, which ever after enjoys a fixed, transcendental, transhistorical existence; they do so within the historical process, in which no two moments can ever be identical (see Morson and Emerson 1990: 428-9).

This aspect of the chronotope is illuminated, in characteristically paradoxical fashion, and presumably without any knowledge of Bakhtin, in Borges's often cited fiction, "Pierre Menard, author of the *Quixote*". The fictional French author, writing in the early twentieth century, laboriously produces a text that is "verbally identical" to Cervantes's novel, but "almost infinitely richer" (Borges 1970: 69). "Menard's fragmentary *Quixote* is more subtle than Cervantes'" (ibid.: 68), precisely because written in a different epoch, by a writer whose historical, geographical, linguistic and cultural context could hardly have been more different from that of Cervantes three hundred years before him. What distinguishes Menard's *Quixote* from the real one (and at this point it ceases to matter that the former only exists – *could* only exist – within a fictional text) is precisely their respective chronotopes, as delineated in the

last part of Bakhtin's essay. That is to say, even if the spatial and temporal relations *within* the two texts are absolutely identical, what makes them utterly different, as Borges insists that they are, is their respective spatial and temporal relations to the world in which they were created and are (now, or at any time) read.

This is why I believe that in future it may be necessary, and productive, to distinguish between the "chronotope" as archetypal plot-structure, or template, from the "chronotope" in its more fundamental historical (and even historicist) sense as I believe it was intended by Bakhtin to be understood. The former has an evident transhistorical existence, and can be seen as an intertextual resource available to writers in any epoch, as well as being at some specific times more or less imposed on them; but it is in the story of the latter that a true "historical poetics" would have to consist.

In this paper I have used the term in both of these senses. In the first sense (the chronotope as transhistorical plot-structure, template, or archetype) Fielding exploits a still-productive potential that has come down to him via the long history of the genre in which he is working; but it is in the second sense (the chronotope as an unrepeatable intersection of a fictional world with a given place and time in human history) that the concept of the chronotope can provide a measure, as it were, of the distance traveled *along the same scale or axis* during the centuries that separate the writing of the two novels. *Tom Jones*, according to this reading, represents not a radical break but a measurable shift in poetics along a scale that can be calibrated in historical time.

This is precisely the kind of "measurement" that ought to be provided by a "historical poetics", which I suggest, for that reason, should be seen as a worthwhile methodology for a new understanding of the novel as a genre at once in and about history.

Endnotes

1. See, indicatively but obviously not exclusively: Doody (1997), Frye (1976), Mander (2007), McKeon (2002), and Watt (1957).

2. "The stylistic level of the *Decameron* is strongly reminiscent of the corresponding antique *genus*, the antique novel […] This is not surprising, since the attitude of the author to his subject matter, and the social stratum for which the work is intended, correspond quite closely in the two periods, and since for Boccaccio too the concept of the writer's art was closely associated with that of rhetoric. […] Yet while the antique novel is a late form cast in languages which had long since produced their best, Boccaccio's stylistic endeavor finds itself confronted by a newly-born and as yet almost amorphous literary language" (Auerbach 1953: 216).

3. Holquist (2002: 109-26). Among critiques of Bakhtin's reading of the ancient novel, the most important remains Branham (2002). See also Branham (2005) and specific contributions cited below. See also Morson and Emerson (1990: 366-432).

4. Argued by Branham (2002: 165). But see contra Morson and Emerson (1990: 366-9).

5. See particularly, and most recently, Ballengee (2005), Smith (2005), Whitmarsh (2005), and for a view more sympathetic to Bakhtin's approach, Kim (2008).

6.   References are given parenthetically in the text, in the form of book-number followed by paragraph-number separated by a full-stop (most if not all translations also include these numbers). Page numbers refer to Whitmarsh (2001).

7.   Although differently formulated, and to a different end, I suggest that this distinction is congruent with the revisionist distinctions introduced into Bakhtin's theory respectively by Whitmarsh and Ballengee: in the one case between "centrifugal and centripetal forces" (Whitmarsh 2005: 116-19), in the other between "inner experience" and "public image" as validated by society (Ballengee 2005: 135). Smith (2005: 173), in his chronotopical re-reading of *Callirhoe*, also seeks to rescue what he calls a "real-life chronotope" from the dominance of Bakhtin's empty adventure time.

8.   Nothing in the text explains how Clitophon came to be alone in Sidon, where in the first two paragraphs of Book 1 he meets the book's supposed author and begins to tell the story that makes up all the rest of the text. The fullest discussion of this incomplete "frame", which certainly complicates matters, is to be found in Repath (2005). The issue has intentionally been left out of the present analysis.

9.   References here are given in the form of book-number (in roman) followed by chapter number (roman, small caps), separated by a full-stop. The page references which follow are to Fielding (1996).

10.   See indicatively Rawson (2007), which gives a representative overview of current scholarship and does not make any mention of either the "romance" or Miller (1976).

11.   Thanks to an exhaustive study by Mace (1996), we know that Fielding's knowledge of ancient texts was considerable, and she also argues that he makes much more systematic use of this knowledge in his fiction than he has often been given credit for. But a striking absence from that study is any mention of the ancient novel, either of texts or of authors. It seems incredible that Fielding would not have known of *Leucippe and Clitophon*, as Richardson knew the *Aethiopica*. For the purposes of this paper, it is not important to establish the precise route by which Fielding had access to the chronotope of the ancient novel.

12.   Dowling first appears as the unnamed messenger from Salisbury (V. VIII, p. 212 and IX, p. 217) and is introduced by name when Jones first meets him (VIII. VIII, pp. 374-5; see XII. X, pp. 571-6). After a number of further preparatory appearances, Dowling finally tells his story at XVIII. VIII, pp. 838-40.

13.   Mrs. Waters (an added frisson to this episode is given by the fact that she soon turns out to be none other than Jenny Jones, supposed by the reader, and by all the characters at this point, to be Jones's own mother): IX. V, pp. 442-4; see VII, p. 448; Lady Bellaston: XIII. VIII, pp. 627-8; IX, pp. 632-4; XV. IX, pp. 717-22; Mrs. Fitzpatrick: XVI. IX, pp. 767-8.

14.   See, respectively, VIII. X-XV, pp. 383-421 (esp. X, pp. 383-5; XI, p. 388), XII. XII, pp. 581-7 (see XIII, p. 587: "his Egyptian majesty"), and XIV, pp. 592-5.

15.   Compare the influential formulation by T.S. Eliot (1975: 40): "Someone said: 'The dead writers are remote from us because we *know* so much more than they did.' Precisely, and they are that which we know".

16.   For a thorough exploration of the representation of time in the ancient novels (dating from before Bakhtin's work became known in translation), see Hägg (1971).

17.   Scholz (2003: 163), cited by Bemong and Borghart elsewhere in this volume. Note the implicit nod to both transformational grammar and Lévi-Strauss's theory of myth.

Eulogizing Realism: Documentary Chronotopes in Nineteenth-Century Prose Fiction

Pieter Borghart & Michel De Dobbeleer

In this contribution we try to probe the generic chronotope of realism, which, judging from its astonishing productivity in the nineteenth century and the profound impact it has had on literary evolution and theory ever since[1], can be designated nothing less than a hallmark in the general history of narrative. Although we are primarily concerned with the description of the principles of construction underlying the realistic, "documentary", chronotope, we would also like to touch upon some of its rather evident, but still somewhat under-discussed similarities with the genre of historiography. For, despite an abundance of what could be called "touches of realism" in a plethora of literary texts and genres (both narrative and poetic) since the very beginnings of literary history itself, the direct germs of realism as it developed into a particular narrative genre or *generic chronotope* during the nineteenth century may well be situated in "prescientific" historiographical works such as those of Gibbon or Michelet.[2]

Bakhtin, as is apparent from FTC and BSHR, seems not to have thought of this hypothetical connection. However, it is noteworthy that in explaining the process of development of new narrative genres, he attaches far more importance to time than to space (e.g. "[…] in literature the primary category in the chronotope is time"; FTC: 85), and what historiography and realism have in common is precisely a "historical" – i.e. an irreversible, linear, organic – conception of time. For this reason, we consider it useful to draw in passing some preliminary parallels between the narrative strategies of our main subject, the nineteenth-century realist novel, and a number of construction principles underlying prescientific historiographical works.

The Assimilation of Historical Time and the Concept of the Documentary Chronotope

In FTC Bakhtin concludes his historico-typological survey of generic chronotopes with a discussion of the idyll. At first sight this may come as a surprise, given Bakhtin's teleological view of literary history (see Bemong and Borghart in this volume): for both in FTC and BSHR he repeatedly points to the time-space configuration of nineteenth-century realism as the criterion *par excellence* for evaluating former generic chronotopes: "Our criterion is the assimilation of real historical time and the assimilation of historical man that takes place in that time" (BSHR: 19; see also

BSHR: 21; FTC: 84, 85, 251-2). A closer look at both essays, however, promptly reveals that the apparent absence of any discussion of chronotopic features characteristic of nineteenth-century realism is severely misleading. On the level of generic chronotopes, for instance, Morson and Emerson have rightly observed that in the first chapter of FTC, "[…] Bakhtin seems to be not only describing the chronotope of the Greek romance but to be eulogizing its implicit opposite, the nineteenth-century novel" (1990: 383-4). Furthermore, dispersed throughout the central section of BSHR entitled "Time and space in Goethe's work" (BSHR: 25-54), the Russian scholar comes up with a number of principles of construction underlying narratives in the realist tradition (see below). Finally, we must not forget that Bakhtin's discussion of minor chronotopes in the "Concluding Remarks" of FTC also touches upon important aspects of nineteenth-century realism (247-8). In this respect, his definition of the chronotope of parlors and salons is emblematic:

> Most important in all this 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; the interweaving of petty, private intrigues with political and financial intrigues, the interpenetration of state with boudoir secrets, of historical sequences with the everyday and biographical sequences. 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. The epoch becomes not only graphically visible [space], but narratively visible [time] (FTC: 247).

What, then, are these chronotopic features identified by Bakhtin as the common denominator of nineteenth-century realism?[3] Generally, in the realist world construction time, space, plot and characters constitute an organic unity, being organized in such a manner that the resulting chronotope can only be designated "dynamic". Its most important characteristic is the assimilation of *real historical time*:

> 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 – that is the ability to read in everything *signs that show time in its course* […]. (BSHR: 25; emphasis in original)

Being the organizing axis of this particular chronotope, such a conception of time[4] has far-reaching implications for the other narrative categories as well: *space* ceases to be mere background and becomes identifiable with a particular historical era to such an extent that "present, past and future [are] linked by a process of genuine growth, which means that change does not take place in an arbitrary fashion (not just anything can happen)" (Morson and Emerson 1990: 405). It follows that with regard to *plot structure*, the fusion of historical time and space significantly confines the range of narrative possibilities: as the fictional world is mainly ruled by social and historical

factors, the character's radius of action is strongly dependent on the conditions of the epoch under consideration. Furthermore, in maintaining close interaction with the fictional world, the *protagonists* gradually undergo a genuine evolution: "Individual people genuinely develop, which is to say, their changes are not simply the revelation of qualities given from the outset […] People do not develop the way a seed grows into a plant; their choices at every moment reshape them bit by tiny bit" (Morson 1991: 1083). However, we must not lose sight of the fact that both plot and character evolution in realism are not wholly dependent upon historical and social forces: protagonists in fact retain a certain "capacity to surprise" (Morson and Emerson 1990: 405), which ensures change and thus evolution of the fictional world at hand. In sum, "the plot […] and the characters do not enter [the fictional world] from the outside, are not invented to fit the landscape, but are unfolded in it as though they were present from the very beginning" (BSHR: 49).

When discussing this particular world construction, it is advisable to bring the so-called "documentary chronotope" into play. Admittedly, the history of this chronotope is young and largely confined to Flemish scholarship. Although one may retrace several major chronotopes in Bakhtin's work (see Bemong and Borghart in this volume), the term "documentary chronotope" never occurs in it. To the best of our knowledge, the notion appears for the first time in 1997 at a conference of documentary film makers in Chicago, where Michael Chanan introduced it to give a new, Bakhtinian underpinning to some observations about the differences (and similarities) between documentary and fictional screen space.[5] A clear definition, however, is not supplied in Chanan's paper. (Indeed, the term itself appears only in its title.)

In a more narrow literary context, the term was coined autonomously by Bart Keunen in a monograph dealing with the representation of time and space in big-city novels (2000; see also 2001: 424-5), where it indicates the world construction typical of nineteenth-century realism (2000: 88-95). The documentary aspect lies in the fact that, within the paradigm of realism, the fictional world is meant to be perceived as a construction which is immediately recognizable for the reader because of its close, "documentary" resemblance to the extra-literary world.[6] Hence, the narrative structure allows extensive descriptions of everyday scenes. This descriptive tenet relies on all sorts of cultural (e.g. political, economical, scientific, religious) "documents", functioning as symbolic references to collective historical processes.

A few years later, Keunen's term was adopted in Borghart's study of nineteenth-century naturalism (2006).[7] Since Borghart's corpus is not confined, as is Keunen's, to (big-)city novels but also takes into consideration naturalist countryside fiction, the scope of the term is widened from industrializing and urbanizing contexts to rural ones (2006: 43). In these contexts, the adjective "documentary" should be understood in both passive and active senses: on the one hand, documentary chronotopes are primarily based on cultural documents and coherent references to social reality ("documented"), while on the other they also provide the reader with a certain

amount of specialized knowledge about contemporary society ("documenting") (Hamon 1975). The world view expressed by documentary chronotopes in essence derives from a positivist conception of human beings and society. Nineteenth-century realism typically emphasizes the determination – at least to some degree – of human agency by natural, social, and historical forces, while simultaneously also propagating a rational belief in scientific progress and social improvement.[8]

Nele Bemong, for her part, adopts the term throughout her investigations of the Belgian historical novel. Interestingly, she observes "that the *documentary chronotope* [...] interconnects the [nineteenth-century] historical novel to the adjacent system of historiography" (under review; emphasis in original). Different from Keunen's and Borghart's approaches, this last statement seems to widen the range of the notion from fiction to non-fiction, a scope that Michael Chanan must have had in mind when opposing documentary time-space to fictional time-space (in films, see above). Hence, the documentary chronotope might indeed be "at work" in fictional as well as in non-fictional, for example historiographical, texts. Not accidentally, realism, in fiction, and historiography, in non-fiction, turn out to be genres *par excellence* that provide us with "documentary" passages (or "documentary motifs", see below, note 17).

Be that as it may, the aforementioned principles of construction characteristic of documentary chronotopes still do not provide the necessary analytical tools for identifying realist (and/or historiographical) world constructions on the basis of sheer textual analysis. As a matter of fact, however ubiquitous the concept of realism in critical discourse over the past century and a half, surprisingly little attention has been paid to its rhetorical dimension in terms of the narrative strategies used.[9] For this reason, we propose to revisit Philippe Hamon's well-known article "Un discours contraint" – to date still the most profound attempt at establishing the poetics of realism – according to the constructivist *representans-representamen* dichotomy discussed by Bemong and Borghart earlier in this volume. In his study Hamon endeavors to describe, apparently on an arbitrary basis, fifteen divergent thematic and narratological strategies (*representans*) that – under the express condition of their being sufficiently coexistent – he considers to be characteristic of (nineteenth-century) realism (*representamen*).[10] The advantage of a reassessment from a Bakhtinian perspective resides in the fulfillment of one of the main principles of modern comparative literature, namely the demand not "[...] to compare isolated elements of literary texts" (textual strategies) "as long as we do not know of their place and function in any of the substructures of these texts" (generic chronotope) (Fokkema 1974: 55; see also Miner 1987: 137-8).

Narratological and Thematic Features of Documentary Chronotopes

Rather than dryly enumerate mere textual strategies, we think it appropriate to adopt a more lively approach. Thus, in the following paragraphs the features of realism identified by Hamon are reconfigured from a Bakhtinian point of view, occasionally being confronted with the "devices" of historiography. Serving throughout as the main example is *The Murderess* (1903) by the Greek writer Alexandros Papadiamantis.[11] This masterpiece tells the story of Khadoula, or Frangoyannou, an old woman from the lower classes who, on the basis of the harsh living conditions of the poor and the inferior social position of women in nineteenth-century Greece, eventually begins to murder female babies and children because they have no prospects in life.

In order to realize a time scheme that mirrors *real historical time*, a first important principle of construction – although one strikingly absent from Hamon's study – is embodied in the persistent use of a coherent series of temporal indicators that allow the reader at any moment to determine perfectly the narrative's temporal progress. Even though the author of the *Murderess* opts for a division into seventeen short chapters, judging from the aggregate of temporal references the novel seems to fall into three larger units, each of which takes place on the island of Skiathos during the period between January and May somewhere in the second half of the nineteenth century (Farinou-Malamatari 1987: 48-51). The first episode (I-VII), ending with the discovery of Frangoyannou's first victim, encompasses three sleepless nights in January in which the old woman sits beside the cradle of her newborn but already ill granddaughter, while mentally re-enacting her entire miserable life.[12] The second part (VIII-X), in which Khadoula commits her second and third child-murders, comprises a day shortly before and a day shortly after Easter. Finally, the last episode (XI-XVII) recounts Frangoyannou's escape from the local authorities and covers a period of six entire days, four before and two after her final crime. Within this overall chronology, an abundance of temporal markers in turn neatly structures smaller narrative units such as particular days or nights.

More importantly, however, than such a formal analysis of story-time, Bakhtin's conception of the chronotope above all emphasizes the interconnectedness of time and *space*, in which the latter is supposed to become "[…] charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history" (FTC: 84). The assimilation of real historical time involves the ability "to *read time*, in the spatial whole of the world", that is "to read in everything *signs that show time in its course*" (BSHR: 25; emphasis in original). In this respect, an essential characteristic of realist narratives is their being embedded in a specific cultural historical – including geographical – context (Hamon 1982: No. 3; see also Chevrel 1997: 360-2). In *The Murderess* this embeddedness is not only apparent from an abundance of references to contemporary or recent Greek history, all sorts of popular customs and traditions prevalent during the nineteenth century as well as a detailed topography of Skiathos (Erselman 1954); some passages also sug-

gest that within the boundaries of the novel's story-time the island is undergoing a remarkable transition from a traditional, closed community to a more modern, open society. Inevitably, such a process entails a number of difficulties:

> At that time, with the development of commerce and communications, the morals of that little out of the way place began to relax somewhat. Strangers from other 'more civilized' parts of Greece, either Government employees or merchants, were importing new liberal ideas on all matters. According to them it was foolish to be modest and decent, and silly to be sober and sensible. Depravity and lust were 'natural things'. (1977: 100-1)

Likewise, the ideas of emancipation taught to young girls at school come into conflict with the established social hierarchy, while traditional medicine starts to encounter competition from skilled doctors from abroad (Rigatos 1996). Since such passages help to construct the impression of a contemporary fictional world *in evolution*, they should be regarded as "[…] a synecdoche for the sum total of socio-historical developments" (Keunen 2001: 425).[13] It goes without saying that prescientific historiographical texts are equally engrafted on a particular geographical and historical context, which is usually shown in its ("emplotted", see below) development too.

Detailed descriptions of the daily hustle and bustle, which firmly anchor characters in a specific socio-professional environment (Hamon 1982: No. 7, 12) and are characterized by the usage of technical, transparant vocabulary (Hamon 1982: No. 11), serve a similar function. From a narratological point of view two possibilities exist: either such passages are paradigmatically organized as traditional (static or dynamic) descriptions that momentarily suspend the narrative sequence, or they are syntagmatically inserted into the story as genuine, if insignificant, plot events (Hamon 1982: No. 15).[14] Whatever the narrative form they assume, apart from their "documentary" function (Hamon 1982: No. 6) such minor chronotopes also refer to more encompassing socio-historical situations on the basis of metonymical relations. The following quote from the morning scene at the end of chapter I is a case in point:

> The old woman had just awakened, and she was rubbing her eyes and mumbling. A noise was heard in the adjoining small room. It was Constantis Trakhilis, the baby's father, who slept on the other side of the thin wooden partition beside another daughter and a little boy who had just awakened. He was collecting his tools – hammers, saws, planes – and was preparing to go to the Yard to begin his daily work. […] The noise of the tools – hammers, saws, gimlits and so forth – which Constantis behind the partition was throwing one by one into his bag awoke his wife too. 'What is it, Mother?' 'What should it be? Constantis is chucking his tools in the bag,' said the old woman with a sigh. (1977: 9)

Thus, by repeatedly foregrounding different aspects of the characters' socio-professional milieu, the historical time of nineteenth-century Greece again can be glimpsed through the spatial organization of Papadiamantis' novel.

In addition, the presence of historical time can be sensed from the way in which the *plot* is structured. Similar to historiographical texts, realist narratives typically feature a straightforward story line, without many complications and containing all necessary information, which avoids either narrative suspense or deception (Hamon 1982: No. 13). In line with the mutual interaction between realist fictional worlds and the events taking place within their boundaries, plots of nineteenth-century novels appear to be rather static and do not easily lend themselves to unexpected or spectacular turns (Hamon 1982: No. 9, 14).[15] In the case of *The Murderess*, the story proper can be rendered succinctly as follows: |inner thoughts| → |first murder| → |secret confession| → |second murder| → |third murder| → |escape from authorities| → |fourth murder| → |death by drowning|. Whether the relationships holding between these events are of a causal or merely chronological nature, the primary narrative sequence evolves logically without attracting too much attention.[16] Within the context of historiography, *plot*, or more specifically, *emplotment*, is the mechanism *par excellence* that can turn the "documentary motif" into a genuine documentary chronotope.[17] Given that the narrativization of historiography has been taken for granted ever since Hayden White's influential *Metahistory*, historical texts turn out to be no less emplotted than works of (literary) fiction (White 1993: 7-11). Chronotopicity being one of its prerequisites (see Bemong and Borghart in this volume), this narrative dimension brings scientific "documentation" into the realm of historiographical (analogous to fictional) world constructions.

Lastly, a historical time conception also makes itself felt on the level of narrative *characters*. As the above analysis of the plot of Papadiamantis' novel exemplifies, in realism the protagonists' radius of action is subject to the fictional world they inhabit to such an extent that they step less into the limelight than traditional novelistic heroes (Hamon 1982: No. 10). Conversely, the main plot events irrevocably leave their mark on the personal evolution of the characters, "reshap[ing] them bit by tiny bit" (Morson 1991: 1083). Textual strategies which assure such an organic conception of character evolution involve a detailed account of their personal and familial background – often realized through a series of flashbacks (Hamon 1982: No. 1) – as well as a thorough attention to both the psychological origins and consequences of their behaviour (Hamon 1982: No. 2). Regarding (historical) character evolution, prescientific historiography displays remarkably similar devices, and it is indeed here that, in historiography too, *functional* flashbacks may well appear.[18] In *The Murderess* all these narrative techniques are intrinsically interwoven. In the first part of the novel, the narrator tries to account for the murderous thoughts of Frangoyannou by recounting her entire miserable life, with special emphasis on the institution of the dowry that she holds responsible for most of the misfortunes that have befallen her.[19] Towards the end of her nocturnal introspection, Frangoyannou's memories, almost unnoticed, shift to a series of interior monologues that psychologically "justify" her

aversion to female babies, thus paving the way for the eventual murder of the first victim. Moreover, hunted down by the police day and night, Khadoula's dreams in the last part of the novel reflect an increasing, if unconscious, remorse for her deeds. In short, the heroine's murderous behaviour has both social and psychological origins (dowry, murderous thoughts) and results in analogous consequences (social expulsion, nightmares), so that her eventual death by drowning does not really come as a surprise.

Notwithstanding the drastic nature of Frangoyannou's decisions and the cruelty of her subsequent actions, instead of merely conforming to the unjust faithfulness traditionally reserved for Greek women, Papadiamantis' heroine in fact retains a remarkable "capacity to surprise". In this respect, she embodies the past, present and perhaps even future of contemporary Greece, metonymically emblematizing an entire society that is struggling to throw off its patriarchical yoke. Or to quote Bakhtin one last time:

> It is as though the very *foundations* of the world are changing, and man must change along with them. […] The image of the emerging man begins to surmount its private nature […] and enters into a completely new, *spatial* sphere of historical existence. Such is at last, the realistic type of novel of emergence. (BSHR: 24; emphasis in original)[20]

Admittedly, Papadiamantis' novel has often been read as a warning against rather than as an appeal for westernized social reform, since the narrator in the final analysis seems to "[…] advocate the idea of recurrence and a return to a purer presocial condition […]" (Tziovas 2003: 98): see what happens if we dare to repudiate our indigenous traditions and values, the message turns out to be. Such an interpretation of *The Murderess* nevertheless does not serve as a contradiction of the results from the chronotopical analysis carried out in this contribution: the presence of a documentary chronotope and its attendant positivist world view in Papadiamantis' novel is unmistakable, albeit with an axiologically negative semantic connotation.[21]

Epilogue

Having discussed the principles of construction and textual strategies (both narratological and thematic) characteristic of documentary chronotopes, in conclusion we devote a few words to the importance of Bakhtin's conception of realism for writing literary history (and the history of narrative in general). From a *synchronic* point of view, the documentary chronotope and its narrative substructure could be used as a conceptual tool for reassessing some aspects of the history of realism. Since Bakhtin has convincingly argued that a contemporary setting in itself cannot be regarded as a sufficient criterion for classifying a text as an example of nineteenth-century realism, historians of various national literatures would undoubtedly surpass their predecessors by taking this fundamental insight into consideration when delineating the

periodization of this literary period.[22] Likewise, genre theorists could take advantage of the Bakhtinian conception of literary realism to help determine the status – whether popular, highbrow or a combination of the two – of less well-known nineteenth-century narrative genres such as the mystery novel (Maxwell 1977), an issue still under debate. Within the realm of nineteenth-century realism proper, chronotopical analysis also appears to be fruitful for drawing finer generic distinctions. It has been argued, for instance, that the poetics of naturalism constitute a radicalization of realism mainly with regard to the narrative techniques used. As a form of practical sociology, naturalism especially focuses on the documentary function of realism by radically highlighting the construction of the fictional world or chronotope, often at the expense of an elaborate and intriguing plot (Borghart 2006: 47-54; 2007: 214-21).

From the perspective of *diachronic* literary evolution, whether (specific) chronotopes can be attributed to *non*-fictional (in our case: prescientific historiographic) texts requires further investigation, but we hope to have made clear and justified that several features of nineteenth-century realism, rather than having appeared out of the blue, may have had the ground prepared for them by centuries of (prescientific) historiography, a genre to which Bakhtin, throughout his multifarious critical works, regrettably did not devote a separate study. On the other side of the chronological spectrum, a first attempt has already been made to account for the way in which modernism took up and further elaborated some chronotopical features of realism (Keunen 2001: 424-7), but documentary chronotopes would certainly be useful for studying different kinds of twentieth-century "neorealism" too. To draw a comparison with earlier stages of the history of Western prose fiction, it could be argued that the world construction of nineteenth-century realism relates to contemporary prose fiction in similar ways as the Greek adventure chronotope inspired the subsequent history of the European novel: both the Roman adventure novel of everyday life as a genre (FTC: 111-29) and individual novels such as Fielding's *Tom Jones* (see Beaton in this volume) introduced and elaborated the notion of "adventure time" in totally new contexts, while the chronotope underlying the ancient Greek romance proved productive for a genuine revival in both Byzantine twelfth century literature and Modern Greek romanticism (Borghart and De Temmerman 2010).

With regard to the concept of "generic sedimentation" (FTC: 85), finally, to the best of our knowledge, the reception of realist world constructions in popular culture, though acknowledged (Tallis 1988: 1-2, 195-6; Brooks 2005: 5), is a still largely unexplored field. One need only think of renowned television series such as *Rome* – with its emphasis on the everyday life of mostly invented characters within the constraints of first century BC historical time-space – to realize that interdisciplinary cooperation within a Bakhtinian framework promises to yield fresh and illuminating results that will enable future scholars to further trace, determine and understand the general history of narrative.

Endnotes

1. Structuralist narratology, for instance, has often been criticized for regarding literary realism almost as the prevailing standard of a variety of narrative techniques. With regard to literary evolution, apart from the impact of realism on twentieth-century developments such as modernism and neo-realism (see below), we would suggest that its importance for the gradual transition – at least in belles-lettres – from *teleological* plot structures to *dialogical* chronotopes can hardly be underestimated: as the assimilation of historical time significantly confines the protagonists' spheres of action (see below), realist stories had to come up with other strategies (such as extended psychological introspection into the main characters' inner lives) in order to retain the reader's interest.

2. The notion of prescientific historiography is adopted from Aviezer Tucker's *Our Knowledge of the Past: A Philosophy of Historiography*. According to this scholar, the most important difference between prescientific and scientific historiography is the fact that the latter "should fit old historiography as well as new evidence" (2004: 120), whereas the former, we might say, entirely relies on its own world construction (or chronotope). Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century historians such as Edward Gibbon, Thomas Macaulay and Jules Michelet, who did not yet meet the historiographical standards of a Leopold von Ranke, are considered to be the last major exponents of prescientific historiography (Tucker 2004: 45).

3. Albeit from a slightly different angle, these principles are most fully elaborated by Morson and Emerson (1990: 405-6, 410-2) and Morson (1991: 1083-6).

4. In fact, this very conception of time had already been explored (and eulogized) in Bakhtin's essay "Epic and Novel" (henceforth EN). In terms of this essay's title one could call it "novelistic", characterized by typical traits of the everyday world such as conflict, difference and contingency. Its counterpart, the "epic" conception of time, then, is typified by regularity, harmony and universality, these all being features of an ideal(ized) world in which conflict is neutralized. To be sure, in the long course of its development literary history has witnessed stages in which *both* conceptions – as is clear from Falconer (1997; see also her contribution to this volume) – appear somehow blended.

5. "Fictional screen space creates the unities of the scene and the plot. […] Where the space of the fictional narrative produces continuity, documentary space is composed of discontinuities, both spatial and temporal, produced by dialectical (and dialogical) associations across time and space" (2000: 60). The conference was entitled "Visible Evidence" (Chicago, September 4-7, 1997), and Chanan's paper – interestingly entitled "The Documentary Chronotope" – was published three years later.

6. More specifically, the choice of the term "documentary" must be connected to Bakhtin's interest in *knowledge*, indicative of the concept of "novelistic" time, as opposed to *memory*, indicative of the concept of "epic" time (see note 4). To put it in his own words: "In ancient literature it is memory, and not knowledge, that serves as the source and power for the creative impulse. That is how it was, it is impossible to change it: the tradition of the past is sacred. There is as yet no consciousness of the possible relativity of the past" (EN: 15). The documentary chronotope, indeed, makes no use of such memory (of a transcendent past). Rather, it uses knowledge, which is firmly anchored into everyday reality and joins past and present to a future that is open. In this way, documentary chronotopes create an immanent experience of duration, of real historical time. In fact, within this chronotope one can sense the French philosopher Henri Bergson's concept of *durée* – which is so essential to the subjective meaning of temporality – fully realized: entirely indeterminate, open time, as opposed to the immobile scientific conception of time (see his *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, 1888: 54).

7. The term has also appeared in Singapore (Anthony Guneratne used it in the context of postco-lonial studies in 1997) and Russia (Svetlana Sorokina speaks of a "dokumentalnyi khronotop" in her 2006 article on the genre of the *roman à clef* in Russian literature of the 1920s). However, both uses are modest, in fact mere mentions, and unfortunately do not seem to contribute to our discussion. Film narratologist Lily Alexander's single mention of the term, finally, refers to Michael Chanan's, which she contests (2007: 61, note 1).

8. In a study entitled *In Defence of Realism*, Raymond Tallis argues that – on a more abstract, phil-osophical level – the validity and attractiveness of realist fiction resides in its capacity to answer the human need to genuinely experience and imagine – rather than merely pass through – the everyday world (1988: 206-8). He concludes on the following note: "Man is the only form of matter that is astonished by its own existence and capable of conceptualizing its own mutability in the terrifying idea of death. Realist fiction, linking the small facts that engage us with the great facts that enclose us, mediating between the truths of daily life, is the most compendious expression of that astonishment and that terror. It is, potentially, the highest achievement of man, the *explicit animal*" (ibid.: 212; emphasis in original).

9. This is apparent from a representative sample of critical studies on realism up to the late 1980s (Furst 1992). A perusal of more recent work, however valuable and innovative in approach (Herman 1996; Kearns 1996; Becker 2000; Morris 2003; Brooks 2005), does not alter this observation.

10. Hamon (1982: 135-68). Moreover, from an epistemological perspective Hamon's study is directly in line with the constructivist approach adopted in the present article: "Il ne s'agit donc plus de répondre à une question du genre: *comment la littérature copie-t-elle la réalité?*, qui est une question devenue sans intérêt, mais de considérer le réalisme comme une sorte de *speech act* […] défini par une posture et une situation spécifique de communication, donc de répondre à une question du type: *comment la littérature nous fait-elle croire qu'elle copie la réalité?*, quels sont les moyens stylistiques qu'elle met – consciemment ou non – en oeuvre pour créer ce statut spé-cial de lecteur, bref, quelles sont les 'structures obligées' […] du discours réaliste?" (ibid.: 132).

11. As one of us is basically trained as a neohellenist, it is not surprising that the case study stems from this national tradition. Although realism in Modern Greek literature began to develop gradually as early as the mid-nineteenth century, it came into full swing only from the 1890s onwards (see Borghart 2005: 316-8 for a brief survey of recent studies). Among specialists in the field it is generally acknowledged that Papadiamantis' *The Murderess* epitomizes the main achievements of this period.

12. According to Farinou-Malamatari (1987: 50), the first chapters of *The Murderess* relate the events during the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth or forteenth night since the birth of Khadoula's granddaughter. As she rightly remarks, the memories of the old woman, which begin and end during the night of the first murder, do not exhibit a perfectly chronological order but rather resemble a circular motion, thus providing the narrative with a certain temporal indeterminacy. Since the cock is heard crowing three times in this part of the novel, the inner thoughts of Frangoyannou can also be interpreted from the more universal perspective of betrayal.

13. The use of metonymy as a general principle of construction in nineteenth-century realism was first noted by Jakobson in 1921 (1971a) and later taken up by other critics including Chevrel, who accordingly refers to the fictional world in naturalist literature as "un *organisme en mouve-ment*" (1997: 101; emphasis in original).

14. For a more comprehensive theory of the forms and functions of descriptions in literature, we refer to two other studies by Hamon (1972, 1981). For a theoretical account of the paradig-matic and syntagmatic nature of descriptive passages in European naturalism, see Borghart

(2006: 92-104). For a "historiographical" illustration of Hamon's No. 7, 11 and 12, we can refer, quite arbitrarily, to the lively passage at the end of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (chapter LXVIII), where the narrator tells us about the feverish preparation of an immense Ottoman cannon and its laborious transportation towards Constantinople (1952: 542).

15.   This is to be compared with Dorrit Cohn's narratological analysis of historiographical texts in her essay "Signposts of Fictionality: A Narratological Perspective" (1999: 109-31), in which it is demonstrated how historiographers' "[…] departures from chronology and isochrony tend to be functional, dictated by the nature of their source materials, their subject matter, and their interpretive arguments rather than by aesthetic concerns or formal experimentation" (1999: 116).

16.   Examples of causal sequences are |inner thoughts| → |first murder| → |secret confession| or |third murder| → |escape from authorities|, whereas the narrative sequence |confession| → |second murder| → |third murder|, which covers the entire second part of the novel, is an outstanding example of a series of narrative events structured according to a merely chronological order.

17.   For preliminary considerations of the status of "documentary" features in non-fictional texts, it is probably safer to speak of "documentary motifs" than of "documentary chronotopes". Admittedly, in literary contexts the term "motif" no less than "chronotope" points to fictional texts (e.g. the collocation "motivic chronotope"), but the former term never implicates the encompassing time-space configuration of a (fictional) narrative which the latter sometimes indicates (e.g. "major" or "generic chronotope"). To bring Roland Barthes' famous words on realism into play, the difference between the documentary motif in fiction and that in non-fiction is that the former produces an "illusion référentielle" (Barthes 1982: 89), whereas the latter *is* referential. In other words, the former produces an "effet de réel" (ibid.), while the latter – due to its mere presence in a historiographic text – *represents* reality.

18.   However, in spite of these parallels, Hamon's characteristic No. 10 also reveals a fundamental *disparity* between the realist and prescientific historiographical world constructions. While the former focuses on *everyday* characters who are unlikely to hold the spotlight, protagonists in older historiography, eager as they are for great deeds (just like more traditional novelistic heroes), surely *do* like to step into the limelight, a practice still validated in a nineteenth-century work such as Thomas Carlyle's *On Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841). A fine example of the preference among prescientific historiographers for depicting prominent characters (even if they were not there) is given by Ann Rigney in her article on Michelet's narrativization (in his *Histoire de la Révolution française*) of the taking of the Bastille (1988: 276-7). Despite her criticism of White, Rigney illustrates and demonstrates, interestingly enough, the chronotopic (she does not mention the term) consequences of emplotting historical facts.

19.   In nineteenth-century Greece little girls were largely unwanted because of the material and financial burden that their future dowry would lay on their families. When parents married off their daughters, they were morally and socially obliged to grant the bride not only clothes and all sorts of household goods, but also a piece of land and a considerable amount of money. Needless to say, most poor families could hardly afford expenses of such magnitude.

20.   In line with the general realist construction principle of metonymy, Hamon terms a similar conception of character "le héro synecdochique" (1981: 207), without, however, envisaging the possibility of such broad thematic implications.

21.   In this respect, the name of the heroine "Frangoyannou" is particularly meaningful. Literally translatable as "(wife) of Yannis the Frank", the married name of the murderess equates her with western Europe, a society that, according to Papadiamantis' nostalgic conservatism, ought to be renounced at any cost.

22.   To take the history of Modern Greek literature as an example again, running counter to a number of traditional literary critics it has recently been argued that the first novels after Greek independence in 1830 do not constitute the first-fruits of literary realism – a claim previously made on the basis of their contemporary setting. A thorough chronotopical analysis leads to the conclusion that they spring, rather, from the indigenous narrative tradition of the adventure novel (Borghart 2009; Borghart and De Temmerman 2010).

Part IV

CHRONOTOPICAL READINGS

The Chronotope of Humanness: Bakhtin and Dostoevsky

Gary Saul Morson

Bakhtin and Dostoevsky shared the conviction that human life must be understood in terms of temporality. Both thinkers were obsessed with time's relation to life as people experience it. For each, a rich sense of humanity demanded a chronotope of open time. In many respects, the views of Bakhtin and Dostoevsky coincide. Theologically speaking, one could fairly call them both heretics, as we shall see. Their differences reflect their different starting points. Bakhtin began with ethics, whereas Dostoevsky thought about life first and foremost in terms of psychology. For Bakhtin, any viable view of the world had first of all to give a rich meaning to moral responsibility. Dostoevsky could accept no view that was false to his sense of how the human mind thought and felt.

Time and Bakhtin's Key Concepts

We can see Bakhtin's interest in time reflected in his key concepts. Most obviously, the chronotope essay (FTC), the surviving fragments of the Goethe book (BSHR), and the essay "Epic and Novel" (EN) together explore the ways in which human temporality has been represented and understood. Essential to each generic chronotope is a specific "image of man" and concept of agency. Agency, of course, pertains to our control over the *next* moment of time.

Several other concepts with which we associate Bakhtin are essentially chronotopic as well. "Unrepeatability", as the term suggests, means that the same event cannot happen twice. There is no perfect "recurrence", as the Stoics had long ago proposed and as the devil in *The Brothers Karamazov* suggests. In Bakhtin's theory of language, an utterance is constituted by its unrepeatability. In fact, Bakhtin regarded every event as differing in some way and to some degree from every other, which means that iron-clad laws can take one only so far, particularly in the biological and social worlds. All photons are exactly alike, but each kidney functions in its own way.

If we are to understand Darwin correctly, no two individuals of any species are exactly alike, and a species is nothing more than a collection of individuals. Ernst Mayr has famously referred to this Darwinian approach as "population thinking" (Mayer 1972: 45-7). A species has no essence, it is rather a shifting collection of individuals. Or we might say chronotopically: an understanding of the origin of species depends on grasping unrepeatability.

Social institutions and individual people are even more obviously unrepeatable. In formulating general principles, historians have always labored under the disadvantage that no two situations are ever more than approximately alike. That is because each culture and each historical moment is shaped by countless contingent factors that other cultures and moments do not repeat. Even a desiccated sense of selfhood like Locke's, which makes people no more than the passive recipient of so many influences, establishes each person's unrepeatability if only because influences can never be identical. Nineteenth-century novels describe a much richer unrepeatability.

Temporality shapes Bakhtin's concept of dialogue as well. What makes a dialogue dialogic rather than monologic, and what distinguishes dialogue from dialectic, is that dialogue does not follow any preset path. Or to use Bakhtin's language, a dialogue does not "unfold", it "becomes". Its result is not "already given" but made in the process of exchange. The same conversational starting point can always lead to multiple continuations.

For much the same reason, Bakhtin's contrasts of "given" with "posited" (*dan* with *zadan*) and of "given" with "created" (*dan* and *sozdan*) are essentially temporal. What is given is "ready-made" (*uzhe gotov*), that is, determined entirely by prior events and overall laws. Creativity begins where laws cease. But *do* laws cease? Bakhtin insists that they do. For the believer in closed time, or the "theoretists" propounding systems as diverse as Marxism, Freudianism, Structuralism, Formalism and functionalism, laws govern absolutely everything. For Bakhtin, there is something just beyond their reach, which he calls the "surplus" (*uzbytok*). Creativity and dialogue depend on the existence of a surplus.

So does "eventness" (*sobytiinost*). Not all events have eventness. An event has "eventness" if and only if presentness matters, only if the present moment is something more than the automatic result of prior moments. Only then can the present moment have real weight, can it actually constitute a force of its own.

If the present has presentness, the event has eventness. In that case, suspense results not from our ignorance of what is already determined, but from a genuine uncertainty. To use Aristotle's definition of contingency, the event shaped by presentness can either be or not be. The possibility of more than one outcome makes an event not just something that happens but something that happens *even though it might not have*. It is that quality – the-might-not-have been – that constitutes eventness.[1]

Eventness, creativity and the surplus all create a world of what Bakhtin calls "unfinalizability" (*nezavershennost*). The deepest meaning of this term pertains to the very nature of things. Theologically, it means that the Creation did not end after six days but is ongoing. The nature of things is always changing, if ever so slightly, from moment to moment, in ways that are *in principle* unpredictable, even by the Divine Mind. That is why "nothing conclusive has yet taken place in the world, the ultimate word of the world and about the world has not yet been spoken, the world is open

and free, everything is still in the future and will always be in the future" (1984: 166). This famous line actually appears as a description of the key idea behind Dostoevsky's novels, and it marks a key point where the two thinkers agree.

The Heresy of Open Time

Dostoevsky and Bakhtin also share a belief in the value of theological thinking. I do not mean that their concepts must be understood religiously, and still less that Bakhtin's views are coded Russian Orthodoxy. Rather, Bakhtin and Dostoevsky grasped that theology offers a vocabulary useful for understanding many nontheological questions. After all, for two thousand years Christian Europe discussed all important questions in a religious framework. If we could only translate the wisdom of those centuries, we could add it to the rather thin vocabulary about humanity and society that the scientific age has offered.

Often enough, such translation is relatively easy. Ivan Karamazov understands quite well, for instance, that describing the world as evil, which is entirely possible for an atheist, is equivalent to indicting the morality of its Creator. Conversely, to sense the essential goodness of things is, as Zossima recognizes, to appreciate God's love for the world He made. The secular and religious ways of wording each judgment express the same core meaning. It can be advantageous to think of a question in both ways, so that one vocabulary can illuminate what the other suggests.

Bakhtin and Dostoevsky entertained a view of time that ran counter to *both* scientific (or pseudo-scientific) determinism *and* the dominant tradition of Christian theology. They regarded both traditions as sharing a mistaken chronotope, and they challenged both with an alternative chronotope. What made them unenlightened from the perspective of materialistic determinism and heretics from the perspective of traditional Christian theology was the very set of concepts we have just described.[2] How could a world have eventness or unfinalizability if it is governed by deterministic laws? Or to state the same point theologically, how could there be eventness if God is omniscient? Both Bakhtin and Dostoevsky believed that time is genuinely open, which means that at any given moment more than one thing can happen. There are more possibilities than actualities. If the same situation were repeated, *something* else might have happened. One just has to *wait and see* what does happen. God Himself does not know in advance what will happen.

Laplace imagined that a demon knowing the position of all particles and all laws that govern their motion could calculate everything that would happen or had happened. The present state of the universe, he insisted, is entirely the effect of its past and the complete cause of its future. A demon who knew everything about the present and what controls it would know every other moment as well. Laplace's hypothetical demon resembles the Christian God who, in the dominant theological tradition, made the world knowing in advance everything that would occur.

In short, both materialist determinism and Christian theology insist on a chronotope in which, at any given moment, one and only one thing can happen. Our sense of alternative possibilities simply reflects our lack of knowledge of causes. We may not know enough to see exactly what outcome must happen, and so may imagine that more than one thing could happen, but the more we know, the more possibilities narrow. In fact, there is only one possibility. If that were not the case, God could not know the future, because any future would depend on earlier contingencies that might or might not take place. It would also mean that science, no matter how far it advanced, could never fix what would happen. But, to use a common theological image, God, who exists outside of time, sees all of time simultaneously, like an image in a mirror. For both traditions, the future is as irrevocable as the past. Presentness is an illusion.

It is, in fact, no coincidence that the two visions coincide. Historically, one begat the other. The long tradition of "natural theology" presumed that God had written two books, the Bible and nature, both of which reflect the divine mind. To study nature, therefore, was a pious act. God made the world run according to perfect laws, and "natural philosophers" – the term "scientist" did not come into use until the nineteenth century – discover those laws. In so doing, they reveal the Divine Mind, which foreknows all. It should be evident how easy it would be to transform this model into the modern materialist one. Just eliminate God while keeping everything else the same. Instead of saying God knows all events, say that events are in principle knowable. Or say that if there could be a calculating demon, he would know what happens at all moments. In either case, we have a world governed entirely by natural laws and unfolding in closed time.

The story goes that Laplace was once explaining astronomy to Napoleon, who asked where God fit into his theory: "I don't need that hypothesis", Laplace supposedly replied. And indeed, once we have the model of a world governed by laws, the addition of the Creator of those laws adds nothing to the predictive power of the model. Spinoza, it will be recalled, referred repeatedly to "God, or nature" as if the two were identical, because for him they were no more than two names for the same thing. For seventeenth-century rationalism and its heirs, all power belongs to the general laws. No individual moment could ever make a difference any more than any individual particle could exercise genuine initiative.

In such rationalism, knowledge therefore means discovering the general laws that govern all. It is precisely this model that Bakhtin has in mind when he writes: "it is a sad misunderstanding, the legacy of rationalism, that truth can only be the sort of truth that is put together out of general moments, that the truth of a proposition is precisely what is repeatable in it" (Bakhtin 1986: 87). That is the view Bakhtin called "theoretism," and he devoted his life to arguing against it. He wanted moments to have presentness and people to have initiative. For him, the entirety of the world could profoundly shape, but could not exhaustively specify, each part at each

moment. In short, Bakhtin advocated a chronotope in which time is open and individual freedom exists.

Ethics and the Novel

Bakhtin's chronotopic vision, and his general interest in temporality, was not merely literary, not even at root theological and metaphysical. I have long thought that to grasp why Bakhtin argues as he does, and to arrive at what animates his work, one needs to remember that his primary concerns were *ethical*. Bakhtin shaped his major concepts so as to show why moral responsibility in a strong sense exists. His first publication, *Art and Responsibility*, deals with ethics, as does his early treatise *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*. If we had to judge from his earliest writings, we would take Bakhtin as a sort of existential ethicist.

He remained one. Although he wrote no more treatises resembling *Towards a Philosophy of the Act*, he did not abandon ethical philosophy. Rather, he chose to refine his understanding of it by passing his beliefs through – entering into dialogue with – other fields, especially literature. Several important considerations make this way of working understandable. For one thing, the Soviet context made Bakhtin's emphasis on the individual, rather than social class and the "guiding role of the Party", impossible to express. For another, the Russian tradition afforded many examples of thinkers working out ethical, psychological, and social ideas through literature or literary criticism. Writers as different as Chernyshevsky and Dostoevsky participated in this tradition. Finally, Bakhtin's own theories suggest why novels are the best place to look for guidance in ethics.

Why should novels be superior to philosophical treatises in elucidating moral problems? For one thing, modern novels as a genre are fundamentally *casuistical*.[3] By casuistry, I mean not tortured reasoning in defense of a pregiven outcome – the sort of thing that Pascal accused the Jesuits of doing – but reasoning by *cases*. The core idea goes back to Aristotle, who argues in the *Nichomachean Ethics* that if we define "justice" as the judgment derived from following the rules, then there will be instances in which justice so defined is manifestly wrong. That is because rules are made with the general case in mind but no one can foresee each particular case that may arise. When justice goes wrong, one must correct it with what Aristotle calls "equity". And equity by definition cannot be made into a set of rules. It relies on moral wisdom, which only long experience with reflecting on many different cases can supply. The reason that young people can make great discoveries in mathematics but cannot be ethically wise is because mathematics depends on manipulating rules, for which sheer intelligence suffices, whereas ethics depends on experience. Aristotle compares the ethically wise person with a good navigator, who not only knows the general theory of navigation, but has also explored this or that particular harbor.

In Bakhtin's terms, one could say that we need casuistry to the extent that theoretism is inadequate. We need it when the particular case contains a surplus that exceeds the rules. *Toward the Philosophy of the Act* insists that theory can never exhaust the particular situation. The concrete act or event, writes Bakhtin, "cannot be transcribed in terms in such a way that it will not lose the very sense of its eventness, that precise thing that it knows responsibly and toward which the act is oriented" (Bakhtin 1986: 104).

One way to narrate the rise of the realist novel is as a reaction to "rationalism". Seventeenth-century rationalists and their heirs redefined philosophy so as to exclude the particular, the timely, the contingent, the practical, and anything dependent on an unformalizable wisdom (Toulmin 1992). In their own time, Montaigne and Erasmus would have been considered philosophers, but by the time of Kant they had long been considered merely men of letters.

Banned from philosophy, casuistry found a home in literature. Daniel Defoe, often considered the first realist novelist, wrote advice columns for *The Athenian Mercury* that were exercises in casuistry. Readers supposedly sent in stories – usually, Defoe made them up – that raised a complex moral problem, and Defoe applied the principles of reasoning by cases to solve it. If one considers novels like *Moll Flanders* or *Roxana, the Fortunate Mistress*, one can see that each consists of a series of such cases happening to the same person. The heroine always provides a justification for some awful thing she has done, and the point is that the explanation sounds plausible. It is, at any rate, the sort we always use in justifying ourselves. And yet she is manifestly immoral. How could that be?

The reader must solve this riddle. He or she must determine what is wrong with the heroine's self-justification and so learn to reason better about ethical matters. The problem cannot be solved by invoking some rule. Often enough, the answer involves something that the heroine's self-justification has not mentioned at all. Typical of both *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana, the Fortunate Mistress* are explanations that, while working well in their own terms, omit the fact that each heroine has abandoned her children.

The realist novel preserved the sense that ethics is more complex than any theory, and that only a richly detailed story could possibly be adequate to the real problems we face. Like Defoe's novels, later ones deal with self-justification. Jane Austen explores the ways in which "pride and prejudice" condition the very facts we notice. In *Middlemarch*, George Eliot describes how Bulstrode and Lydgate find ways to put themselves in the right. Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* is perhaps above all a story of moral self-deception. In Part VIII, Tolstoy makes the book's casuistical premises explicit. When Levin, who opposes Russian military involvement in the Balkans, is asked whether he would kill a Turk about to torture a baby before his very eyes, he replies that he does not know, he would have to decide on the moment. Levin's brother, a philosopher, regards this answer as absurd because it does not give a principle, just a moment. But for Tolstoy, Levin's is the right answer. The complexities of such a case

cannot be foreseen in advance, and the consequences of a wrong action are terrible either way. To decide, one must rely on the ethical sensitivity acquired over a lifetime, along with the sort of attentiveness to unforeseeable particulars that earlier experience has developed. Surely no rule would do as well. Levin here voices not just his own approach to ethics, and not just the ideas of Tolstoy, but also the presuppositions of the entire genre of the realist novel.

Dostoevsky's heroes learn the inadequacy of theory to real people. In *Crime and Punishment*, Razumikhin argues that the socialist theoreticians ignore everything particular about real, individual people:

> They dislike the *living* process of life; they don't want a living soul. The living soul demands life, the soul won't obey the rules of mechanics […] You can't skip over nature by logic. Logic presupposes three possibilities, but there are millions! (Dostovsky 1950: 251-2; emphasis added)

Raskolnikov believes not just in his theories but in theory itself, and so when one theory fails he switches to another. It is this theoretical frame of mind that leads him to murder. The common decency of ordinary people cannot restrain him. The detective Porfiry Petrovich outsmarts Raskolnikov precisely by not relying on some theory. Razumikhin explains that Porfiry Petrovich follows "the old circumstantial method" (Dostoevsky 1950: 241) while laughing at those who rely on theories. Such people, the detective tells Raskolnikov, resemble the Austrian General Mack, who defeats the French on paper but in fact loses his entire army.[4] Raskolnikov takes the first steps to regeneration when he gives up the theoretical cast of mind altogether: "Life had stepped into the place of theory and something quite different worked itself out in his mind" (ibid.: 531).

Two Kinds of Alibi

For Bakhtin, the theoretical cast of mind not only oversimplifies the world, and not only leads to killing, but also entails yet another moral error. Protected by a theory, people try to create what Bakhtin called an "alibi" for ethical responsibility. We shift responsibility to someone or something else and behave *as if we were not there* – as if we had an *alibi* and so could not be responsible. We are not acting, the theory is. Or: we are not acting, the Party is; or the Church; or the Nation.

In addition to this positive alibi, we also sometimes construct a negative one. Our crime consists in what we do *not* do, make sure we are unable to do, or forget to do. Since our crime is negative, we can readily tell ourselves we have done nothing wrong because we have done nothing. These two kinds of alibi shape the realist novel of ideas. The negative alibi is quite common. Tolstoy's Stiva Oblonsky, we are told, wanted to be a good husband and father, but never could remember that he had a wife and children. In George Eliot's *Romola*, the scholar Tito Melema commits his

worst crimes by what he does not do (rescue his adoptive father). Turgenev's intellectual heroes always have an apparently noble reason for not acting. Dostoevsky uses both types of alibi. Raskolnikov commits two murders in a sort of dream. He kills as if not he, but only his body, was acting. He behaves "almost wholly mechanically, as if someone had taken him by the hand and pulled him irresistibly along, blindly, with unnatural force […] as if a piece of his clothing had been caught in the cogs of a machine and he were dragged in" (Dostoevsky 1992: 70). The axe comes down as if it were acting on its own. Ivan Karamazov really isn't there when the crime takes place. He literally commits his murder *by not being there*. Legally, but not morally, he has a perfect alibi, and he suffers guilt that he had not anticipated.

In both positive and negative alibi, the moral error lies in denying presentness. Fatalism and determinism easily provide the same sort of alibi. Not I, but the laws of nature acting in me, did it. Or in the version Dostoevsky especially despised, not I but the conditions of society did it. For Bakhtin, there is no alibi from "the event of being" (*sobytie bytiia*, a sort of pun in Russian). We live in a state of "non-alibi". The fundamental ethical truth is that I must choose, right here and right now: "That which can be accomplished by me [now], cannot be accomplished by anyone else, ever" (Bakhtin 1986: 112).[5]

Chronotope and Agency

FTC explicates by contrast what ethical choice involves. Each generic chronotope described implicitly contrasts in some significant way with that of the realist novel. If we construct from these contrasts what the realist novel is, and then add the characterizations of the novel Bakhtin offers elsewhere, we can see what he thinks a rich sense of choice demands. Most of all, it demands that we understand the openness of time. Major chronotopes representing time as closed face a difficulty that they solve in various ways. If time is closed, then the world is certain. Conversely, certainty tends to suggest that time is closed. Either way, nothing essential can change. Nevertheless, for there to be a story, something must happen. How, then, can there be a story expressing the certainty of things?

In utopia, nothing can happen because any change from perfection would have to be a worsening. Utopian literature therefore restricts the plot to the journey to and from the perfect world.[6] The Greek romance represents the essential certainty of things differently. Events happen, in fact they crowd over each other as if there cannot be enough of them, but they leave no trace. Change changes nothing. No matter how many adventures the hero and heroine undergo, they end up exactly as if they had married in the first place. The plot describes "an extratemporal hiatus between two moments of biographical time" (FTC: 90), a time of pure digression. The world, too, remains the same. It is never more than an alien space in which adventures can take place, and the story describes no place with a history. The sense of this genre is: we live in a world of constant catastrophes, but the world itself never changes.

Characters in Greek romance lack all agency. Events in the Greek romance happen to them, they do not make things happen. Fate and chance hold all the cards, and what people do is endure. Trials test their ability to remain faithful, but the successful outcome of the test is given in advance. Where the Greek romance expresses certainty, the chronotope of the realist novel depends on uncertainty. In realist novels, each choice of the hero or heroine makes him or her a somewhat different person. The sum total of such changes constitutes growth. In a Greek romance, the sequence of adventures could easily be changed because there is no growth, but in a novel a choice made at one moment might differ at another because character has changed in the interim.

Realist heroes and heroines choose one thing when they could have chosen another. If they choose wrongly, they may experience regret, and regret presupposes that something else might have been done. By the same token, the reader may censure the character, and so this reaction also means that the hero or heroine might have acted otherwise. To be sure, choices in the novel are still severely limited. Characters have a range of freedom, but that range has limits set by social circumstances. Those circumstances not only narrow options, they also shape the chooser himself. Society shapes personality. Dorothea Brooke could not be Russian if for no other reason than her Protestant sensibility. Historical period also leaves its mark on each person. Perhaps even more sharply than George Eliot, Turgenev shows how the concerns, prejudices, and fears of an age enter into each consciousness. Some constraints on a character's choices are created by society, others by the character's own history of choices. Finally, each character is affected by choices made by others. What Anna does narrows Karenin's options. And as society shapes individuals, it is shaped by them.

It would take us too far afield to explore each generic chronotope Bakhtin describes. But we may enumerate a few key features of the modern novel's chronotope. It reflects a strong sense of privacy and the inner world of each self. It places high value on ordinary actions and daily life. And it narrates events so as to emphasize the complexity of ethical decisions with no unambiguously correct answer.

All these qualities and more define people by making them essentially undefined. In EN Bakhtin famously observes:

> An individual cannot be completely incarnated into the flesh of existing sociohistorical categories. There is no mere form that would be able to incarnate once and forever all his human possibilities and needs, no form in which he could exhaust himself down to the last word […] There always remains an unrealized surplus of humanness […] Reality as we have it in the novel is only one of many possible realities […] it bears within itself other possibilities. (EN: 37)

Reality has "other possibilities" and we exceed all the social categories that shape us. Whatever we choose, we could have chosen something else and so could have become

someone else. The someone else we could have been and the others we could always be constitute our surplus of humanness. All these ideas presuppose a world in which uncertainty reflects more than people's ignorance of causes. Rather, uncertainty characterizes the very nature of things. In *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* Bakhtin voices a similar anti-definition of humanity:

> A man never coincides with himself […] In Dostoevsky's artistic thinking, the genuine life of the personality takes place at the point of non-coincidence between a man and himself, at the point of his departure beyond the limits of all that he is as a material being, a being that can be spied on, defined, predicted apart from his own will, "at second hand". (1984: 59).

Here Bakhtin's chronotopic vision enables him to express a fundamental ethical point. It is immoral to treat another as if he or she were entirely known and predictable. If Bakhtin has an equivalent to the Kantian categorical imperative, it would be: always treat another person as unfinalizable, as exceeding not only what you do know about him but also what anyone could know about him.

Dostoevsky's Chronotope of the Guillotine

Dostoevsky would surely have agreed with all these ideas, and, indeed, Bakhtin seems to derive many of them from Dostoevsky. But I think Bakhtin misses one of the most profound ways in which Dostoevsky links uncertainty with humanness. For Bakhtin, Dostoevsky's "suddenlys" indicate an inability to grasp "real historical becoming". Perhaps so, but Dostoevsky uses intensified crises not only to represent how change happens, but also to offer "thought experiments" about human psychology. Extreme moments serve to foreground mental processes.

For the remainder of this essay, I would like to explore one way in which Dostoevsky linked openness with human psychology. To do so, let us turn to the minor chronotope of the guillotine. Dostoevsky counted on his readers' familiarity with the most remarkable incident in his life. After months of imprisonment for radical activities, Dostoevsky and others were abruptly informed that they would be executed that day. They were led out to the Senate Square to be shot. Given last rites and offered blindfolds, they were fully convinced they were about to die. At the very last moment, an imperial courier galloped up to announce that, in his infinite mercy, Tsar Nicholas had canceled the execution and substituted a term of imprisonment and internal exile. The whole scene had been planned in advance as part of the punishment.[7]

Anyone who has read Dostoevsky knows how frequently he alludes to this experience. On his way to the murder, Raskolnikov notices that, despite the need for presence of mind, he repeatedly loses himself in daydreams of "irrelevant matters". He reflects: "'So probably men led to execution clutch mentally at every object that

meets them on the way' […] he made haste to dismiss this thought" (Dostoevsky 1950: 74). Every reader of such a passage would have known that when Dostoevsky wrote of the psychology of a man condemned, he was not just guessing. Most memorably, in Part I of *The Idiot*, Prince Myshkin three times describes the psychology of a man about to be executed. *The Idiot* frequently discusses the relation of time to humanness. Ippolit's long confession, Myshkin's epileptic seizures, and many other passages all deal with the nature of time. The execution stories are simply the most striking way in which the novel illustrates why human life depends psychologically on indeterminacy. *The Idiot*'s first execution scene begins with Myshkin making inappropriate conversation with General Epanchin's footman. The discussion turns, as it often seems to be with Myshkin, to an execution he saw at Lyons. Myshkin describes his surprise that such a terrible and courageous criminal should have wept for fear. The footman observes that it is at least good that "there is not much pain […] when the head falls off", but Myshkin answers with what he calls 'an absurd and wild idea'" (Dostoevsky 1962: 20): perhaps it would be better if there were physical tortures to distract one from the psychological horror.

And what exactly is that horror? Myshkin's answer goes to the heart of Dostoevsky's sense of human existence:

> But the chief and worst pain may not be in the bodily suffering but in one's knowing *for certain* that in an hour, and then in ten minutes, and then in half a minute, and then now, at the very moment, the soul will leave the body and that one will cease to be a man and that that's bound to happen; the worst part is that it's *certain.* (ibid.: 20; emphasis added)

Myshkin insists that the worst part of execution is not pain, and not even death, but the *certainty* of death. If, for instance, death were simply very likely, but not certain, if the chance of escape were, even if negligible, still present, the situation would be psychologically quite different. For Myshkin, that difference explains why capital punishment is worse than murder:

> Anyone murdered by brigands, whose throat is cut at night in a wood, or something of that sort must surely hope to escape till the very last minute. There have been instances when a man has still hoped for escape, running or begging for mercy even after his throat was cut. But in the other case all that last hope, which makes dying ten times as easy, is taken away *for certain*. There is the sentence, and the whole awful torture lies in the fact that there is certainly no escape, and there is no torture in the world more terrible. (ibid.; emphasis added)

Lead a soldier in a charge against cannons and he will still hope, but that same soldier may go out of his mind if a sentence of certain death is read over him.

Is it possible for the rest of us even to know the horror of such last moments? "Perhaps," Myshkin concludes, "there is some man who has been sentenced to death,

been exposed to this torture and has then been told 'you can go, you are pardoned'. Perhaps such a man could tell us" (ibid.: 20-1). As every reader knew, there was such a man, and he was telling us.

But why should *certainty* be so important? Why is a death sentence so much worse than death at the hands of brigands? For Dostoevsky, the answer to this question illuminates what human life is in its essence. To be human means to live in a world where the future does not exist until we make it. It is not as if we were characters in a novel with the plot planned in advance and our destinies already written down, and in a sense already *past*. Dostoevsky was well aware that determinism and divine omniscience both entail a chronotope of certainty. He sought to refute that chronotope *psychologically*.

In Dostoevsky's view, one can affirm closed time philosophically or theologically, but one cannot actually live by it. One can apply it only to others, but always with an implicit loophole for oneself. *Your* views are determined by sociological or psychological forces, but *mine*, including my belief in such forces, derive from sober reflection based on evidence. Without such a loophole, life would be unendurable.

For life to have meaning, our efforts must matter. The world must depend in part on what we choose to do. To be genuine, these choices must not be given in advance. It cannot be, as many philosophers still argue, that the same laws of nature that act through us also give us the sensation of choosing. We "freely" (that is, without external constraint) choose, but the laws absolutely determine in advance what we will choose. For Dostoevsky, that sort of freedom is insufficient. Our choices must be just that, ours.

Time must be open in the sense that if the identical situation were repeated, something *else* might result. That is the minimal definition of open time. In his *A Writer's Diary* Dostoevsky reports on the trial of a woman accused of attempted murder. The jury was asked to decide whether she would have committed the murder if her hand had not been stayed. Dostoevsky replies that such a question is unanswerable because at the moment in question the outcome was still undecided and might have developed in many different ways. Repeat the situation, he explains, and each time you might get a different result. One time the defendant might commit murder, another time restrain herself before it was too late, and a third time turn the weapon on herself. All these results "could have happened to the very same woman and sprung from the very same soul, in the very same mood and under the very same circumstances" (1993: 474). If identical circumstances can lead to different results, then by definition time is open. There is no sufficient reason determining a specific outcome.

For life to be meaningful, the world must really be uncertain in this sense *and* we must experience it as such. Determinism destroys uncertainty, while capital punishment destroys the sense of uncertainty. The horror of absolute certainty explains the remarkable image of a man begging for mercy even after his throat has been cut: the

victim may know that he is sure to die, but so unacceptable is that knowledge, that he acts as if his throat were only just about to be cut. He manufactures suspense.

Dostoevsky's political anti-utopianism derives from similar considerations. Two aspects of utopian thought may be distinguished, and either one would be sufficient to condemn life to meaninglessness. First, most utopianism depends on determinism, the alleged discovery of social laws as ironclad as physical ones. Dostoevsky's underground man argues vigorously against this view. But even apart from the determinism that usually accompanies it, utopianism runs counter to the chronotope of humanness and so destroys meaningfulness. That is because utopias eliminate suffering by eliminating conflict and the unforeseen. But in doing so, utopias eliminate life itself.

In a sketch in his *A Writer's Diary*, Dostoevsky imagines what would happen in a utopian world in which all needs were immediately satisfied "just as our Russian socialists dream" (1993: 335). Only now, people would think, can true human potential be revealed! But such rapture would not continue for long. People would soon realize that a world in which wishes are instantly gratified is a world in which effort makes no sense. Without uncertainty, and without the possibility of failure, there can be no need to strive. Meaningfulness requires not only goals but also a process of truly achieving them by our own efforts. With everything planned and certain, utopia would turn into hell:

> People would suddenly see that they had no more life left, that they had no freedom of spirit, no will, no personality […] they would see that their human image had disappeared […] People would realize that there is no happiness in inactivity, that the mind which does not labor will wither, that it is not possible to love one's neighbor without sacrificing something to him of one's own labor; that it is vile to live at the expense of another; and that *happiness lies not in happiness but in the attempt to achieve it*. (ibid.; emphasis added)

The "human image" demands that life be a *process* in the sense of a series of steps leading to an uncertain outcome. It is not a product given from all eternity.

Utopianism and socialism violate what might be called the "process paradox", the strange, chronotopic truth that the temporality in which we get something is essential to its value and ultimately to all value. This paradox reappears constantly in Dostoevsky. The underground man attributes to man a propensity to destroy – much like what Freud would later call a death instinct – and explains that propensity as resistance to final goals that end the process of achieving them. He compares man to a chessplayer who likes only the process of the game. People are not ants, he explains, who are content with their stable anthill for ever. The anthill remained Dostoevsky's favorite image for socialism and its mistaken definition of human needs.

The underground man then sharpens his paradox. Man, he says, "likes the process of attaining but does not like to have attained, and that of course, is terribly funny […] there seems to be a kind of pun in it all" (Dostoevsky 1960: 30). The reason why the result is funny is that to strive one must believe in a goal that, if attained, would be worthless. But once one is aware the goal is worthless, how can one strive for it? To realize that value lies in the striving prevents striving.

The Idiot in fact looks for a solution to this problem. The book's most famous line occurs in Part III, when Ippolit, who is dying of tuberculosis and imagines the certainty of his near death as a sort of execution, exclaims:

> Oh, you may be sure that Columbus was happy not when he had discovered America, but while he was discovering it […] It's life that matters, nothing but life – the process of discovering, the everlasting and perpetual process, not the discovery itself, at all. (Dostoevsky 1962: 375)

The novel suggests one answer to the process paradox: strive for goals that, when achieved, turn out to be midpoints in yet another process, *ad infinitum*. Do not strive, even in principle, for goals that are guarantees or eliminate uncertainty.

Execution #2. What the Mind Does to Time

The solution of striving for intermediate goals does not work for those condemned to an imminent death. How then, does the condemned man experience closed time? Myshkin's second description of an execution addresses this question:

> This man had once been led out with others to the scaffold and a sentence of death was read over him […] Twenty minutes later a reprieve was read to them, and they were condemned to another punishment instead. Yet the interval between those two sentences, twenty minutes or at least a quarter of an hour, he passed in the fullest conviction that he would die in a few minutes. (Dostoevsky 1962: 54-5).

Readers knew that this story was the author's.

The pardoned man relates that the mind refuses to accept its imminent end. It contrives to experience the few minutes left as enormously long, as if months or years of living could take place in a few minutes. That length of time allows plenty of room for process, striving, and uncertainty. Consequently, even five minutes before the execution, the end seems quite distant:

> He had only five minutes more to live. He told me that those five minutes seemed to him an infinite time, a vast wealth; he felt he had so many lives left in those five minutes that there was no need yet to think of the last moment, so much so that he divided his time up. (ibid.: 55)

If a span of five minutes now seems like "many lives", then of course one can accomplish many things, and so intermediate goals become possible after all.

The prisoner allows two minutes to take leave of his comrades, another two minutes just "to think for the last time", and a minute "to look about him for the last time" (ibid.). Taking leave of his comrades, "he remembered asking one of them a somewhat irrelevant question and being particularly struck by the answer" (ibid.). "Irrelevant questions" matter only if one tacitly assumes one will live to see their consequences or significance. An interest in them, like the desire to divide time up, therefore expresses a refusal to accept imminent demise. One feigns uncertainty.

In the two minutes he allows for "thinking", the condemned man expects to resolve the ultimate mystery, "how it could be that now he existed and was living and in three minutes he would be *something*. But what? Where? He meant to decide all that in those two minutes!" (ibid.). And why not, if experienced time can still be measured in lifetimes?

Even more strangely, as moments seem to lengthen, the prisoner suffers from the sense of too *much* time. Reflecting that he experiences a minute as an age, he recognizes how meaningful life could be if he could return to daily life with the ability to experience time in this new way. If five minutes contain lifetimes, what would forty years be? "What eternity?", he reflects, "I would turn every minute into an age; I would lose nothing, I would count every minute as it passed, I would not lose one!" But it is impossible! So dreadful was this thought – and so long did it seem to go on – that "at last he longed to be shot [more] quickly" (ibid.).

I think only Dostoevsky could have written that last line. So much does the mind intensify and lengthen each moment that at last the end seems *too far* away! The way the mind resists certainty at last takes on a life of its own, so that one longs to escape from it.

The Quick and the Dead. The Third Execution Scene

Adelaida Epanchina has been seeking a subject for a painting, and Myshkin immediately suggests the face of the man he has seen executed. That face, he explains, would reveal the intensifying of time, even more so than in Myshkin's second description of execution. Myshkin imagines that the prisoner experiences his mind speeding up as if it were trying to condense decades into minutes:

> I think that he too must have thought he had an endless time left to live, while he was being driven through the town. He must have thought on the way, "There's a long time left, three streets more. I shall pass through this one, then through the next, then there's that one left where a baker's on the right […] It'll be a long time before we get to the baker's". (Dostoevsky 1962: 59)

As time lessens, the mind speeds up proportionately, so that even when only a few minutes remain, it still tries to condense a lifetime into the interim before the end. As each disappearing minute represents a higher percentage of remaining life, the mind accelerates ever more rapidly. One might think that people would faint as the last moment approaches, but that rarely happens precisely because, "on the contrary, the brain is extraordinarily lively and must be working at a tremendous rate – at a tremendous rate, like a machine at full speed" (ibid.: 60).

This prisoner, too, notices irrelevant things – a man with a wart on his forehead, the executioner's rusty button – but it is clear that in distracting himself, he never loses sight of what he is distracting himself from. Buttons rust slowly, over a long time, for instance, and so rust suggests extended, not abbreviated, temporality. The chronotope of rust denies the chronotope of "suddenly". The very need to think of a slow, ongoing process implicitly shows that "there is one point which can never be forgotten, and one can't faint, and everything moves and turns about it, about that point", which is the certainty and proximity of death.

In English, the word "quick" means both fast and live. As a noun, "the quick" means the living or the vital and most important part. Hence we have the idiom, "the quick and the dead". Traced to Indo-European, "quick" is related to Latin *vivus*, Greek *bios*, and Russian *zhivoi* (live). In Russian, too, *zhivo* can mean quickly or promptly and *zhivei*, make haste! (or as we might say in English, "step lively!"). One clings to speed because it is the opposite of death, and the closer to death one comes, the faster the mind works. This shared etymology testifies to the chronotopicity of life itself.

The Chronotope of the Last Tenth of a Second, and After

By the time the prisoner lays his head on the block, his thought flashes so quickly that a whole lifetime must occur in a "quarter of a second". Imagine what that quarter second is like

> when his head lies on the block and he waits and […] *knows*, and suddenly hears above him the clang of the iron! He must hear that! If I were lying there, I should listen on purpose and hear. It may last only the tenth part of a second, but one would be sure to hear it. (Dostoevsky 1962: 60; emphasis added)

One would listen for the sound because it would be one's very last. Into that tenth of a second the mind puts as much as it did into a quarter of a second, and before that into several minutes, and before that into a few last hours: unimaginable intensity.

Now we encounter another thought that only Dostoevsky could have formulated: "And only fancy, it's still disputed whether, whether when the head is cut off, it knows for a second after that it has been cut off! What an idea!" (ibid.). If so, then

"the head" – that is, the mind that realizes it now belongs not to a person but only to a head – experiences that second at the rate of the previous tenth of a second, that is, as the equivalent of ten lifetimes! Myshkin goes one step further and asks: "And what if it knows for five seconds?" (ibid.). We would have no way of grasping those five seconds just after beheading precisely because to us they are only five seconds. The gap between the internal and external perspective remains unbridgeable.

Because no one else can remotely understand his experience, the prisoner suffers an excruciating loneliness. Would anyone who understood give him a special breakfast? "Isn't that a mockery? Only think how cruel it is! Yet on the other hand, would you believe it, these innocent people act in good faith and are convinced that it's humane" (ibid.: 59). The breakfast appears humane to the "innocent people" because they imagine consuming it in ordinary time, but it is cruel to the prisoner who experiences every pleasure *as the very last* and, therefore, as a mockery of itself.

On the way to the scaffold, the prisoner can forget neither his difference from all others nor the fact that he alone comprehends that difference, a double difference that entails a double loneliness:

> There were crowds of people, there was noise and shouting; ten thousand faces, ten thousand eyes – all that he has had to bear, and, worst of all, the thought, "They are ten thousand, but not one of them is being executed, and I am to be executed". (ibid.)

The voyeuristic crowds eye him across a small space that represents a completely different temporal universe. This is the way in which *space fuses with time* in the minor chronotope of the guillotine or scaffold. Separation from others cannot be greater than it is for existence in a different kind of time, and no space can be more uncrossable than the one separating these two temporalities. We die as we live, chronotopically.

Process

Bakhtin and Dostoevsky agreed that, so long as we remain human, life requires open time. Bakhtin arrived at this conclusion by way of ethics. It is only if more than one outcome to a given moment could take place that what we do can matter. Because we are fundamentally ethical beings, we must experience a world in which possibilities exceed actualities. Dostoevsky held much the same ethical views, but he also advanced a psychological argument. Not just ethical choice, but all psychological experience depends on open time. Humanness requires uncertain beings in an uncertain world, surprisingness within and without. If life is to have meaning, its outcome must not be given in advance. The moment that striving no longer matters, we experience despair so profound that the mind will do anything to fabricate uncertainty.

What executions foreground is an eternal truth about the mind. The mind demands the possibility of possibility. Life cannot be a finished product. We must live it as process. Life as product is death-in-life. It hardly matters what transforms life from process into mere product. Capital punishment, utopian socialism, materialist determinism and divine omniscience all entail a chronotope in which time is closed. Humanness demands a chronotope allowing for real agency and ensuring that, at every moment, the next could be more than one thing. It's life that matters, nothing but life – the process of discovering, the everlasting and perpetual process, not the discovery itself, at all.

Endnotes

1. The concept of "what might have been", what I call the "sideshadow," is the central idea of my book *Narrative and Freedom. The Shadows of Time* (1994).

2. For another view of Dostoevsky as heretic, see the remarkable recent book by Susan McReynolds, *Redemption and the Merchant God: Dostoevsky's Economy of Salvation and Antisemitism* (2008).

3. On casuistry and its relation to ethics and the novel, see *Defoe and Casuistry* (1971) by G.A. Starr, and *The Abuse of Casuistry: a History of Moral Reasoning* by Albert R. Jonsen and Stephen Toulmin (1988).

4. Porfiry Petrovich is evidently alluding to the scene involving General Mack in *War and Peace*. Both novels were being serialized in the same journal at the same time.

5. Compare with the famous line of Rabbi Hillel "The elder" (c. 60 BC – c. 9 CE): "If I am not for myself, who is for me? And being for my own self what am I? If not now, when?" (Knowles 2004: 388). The line is sometimes quoted as: "And if not I, who? And if not now, when?"

6. I discuss the plots of utopia and anti-utopia in *The Boundaries of Genre. Dostoevsky's "Diary of a Writer" and the Traditions of Literary Utopia* (1981).

7. This punishment was to be reused, though of course not too often, in tsarist Russia.

Heterochronic Representations of the Fall: Bakhtin, Milton, DeLillo

Rachel Falconer

The chronotope of a text changes every time it is read, and this is no less true of the time in which we read Bakhtin's own texts. In the first decade of the new millennium, in the context of a series of terrorist attacks, as well as other global crises, Mikhail Bakhtin's essay "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel" strikes me as ever more pertinent and timely. In FTC, Bakhtin demonstrates how two concepts, freedom and responsibility, underpin his entire approach to language, literature, politics and spiritual life (FTC: 84-258; Morson and Emerson 1990: 369; Morson 1994). In re-reading Bakhtin, post-9/11, I find new points of connection between my academic life and the democratic society which makes this relatively free existence a possibility.

In FTC, Bakhtin sets out to demonstrate how images of the human subject in literature gradually acquire a sense of historicity, of being embedded in specific times and places. In the ancient history of the novel, Bakhtin traces not only how this human subject comes to be represented through time as a free agent, oriented to the openness of the near future, with the capacity to exercise choice. In its most fully developed form (which for Bakhtin is nineteenth century realism), the novel would come to represent the human subject at its most densely and complexly chronotopic: fully addressed in, and answerable to, a particular historical moment, and yet within those parameters, radically free to act.

A peculiar feature of FTC, however, is that it never directly analyses the chronotope of nineteenth century realism, even though this is the genre that clearly represents time, space and the human subject, in ways that Bakhtin values most highly. Although he does discuss the realist chronotope elsewhere, especially in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics,* it seems odd that he would expend so much time analyzing the chronotopes of romance and adventure time in ancient Greek and medieval literature, at the expense of the nineteenth century novel, which more fully embodies those concepts of freedom and responsibility that the essay celebrates (Bakhtin 1984).

One possible explanation for Bakhtin's focus on earlier literature is that the chronotope is best understood as a theory of becoming and not of being. If the nineteenth century novel presents us with the richest and most completely historical chronotope, then, Bakhtin suggests, we may have more to learn by studying the drama of its emergence than by studying the chronotope in its most perfect and finalized form.

In other words, Bakhtin deliberately stages a *quest* for historicity; and it is this sense of a quest for historical addressivity which is particularly significant at the start of the twenty-first century. In *Sources of the Self*, Charles Taylor argued that to be modern is to find oneself on a quest for self (Taylor 1989: 17; see MacIntyre 1985). But very often that search involves discovering the ground (both spatial and temporal) for fashioning identity. In this sense, chronotopicity is not a given feature of existence in modern times, but something we have actively to create.

Bakhtin argues that each literary genre codifies a particular world-view which is defined, in part, by its chronotope (FTC: 85). That is, the spatial and temporal configurations of each genre determine in large part the kinds of action a fictional character may undertake in that given world (without being iconoclastic, a realist hero cannot slay mythical beasts, and a questing knight cannot philosophize over drinks in a café). Recent extensions of Bakhtin's theory have sought to define the chronotopes of new and emergent genres such as the road movie, the graphic novel, and hypertext fiction. Others have challenged Bakhtin's characterization of certain chronotopes, such as those of epic and lyric poetry, arguing that these genres (and their chronotopes) are far more dynamic and dialogic than Bakhtin's analysis seems at first glance to allow (e.g. Falconer 1997: 254-72).

Rather than taking issue with Bakhtin's characterization of particular genres here, however, I wish to argue that we should pay closer attention to the heterochrony, or interplay of different chronotopes, in individual texts and their genres. As Bakhtin's own essay demonstrates, what makes any literary chronotope dynamic is its conflict and interplay with alternative chronotopes and world-views. Heterochrony (*raznovremennost*) is the spatiotemporal equivalent of linguistic heteroglossia, and if we examine any of Bakhtin's readings of particular chronotopes closely enough, we will find evidence of heterochronic conflict. This clash of spatiotemporal configurations within a text, or family of texts, provides the ground for the dialogic inter-illumination of opposing world-views.

One example of this inter-illumination may be found in Bakhtin's analysis of the visionary chronotope in Dante's *Commedia,* which turns out to contain two conflicting world-views, the historical and the extra-temporal (Dante 1989; FTC: 156-7). If the extra-temporal wins out in the end, it is actually the presence of the historical impulse that animates the work, at least in Bakhtin's account. According to his reading (and, one might add, Erich Auerbach's), the damned souls in Dante's poem are fully historicized images, and strain to break free of the constraints imposed on them by the visionary chronotope (see Auerbach 1957: 151-76). Bakhtin writes:

> To 'synchronize diachrony', to replace all temporal and historical divisions and linkages with purely interpretative, extratemporal and hierarchized ones – such was Dante's form-generating impulse, which is defined by an image of the world structured according to a pure verticality. (FTC: 157)

At the end of his analysis, Bakhtin discovers an unlooked-for bridge linking the visionary chronotope of Dante's *Commedia* and the realist chronotope governing Dostoevksy's minimalist plots (ibid.: 156). This is just one example of how a study of chronotopic conflict within individual texts might yield more nuanced and productive readings than analyses which aim to identify a single, dominant, genre-defining chronotope in a given text.

Bakhtin's essay "Epic and Novel" provides an important example of such dynamic heterochrony played out on the macro-scale, because while it is clear that Bakhtin considers the novelistic chronotope to be in every way superior to epic, it is also clear that the novel could not have emerged into its present form without epic as its explicit adversary (EN: 3-40). It is the negative example of epic which animates Bakhtin's characterization of the novel. There is not a single quality of novelistic discourse which does not exist in vitalizing opposition to epic discourse. If the epic hero is elevated above the plane of the reader, the novelistic hero exists on the same plane; if epic is oriented to the distant past, the novel is oriented to the near future; if there are no beginnings and no strong closures in the everlasting cycle of epic time, the novel turns out to be obsessively concerned with beginnings and ends; if epic concerns itself with glorious deeds and heroic destiny, the novel concerns itself with the prosaic detail of the everyday. In the dramatic conflict of genres that Bakhtin stages in this essay, it is the presence of epic that galvanizes the novel into becoming more, and more insistently, itself.

Some critics have objected to Bakhtin's negative portrayal of epic in his essay EN, while others have tried to use parts of his comparative analysis while setting aside the obvious bias in favor of the novel. To read selectively in this way, though, is to risk reducing Bakhtin's polemical revaluation of the then literary *status quo* to an inertly formalistic description, which can be silently corrected and reapplied. In my view, it is not necessary to agree with Bakhtin's conclusions, but it *is* necessary to engage in the process of evaluation. Reading Bakhtin without forming any *judgment* would be like touring Hell without thinking about justice. Bakhtin's dramatic portrayal of the relationship between epic and novel demonstrates that fundamental values are at stake in the conflict of genres, and the way we account for their differences should reveal the values we hold most dear.

Once again, I would argue that EN has acquired a new significance and topicality in the first decade of the twenty-first century. It is not only literary texts which have chronotopes, but also private and public opinion, government rhetoric, media representation and military campaigns that retrospectively shape historical events into narrative with distinctive chronotopic characteristics. In the aftermath to 9/11, the Bush administration chose to recast a day of horror and bloodshed into the opening scene of an epic war on terror. At least on the political level, the possibility for a novelistic understanding of this event was foreclosed as soon as military retaliation "Operation Infinite Justice", got underway. (On 19 September 2001, more than a hundred US combat and support aircraft, and a naval taskforce, were dispatched to

the Middle East and Indian Ocean. This military operation was given the codename, "Operation Infinite Justice" recalling the famous inscription over Dante's gates of Hell: "JUSTICE MOVED MY HIGH MAKER", *Inferno* 3:4). But if the Dantean title of this military campaign seemed grotesque to many (and the embarrassed emendation to "Operation Enduring Freedom" was not much of an improvement), the shift from novelistic to epic perspective may also be traced in many, less jingoistic responses. We are living in a decade in which epic and novelistic world-views are once again coming into conflict, and how we draw upon these narrative frameworks to interpret recent events could help to shape our future. The texts which intelligently and persuasively think through the conflict between these opposing chronotopic perspectives are more significant than ever in our crisis-ridden times.

Bakhtin's two key concepts, responsibility and freedom, may be associated respectively with two major genres: epic and the novel. No one could doubt that for Bakhtin, the novel was the most appropriate vehicle to convey the sense of the freedom of the human subject. As Bracht Branham argues (2002), the novelist's central task is to restore a sense of openness and futurity to events that have already happened. If, as Gary Saul Morson argues in the present volume, to be human means to live in a world where time is open, then novels are just about as indispensable to our minds as oxygen is to our lungs. A vital function of the novelistic chronotope is to create a sense of open futurity, and along with this, to convey the up-closeness of experience, of time and space in their ordinary dailiness.

The reverse is also true, however. To be human is to live in a world where time is closed. And it is often a sense of finitude that drives us to achieve certain goals, or (impossibly, from a Beckettian perspective) to "live in the moment". Arguably, if the novel's strength is to convey a sense of open futurity, then that of epic is to bear the sense of time as finite. Given (as Bakhtin argues) its sense of time as cyclical, mythic, ritualized and distanced from the world of the narrator or reader, the epic does not shy away from representing human life as already scripted. Unhesitatingly, it imposes a finalizing frame, and discovers a formal symmetry to the lives of individuals and generations. While responsibility is a concept developed in both genres, the epic hero's sense of answerability to a particular task emerges from a consciousness of temporal finitude, which is more pronounced than in the novel. We cannot live without a sense of time as open, and we cannot escape a sense of time as finite. Texts which juxtapose epic and novelistic chronotopes wrestle with just this paradox.

One immediate result of juxtaposing these two chronotopes is to reveal the constructedness of both these senses of time. The conditions of ordinary, daily time may feel natural, but they are constructions, no less than are the great, epic symmetries that seem to bind us to one fatal trajectory or another (revenge, infinite justice, etc.). One result of a clash between epic and novelistic chronotopes, then, is a sense of being unmoored from temporal certainties, whether the larger, epic certainties of faith, history, technology, or the more daily certainty of expecting to walk peacefully and safely across a park. Open or closed, ordinary or sublime, the human sense of

time is revealed to be a construction, a fiction, and therefore, the result of a choice. The unmoored reader of a heterochronic epic-novel hybrid not only has to choose between conflicting constructions of time; they also have to weigh up and integrate (or try to reintegrate) the competing demands of freedom and responsibility.

One finds this conflict of chronotopes in contemporary, especially post 9/11, fiction, but also in earlier narratives treating of major historical events and crises. In order to achieve some so-to-speak epic perspective on the present situation, I would like to compare two texts which dynamically juxtapose epic and novelistic chronotopes. In each case, the text is responding to a historical disaster of such magnitude that a nation seems to have been derailed from its former path of development, and its people thrown into an extreme crisis of identity. The first text is Milton's *Paradise Lost,* which was written – by a Republican poet – during the period in which the English Republic failed. It was published in 1667, the seventh year of a monarchy whose restoration Milton never ceased to regard as a national and spiritual disaster. The second text is Don DeLillo's *Falling Man: A Novel* (2007)*,* which is one of a number of contemporary novels representing the events of September 11, 2001.[1]

Two general points might be made, before embarking on a closer reading of the texts. First, both authors wrote under a weight of audience expectation that theirs would be *the* voice to capture the epochal event in literature, and both authors largely disappointed those expectations. Milton's audience expected an epic poem about the political events of the previous decade, or at very least, a poem about British history; the choice of a Biblical narrative was a relief to Milton's enemies, and a disappointment to some of his friends. It was seen by many as a sign of the poet's retirement from his formerly active engagement in national public discourse (Milton had been Latin Secretary to Oliver Cromwell). In his retreat from obviously topical subject matter, Milton might be seen as opting for epic narrative in its most traditional form since, as Bakhtin notes, classical epic typically treats of events from the nation's distant past. But as many scholars have noted, Milton broke entirely new ground by placing marriage, not war, at the centre of his epic conflict. So insistent is his emphasis on domesticity that some scholars have claimed *Paradise Lost* to be the first novel in the English literary tradition (see, e.g. Keeble 2001: 139).

For his part, Don DeLillo had been writing novels about terrorism in America for more than two decades prior to 9/11. In *Players* (1977), he creates a character who works in the north tower of the World Trade Center, for a firm called the Grief Management Council, located there as she says, because "where else would you stack all this grief?" This novel begins with characters in an airplane, watching the film of a terrorist massacre. In *White Noise* (1985), DeLillo imagines an apocalypse following what he obliquely refers to as an "airborne toxic event". And in *Mao II* (1991), he transports his readers from a mass cult wedding in Yankee Stadium, New York, to terrorist atrocities in Beirut. But it is not only DeLillo's choice of subject matter that singled him out as *the* novelist destined to narrate 9/11. In *Libra* (1989) and *Underworld* (1997), he also demonstrated his command of prose epic. In their length,

ambitious scope, extensive cast lists, and above all, in their rhythmic, incantatory style, these novels demonstrate many of the characteristics of classical epic. So if American readers were hoping to find 9/11 re-cast in prose as an epic grand narrative, then DeLillo seemed to be the writer most likely to fulfil the task. But *Falling Man* is emphatically *not* such a work. Indeed, *Falling Man* seems reluctant to represent the event directly at all; the World Trade Center is referred to as "the towers" and 9/11 as "the event(s)". For most of the novel, the protagonist Keith Neudecker fails to remember what happened to him on the day of the attacks, and in the days and years afterwards, he appears to be living his life in a void. As Adam Mars-Jones notes, the characters convey "the feeling of being decentred, peripheral to oneself", while the novel as a whole "gives the […] impression of having no kernel inside its various shells" (2007).

Thus both Milton and DeLillo have been described as masters of epic narrative (though in different senses). Yet *Paradise Lost* and *Falling Man* turn out to be unexpectedly heterochronous; that is, they juxtapose the epic chronotope against the novelistic, or in Milton's case, the proto-novelistic. The reasons for this, in my view, are similar, surprisingly. Both texts represent narrators and characters unmoored from time and space by a cataclysmic event. Adrift from their normal temporal address, they find no point of purchase from which to react to the disaster that has occurred. To regain a sense of agency, they need to combine the temporal perspective of the novel, in which the immediate future appears unscripted and open to intervention, with that of epic, in which their actions bear the full weight of historical meaning and consequence.

Milton and DeLillo happen to have written at points in time roughly equidistant from what Bakhtin identifies as the epicenter of dialogic writing. Dostoevsky's novels were produced between 1840 and 1880, nearly two hundred years after Milton, and 200 years before DeLillo. All three exemplify an engagement with what lies at the heart of all Bakhtin's writing about time and space in literature: how to represent an image of a human being who is at once alive to the forces of history, and capable of reacting to those forces freely, however immense and immutable they appear to be.

The quest for historical chronotopicity is not only an ontological challenge for the character, the writer, and the reader. For the writer, it is also a problem of representation. What narrative form, genre, or chronotope, does one choose to avoid aestheticizing historical disaster, thereby redoubling the character's alienation from reality? This problem of representation becomes part of the conflict of *Paradise Lost* and *Falling Man,* as one chronotope is challenged and dismantled by another. In the following analysis, I would like to focus on two opposing movements in what I am characterizing as a dramatized conflict of opposing chronotopes. In the first movement, the cataclysmic event is represented; the chronotopes of epic and novel, previously blended, break violently apart; the epic world-view predominates, but to the characters' diminishment. In the second movement, which runs concurrently with and against the first, the novelistic world-view reasserts itself, forcefully in *Paradise Lost,*

mutedly and by slow degrees in *Falling Man.* The result is not a synthesis of epic and novelistic world-views, as previously, but rather a bifocal perspective of a novelistic chronotope darkening at its outer edges into an epic sense of irretrievable loss.

Both *Paradise Lost* and *Falling Man* are elegiac works. Both mourn the loss of a fuller state of being, prior to a cataclysmic, historical event. Milton retells the Biblical story of the fall of Adam and Eve both as an allegory, and as a theological *explanation* for the failure of the English Commonwealth. Since the Fall, human reason has become clouded and unreliable; only this fact can help to explain why a free people would be, in Milton's words, "chusing them[selves] a captain back for *Egypt*" (1953-, Vol. 7: 463).[2] As Milton elsewhere wrote, "reason is but choosing", and what *Paradise Lost* relates is not so much the loss of innocence, as the loss of mankind's ability to exercise choice (1953-, Vol. 2: 527). Unusually, in Milton's representation, the Garden of Eden is not a state of perfection, although it bears a limited resemblance to Bakhtin's description of Edenic time as "dense and fragrant, like honey, a time of intimate lovers' scenes and lyric outpourings" (FTC: 103). Milton's Eve has nightmares and Adam experiences rejection, and both face a depressing amount of gardening each day. They argue about whose job it is to do what, and neither is sure who should be running the household. Time does not appear to them to be infinite, but it is always reparative. Come morning, their nightmares dissipate and their losses are restored; and this is not because Edenic life is inevitably cyclical, but because Adam and Eve are continually making the right choices.

For DeLillo, New York City was also a paradise in the Miltonic sense that it represented diversity and choice. Thrusting aggressively into the technological future, New York nevertheless had a seemingly infinite capacity to absorb and accommodate difference. In an essay entitled, "In the Ruins of the Future", published in *The Guardian* (first published in *Harper's Magazine*), DeLillo remembers going for an evening walk and seeing:

> crowds of people, the panethnic swarm of shoppers, merchants, residents and passers-by, with a few tourists as well, and the man at the kerbstone doing acupoint massage, and the dreadlocked kid riding his bike on the sidewalk. This was the spirit of Canal Street […] Here were hardware bargains, car stereos, foam rubber and industrial plastics, the tattoo parlour and the pizza parlour. Then I saw the woman on the prayer rug. I'd just turned the corner, heading south to meet some friends, and there she was, young and slender, in a bright silk headscarf. It was time for sunset prayer and she was kneeling, upper body pitched towards the edge of the rug […] Some prayer rugs include a mihrab in their design, an arched element representing the prayer niche in a mosque that indicates the direction of Mecca. The only locational guide the young woman needed was the Manhattan grid. I looked at her in prayer and it was clearer to me than ever, the daily sweeping taken-for-granted greatness of New York. The city will accommodate every language, ritual, belief and opinion. (DeLillo 2001)

The prelapsarian state, for both Milton and DeLillo harmoniously combines the qualities of both epic and novelistic chronotopes as Bakhtin describes them in "Epic and Novel". For Milton, Edenic time combines epic cycles and a sense of the succession of days (See also Rosenblatt 1972: 31-41). In DeLillo's description of "the daily sweeping taken-for-granted greatness" of New York City, there is both novelistic specificity and epic grandeur.

But midway through Milton's epic, this sense of existential fullness and balance gets disrupted. Adam and Eve eat from the Tree of Knowledge, and are punished with exile and a death sentence. At the end of Book Ten, they await the delivery of God's judgment in a state of suspenseful apprehension. They know death is coming, but they do not yet understand what that means. In the final two books, Milton depicts a world that has narrowed and hardened around them. It is more distinctly hierarchized: God, who spoke to them in the garden, is now distant and invisible; Adam no longer discourses with sociable angels, but receives lectures from avenging ones; Eve, of course, is excluded from rational discourse altogether.

Adam wants to understand what death is, and how their act of disobedience will affect the future of the race. Michael takes him to a hilltop, and shows him a vision of Biblical history, unfolding in vastly accelerated time and concluding with a vision of the Apocalypse. In the shift to eschatological narrative in the final two books of *Paradise Lost*, what appears to be lost is any room for Adam to exercise his reason or choice. He sees a world of suffering unfolding and he can do nothing to intervene. In Michael's prophetic narrative, few of the characters appear to exercise choice either; most are unnamed, and few are heard to speak. This is the epic chronotope in its most negative aspect; on his mountain top, Adam stands too high above his descendants to engage with them, and we, Milton's readers, stand too far below, and at too great a distance, to enter into their consciousness.

If time appears to have contracted to a downward spiral of "evil days", so too has the rhythm of the poem changed in Books 11 and 12. From the expansive verse paragraphs of the opening three books, we find now that the epic narrator's sentences have shortened, his figurative language has been trimmed, his pentameter lines more frequently end-stopped. If the rolling, enjambed lines of the first book are a sign of Milton reasserting the "ancient liberty" of the heroic poem, then here that liberty has been curtailed. For the last section of *Paradise Lost*, Adam is trapped in limbo – as is Eve, dreaming in her grotto below. They are not living, in the full sense they have experienced before the Fall, but they are not yet dead either.

Falling Man begins at precisely this point where the balance between epic and novelistic chronotopes has capsized. The novel begins with the sentence, "It was not a street anymore but a world, a time and space of falling ash and near night" (DeLillo 2007: 3). This chronotopic shift from "street" to "world" signals a shift away from the novelistic to the epic, specifically the epic chronotope of the infernal afterlife. In this "time and space of falling ash", there is no forward trajectory, either spatially or temporally. The street has become a world in itself, and there seems to be no other

reality beyond it. The description recalls Dante's *Inferno,* where time is arrested, and the only way to travel is down. The scene that DeLillo goes on to describe could well be taking place in the vestibule of Dante's Hell. People are tossed together with debris, and both are whirled downward like bodiless souls: "They ran and fell, some of them confused and ungainly […] Smoke and ash came rolling down […] with office paper flashing past, […] skimming, whipping past, otherworldly things in the morning pall" (ibid.). In DeLillo's reiterated phrase, "this was the world now" (ibid.), one feels, amongst other things, the huge contraction of space and time and world-view, as all that diversity of being and activity is directed into a single movement and purpose: fall or flight from the towers.

In "Ruins", DeLillo argues that the attacks changed New York City from a future-oriented city to one looking backwards to an archaic past: "whatever great skeins of technology lie ahead, ever more complex, connective, precise, micro-fractional, the future has yielded, for now, to medieval expedience, to the old slow furies of cut-throat religion". As a result of the terrorists' martyrdom, New Yorkers "have fallen back in time and space" and the modernist city has contracted into a "heaven and hell". This sense of mythicization of history certainly suggests that, chronotopically speaking, we have shifted away from a novelistic world-view to a more specifically epic one. But as DeLillo's writing previously accommodated a positive sense of epic, I would argue that the shift here is more specifically to the chronotope of *visionary* epic, as Bakhtin defines this in relation to Dante's *Inferno.* In the opening chapter of *Falling Man,* as in *Inferno,* we see historical characters being crushed into an extra-temporal frame of reference (as DeLillo writes, a world of "heaven and hell"). And of course, in *Falling Man,* this is all the more shocking because the visionary epic chronotope is being imposed on *real* people; DeLillo is representing an actual event, not a vision of the afterlife.

But it is also clear from the opening chapter, that *Falling Man* is not just an account of what happened, nor even just an exploration of what its ramifications may be for present reality. The novel is also a polemic (granted, a *quiet* polemic) against the new post-9/11, medieval, backward-looking world order. It is significant, for example, that amidst all the mass of humanity and inhumanity whirling down and away from the towers in Chapter 1, DeLillo represents his protagonist, Keith Neudecker, walking in the opposite direction: *towards* the towers, *back* to the scene of destruction. At the time, Keith is concussed and is unaware that he is heading against the crowds; he does not know that he is holding someone else's briefcase in his hand, and he is certainly not acting heroically in any conscious way. Nevertheless, his action can be interpreted as a visual metaphor for the way this novel meditates on the day of the attacks. Beginning in a haze of shock and incomprehension, the novel steadily acquires sharper and narrower focus, finally angling in on a crucial moment of choice, faced by several of the characters during or after the attacks. What might be the point of this narrative technique? In chronotopic terms, one could explain this as an attempt to penetrate to the heart of an epic event, to pinpoint a sense of novelistic

futurity. In Miltonic terms, one could see this as an attempt to rediscover a sense of autonomy and agency in a world that has come to seem fatally predetermined.

The title of DeLillo's novel recalls a photograph taken by Richard Drew of a man falling from the North Tower of the World Trade Centre. The publication of the photograph in several newspapers caused a storm of protest, and it was quickly withdrawn from circulation. The journalist Tom Junod set out to identify the falling man in the photograph, and an ABC documentary was made of his investigation. In DeLillo's novel, however, "Falling Man" refers to a performance artist who in the days following the attacks, staged falls from public buildings around the city. Adopting the same pose as the man in Drew's photograph (wearing suit and tie, falling head downwards, arms at his sides, one leg slightly bent), the artist provokes public outrage in the novel much as the photograph had done in reality. Why turn the sight of a man's death into a public spectacle?

In his review of DeLillo's novel, Tom Junod criticizes DeLillo for obscuring the real falling man's history behind this story of the fictional falling artist, David Janiak (Junod 2007). But DeLillo might equally be praised for handling the historical material with appropriate reticence. Also, as Mars-Jones suggests, the artist Janiak might serve as a negative example of the novelist DeLillo does not want to be, one who creates art by exploiting and effacing real disaster. Mars-Jones writes,

> At first, this seems like a piece of terrorist aesthetics, provocation of a city in mourning, as if the author were offering a model of what he wanted to avoid in terms of appropriating the deaths of strangers […] The man's story, as it finally emerges, is far more interesting, a genuine case of repetition compulsion with a sacrificial aspect. (2007)

In another sense, though, Janiak's method might be understood as a positive reflection of DeLillo's. Certain gestures or phrases are repeated without explanation or analysis, by both; but eventually, these ritualized performances begin to assume patterns which echo and respond to the original moment of loss. This is, perhaps, DeLillo's way of helping us survive with ghosts. For as Derrida writes in *Specters of Marx*, "it is necessary to speak of the ghost, indeed to the ghost and with it" (1994: xix), since, if "learning to live – remains to be done, it can only happen between life and death. Neither in life nor in death alone" (1994: xviii).

After the searing opening chapter of *Falling Man,* DeLillo follows his characters into a murky limbo of half-memories and partial connections. Despite the novel's title, DeLillo spends a long time *not* discussing the events of 9/11. Keith traces the owner of the briefcase which mysteriously comes into his hands during his descent from the tower. He has an affair with the owner, Florence, but what they are really trying to share is the memory of that day in the tower. Keith's wife Lianne encourages a group of Alzheimer patients to write down and share their memories of the attacks; but all are aware that they are laboring in a process of "diminishing returns". Lianne's mother, Nina, a cultured art historian, argues with her European lover, Martin, over

the meaning of the attacks. But Nina's intelligence seems inadequate to the task of understanding the terrorists' motives, while Martin's seems too compromised by his own possible involvement with terrorist activity in 1960s Germany. Lianne fights off a growing intolerance to things "Middle Eastern", such as the music issuing from her neighbor's flat. And Keith withdraws into a ritualized existence playing poker, not thinking much beyond the game.

DeLillo's characters drift from day to day in a haze of uncertainty and confusion. They all appear to have been washed out by a terrifying experience which they somehow failed to take in at the time, and now fail to remember specifically. The dialogue is fragmentary, and often flat and colorless, so that without speech markers ("he said, she said") one character's voice blurs indistinguishably into another's. It is not so much that the transformed cityscape seems unreal, but rather that they, the people observing it, seem less alive. The narrator relates Keith's reflections thus:

> Things did not seem charged in the usual ways, the cobbled street, the cast-iron buildings. There was something critically missing from the things around him. They were unfinished, whatever that means. They were unseen, whatever that means, shop windows, loading platforms, paint-sprayed walls. Maybe this is what things look like when there is no one here to see them. (2007: 5)

To a reader of this drifting reverie, it is not so much "things" that come to seem less certain than before, but the presence of Keith himself. His understanding of language fails ("whatever that means"), and his gaze is like that of a ghost's, someone who looks, without actually being present. To express this in Bakhtinian terms, a novelistic character appears to have become trapped inside a visionary epic chronotope. Time and space have enormous consequence, but not for the individual embedded within them. Dwarfed by the scale and magnitude of events, the character seems incapable of action. His language and consciousness come slightly unstuck, and for him, time ceases to drive forwards.

Although it is not so starkly evident amidst all the verbal thunder of *Paradise Lost,* nevertheless the same sense of suspension pervades Milton's narrative of the Fall. At the end of Book Nine, Adam and Eve wait apprehensively for God's judgment to descend on them, but in a sense, this is the state of mind that both reader and narrator share right from the start of the poem. Like Satan, we engage with the narrative of Genesis from a position of belatedness. For Milton's Republican readers, as for the fallen angel, it is already too late to make the right choice. What we have to face is how to cope with the fact of the Fall. The motivic chronotope of a figure falling from the sky resonates throughout the length and breadth of Milton's epic, no less than in DeLillo's novel. The fall of Satan, itself a precursor to Adam and Eve's fall, is narrated no less than four times in the epic, each time with a different emphasis to the motif. Milton's narrator begins his retelling of Genesis with a description of Satan being cast out of heaven:

> Him the Almighty Power
> Hurld headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie
> With hideous ruine and combustion down
> To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
> In Adamantine Chains and penal Fire,
> Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to Arms.
> Nine times the Space that measures Day and Night
> To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
> Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe
> Confounded though immortal. (PL.1.44-53)

Besides providing the primary cause of the epic conflict to follow, Satan's fall is also an example to Adam, Eve and the reader of one possible fate awaiting God's enemies. In this description, the narrator is firmly on God's side, and he positions himself above, looking down on the figure being "hurled headlong" to perdition.

But when we next encounter a falling angel, the sight-line has curiously shifted so that the narrator appears to be looking upwards, as at a comet or plummeting star. Here he is describing Mulciber, the Graeco-Roman god of architecture, but clearly the falling god is Satan's double, being punished (yet again) for over-ambition:

>   from Morn
> To Noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve,
> A Summers day; and with the setting Sun
> Dropt from the Zenith like a falling Star,
> On Lemnos th' Ægæan Ile: thus they relate,
> Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
> Fell long before; […] nor did he scape
> By all his Engins, but was headlong sent
> With his industrious crew to build in hell. (PL.1.742-51)

As many critics have discussed, Milton at first aestheticizes the image of the falling god, tracing a slow and beautiful trajectory through the sky, and then, as if to undo this suspension of judgment, he harshly condemns both the god, and his own temporally languid description. Why dwell so insistently on this motif? Stanley Fish argues that this is Milton's method of training the reader in Puritan aesthetics: we are to see how easily one's judgment can be led astray and how frequently it must be corrected (Fish 1967: 88-90). I would put it a little differently: Milton is focusing the reader's attention on the moment of loss of freedom and responsibility, the point after which everything becomes too late to change. This moment is arrested in the line, "from morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve, a summer's day". By elongating the moment, Milton is not so much inviting us to err, as opening up a space for exercising judgment anew. By playing over this scene repeatedly, Milton thus reintroduces, or if you like, creates the illusion of reintroducing, choice. This is crucial for Adam and Eve, and even more crucial for the reader, who is being urged to exercise

choice in a situation where agency and self-determination no longer seem to be possible. One might compare Gary Saul Morson's account of Dostoevsky: "in order to render palpable the act of choosing, Dostoevsky focused everything on the moment in which choice is made" (1994: 105).

From one point of view, the decision to linger over the image constitutes an error of artistic judgment. Indeed for Milton, the error is also theological, because it creates a space in which the poem's readers may decide to sympathize with Satan where theologically, one should not. For DeLillo, the danger is that by reproducing the sense of unreality that many people felt, and still feel, in the aftermath of 9/11, his novel will only magnify the distances that have already opened up, either by failing to connect with his readers (and many have criticized *Falling Man* for its lack of "warmth"), or by captivating them with aesthetic images that are more bearable to look at than the historical traces of the disaster itself. From the opposing point of view (which I share), the freeze-frame is a necessary step in the construction of a novelistic response to epic tragedy. It forces one (character or reader) to set aside the observer or survivor's sense of belatedness, to focus on a particular moment and the temporal edges that touch upon it: the immediate past and future.

Milton labors over descriptions of Satan's fall in part because he wants his readers to stop and think how their futures should differ from his. His final retelling is placed at the epicenter of the poem. Here Raphael describes the event to Adam, and the tone is once again, unflinchingly judgmental:

> The overthrown he rais'd, and […]
> Drove them before him Thunder-struck, pursu'd
> With terrors and with furies to the bounds
> And Chrystal wall of Heav'n, which op'ning wide,
> Rowld inward, and a spacious Gap disclos'd
> Into the wastful Deep; the monstrous sight
> Strook them with horror backward, but far worse
> Urg'd them behind; headlong themselves they threw
> Down from the verge of Heav'n, Eternal wrauth
> Burnt after them to the bottomless pit. (PL.6.856-66)

Literary texts resonate forwards in time as well as backwards, and as I remarked earlier, the chronotope of a text changes every time it is read. After 9/11, for me, these lines have taken on the uncanny resonance of art anticipating history. Unable to face the terror behind them, Satan's followers choose the monstrous leap into open space. The difference between this and earlier accounts in the poem is that here we see Satan's moment of choice. The choice between the fire and the fall may not seem much, but from the perspective of the protagonist situated in that time-space it means everything. This being the first time that Milton represents the consciousness of the angels at the point of falling, Raphael's account here lends Satan's actions a human-like dignity. As Viktor Frankl wrote about choice in the concentration

camps, "the ability to choose one's attitude to a given set of circumstances" is "the last of human freedoms" (1964: 86). Or as Tzvetan Todorov more recently expressed it, "the important thing is to act out of the strength of one's will, to exert through one's initiative some influence, however minimal, on one's surroundings" (1999: 61).

Milton's God is keen to stress that all his creatures, human and angelic, have the freedom to determine their own futures. In Satan's case, he makes this point chiefly to absolve himself from blame for damning a third of his angelic host:

> authors to themselves in all
> Both what they judge and what they choose; for so
> I formed them free, and free they must remain,
> Till they enthrall themselves. (PL.3.122-4)

Once fallen, the angels will continue to choose enslavement over freedom, but Milton's readers need not share the same fate. If even the fallen angels to whom God extends no grace (because they fell "Self-tempted, self-depraved" (PL.3.130) had a choice, then how much more do Adam and Eve have it in their power to reverse or mitigate a disaster that might seem utterly overwhelming? In theological terms, Milton's poem is engaging in the great debate of seventeenth century religions: if God has foreknowledge of everything, does this mean that all our actions are also predestined? Scholars mostly agree that Milton's position on this issue was Armenian, or something similar; that is, he believed that divine foreknowledge does not imply predestination (Keeble 2001: 135; Loewenstein 2001: 361). By thus lingering over and replaying Satan's fall, Milton prepares us for Adam and Eve, who not only choose to fall, but also choose to recover and live on. Thus for Milton's readers, the poem opens up the possibility of revoking choices that have already been made, and that seem to close off the possibility of future change.

According to newspaper reports, about 200 people jumped from the towers on September 11th. None of them are known to have survived. The Chief Medical Examiner's Office of New York City recorded these deaths as "accidental", rather than "suicide", in part to avoid the stigma of the phrase that sticks in Lianne's mind: "died by his own hand" (DeLillo 2007: 169). In *Falling Man,* Lianne happens upon one of David Janiak's performances. As she watches him waiting over a train tunnel, she begins to understand his intentions: "he wasn't here to perform for those at street level or in the high windows. He was situated where he was […] waiting for the train to come, northbound, this is what he wanted, an audience in motion, passing scant yards from his standing figure" (ibid.: 164). Janiak wants to be seen by viewers "in motion" so that his gesture will be mirrored in theirs. For a second, both will seem to be in free fall. As the train approaches, he does not just imitate the threshold crossing into blank space; he re-lives it:

> The train comes slamming through and he turns his head and looks into
> it (into his death by fire) and then brings his head back around and jumps.
>   Jumps or falls. (ibid.: 167-8)

As the day of the attacks recedes into the past, it may take a performance this violent to force an observer to feel some visceral connection with the half-forgotten images of the day. But what seems clear from this description is that the performance is "authentic" in the sense that Janiak is not just imitating the actual falls. He is re-enacting them in an effort to understand what they meant, what the choice and the decision felt like from the inside.

DeLillo also takes his readers into the mind of one of the terrorists, the fictional character Hammad, although I feel that he is less convincingly interiorized than the other characters. To an extent, Hammad occupies a position analogous to Satan in *Paradise Lost* – not in the sense that his portrayal is demonized (it is not), but in the sense that he is the Other against, and by means of, whom Keith becomes a self. Hammad is the character who embraces a narrowed epic world-view; he welcomes the mythicization of history. And he becomes the remote, de-individuated hero that this particularly brittle epic chronotope accommodates:

> he and his brothers […] felt the magnetic effect of plot. Plot drew them
> together more tightly than ever. Plot closed the world to the slenderest line
> of sight, where everything converges to a point. There was the claim of
> fate, that they were born to this. There was the claim of being chosen, out
> there, in the wind and sky of Islam. There was the statement that death
> made, the strongest claim of all, the highest jihad. (ibid.: 174)

Hammad is one version of the person Keith could become, and one glimpses this possible future as Keith plays for revenge against losers at poker, and chooses a life among strangers.

Against Hammad's converging, hard-edged plot, DeLillo counterposes fragments of stories, half-memories and shadowy premonitions, ghostly narratives that lack the terrorist's certainty, but that nevertheless accrue in number and strength throughout the novel. In "Ruins", DeLillo spells out why he sees this as a necessary response:

> it is left to us to create the counternarrative […] There are 100,000 stories
> crisscrossing New York, Washington, and the world. Where we were, who
> we know, what we've seen or heard. There are the doctors' appointments
> that saved lives, the cellphones that were used to report the hijackings.
> Stories generating others and people running north out of the rumbling
> smoke and ash […] There are stories that carry around their edges the
> luminous ring of coincidence, fate, or premonition. They take us beyond
> the hard numbers of dead and missing and give us a glimpse of elevated
> being. (DeLillo 2001)

Strikingly, DeLillo is not simply collecting documentary evidence and eye-witness accounts. He is not only interested in the prosaic detail, but also in the epic sense of "fate" and of "elevated being". He is not, then, conceding the right to create epic narrative to the terrorists. He is also looking for "configurations" and "symmetry, bleak and touching" that would convey the weight of a "desolate epic tragedy". *Falling Man* is not such a narrative, but it dramatizes the hard and slow process of becoming it. The novel conveys the effort of accumulating the counter-narrative shrapnel, the "smaller objects and more marginal stories […] to set against the massive spectacle that continues to seem unmanageable", as he puts it in "Ruins".

Towards the end of *Falling Man,* Lianne discovers that the performance artist has died, possibly as a result of his dangerous free-falls which were only arrested by a rope and harness. Reading his obituary, she finds a reporter speculating about Janiak's intentions, and whether the artist meant to remind his audience of the man in Drew's photograph. "Free fall", continues the narrator, possibly echoing some explanation in the obituary, "is the ideal falling motion of a body that is subject only to the earth's gravitational field". After this strangely disconnected allusion to a "free" and "ideal" movement of the body through space, we return to the focalization through Lianne:

> She did not read further but knew at once which photograph the account referred to. It hit her hard when she first saw it, the day after, in the news-paper. The man headlong, the towers behind him. The mass of the towers filled the frame of the picture. The man falling, the towers contiguous, she thought, behind him. The enormous soaring lines, the vertical column stripes. The man with blood on his shirt, she thought, or burn marks, and the effect of the columns behind him, the composition, she thought, darker stripes for the nearer tower, the north, lighter for the other, and the mass, the immensity of it, and the man set almost precisely between the rows of darker and lighter stripes. Headlong, free fall, she thought, and this picture burned a hole in her mind and heart, dear God, he was a fall-ing angel and his beauty was horrific. (2007: 221-2)

Like Milton's description of Mulciber falling the length of a summer's day, the image that Lianne conjures in her mind is undeniably a "composition", a work of art, and not a direct encounter with reality. Lianne recalls him as angelic, beautiful, and per-fectly framed by stripes of light and dark. The tiny figure set against "enormous soar-ing lines" precisely conveys the epic immensity of the tragedy. At this point, however, she is no longer thinking about the artist, but about the photograph, and then, through the photograph, about the picture in her mind which, finally, "burns a hole in her mind and heart". So there is a frame within a frame within a frame, which pre-vents us from mistaking the image for reality. But the triple frame also leads us inwards, with Lianne, from an epic sense of immensity to a novelistic insistence on the specifics: "blood on his shirt, she thought, or burn marks". Although Janiak is no longer alive, his performance succeeds with Lianne at this point, as her hazy memory is driven into sharp focus for the first time.

Milton's God makes a careful distinction between Satan, whose Fall is deserved and fatal, and Adam and Eve, whose disgrace will be temporary ("man falls deceived […] man therefore shall find grace" (PL.3.131). But in DeLillo's novel, as in many modern texts, Hell is no longer an expression of God's justice. It is rather an expression of humanity's injustice (on this modern view of Hell, see Falconer 2005: 63 and passim). How does one respond to these unwatchable images of innocent people dying? Keith, Lianne and members of the Alzheimer Group all want vengeance, at some obscure level, at different points of the narrative. But their desires do not harden into that singular purpose, in part because the chronotope they inhabit is not just epic; it is also novelistic.

Likewise in *Paradise Lost,* Adam and Eve turn back to their former habits, even before they learn that God does not intend to destroy them (PL.10.1086-105). They resist the easiest response, which would have been to despair, to become satanic. Adam is shown a dark vision of prolonged suffering in ages to come, but the other strand to this vision is the repeated leitmotif of a lone dissenter making a solitary stand, and surviving.[3] Just as the example of Moses cuts a caesura through the downward spiral of human history in Book 12 (211-5), so the example of Noah illuminates the end of Book 11: "So all shall turn degenerate, all depraved,/ Justice and temperance, truth and faith forgot;/ One man except, the only son of light / In a dark age" (PL.11.806-9). Waves of darkness close again over the descendents of both these Biblical figures, as the final victory, of course, belongs to Christ at the end of time. Milton shares with other Puritan thinkers the view that the history of human injustice represents only a transient phase in God's divine plan. But unlike other eschatological thinkers, whom Bakhtin criticizes for emptying human time of meaning, this Puritan framework actually vitalizes Milton's sense of the immediate future. Adam descends from the hilltop, heartened and inspired – not so much by the vision of Paradise restored ('beyond is all abyss,/ Eternity whose end no eye can reach"; PL.12.555-6), as by the thought that the near future is worth fighting for: "with good / Still overcoming evil, and by small / Accomplishing great things". (PL.12.565-6).[4] So the closing prophetic books of *Paradise Lost* perform a double function. On the one hand, the novelistic chronotope, which brought us close to Adam and Eve in their daily, domestic affairs, gives way before an epic chronotope that hurtles us swiftly and at a great distance, through hundreds of years of Biblical history. On the other hand, the rolling cycles of that epic chronotope are continually cut through with singular acts of resistance, and moments of suspended judgment. Through these fissures, the novelistic chronotope floods through the Biblical narrative, resisting foreclosure.

The poem ends on a domestic note. Adam and Eve, who dropped hands to separate before the Fall, leave Eden "hand in hand" (PL.12.648). Casting their eyes back at their home now in flames, they follow the angel reluctantly down the cliff-side. But when they descend into historical time, they find it bears no relation to the doomed world Adam has just foreseen. The immediate future suddenly looks spacious:

> The world was all before them, where to choose
> Their place of rest, and providence their guide. (PL.12.646-7)

Adam and Eve already know they are *responsible* for the blighted future of the race; but now they also know they are *free.*

In "Ruins" DeLillo echoes this Miltonic image when he alludes to people who joined hands as they jumped from the windows (although I am not sure whether the echo of *Paradise Lost,* which to my ear is unmissable, was intended by DeLillo or not): "People falling from the towers hand in hand. This is part of the counternarrative, hands and spirits joining, human beauty in the crush of meshed steel" (DeLillo 2001). In *Falling Man,* the Alzheimer group members allude to these scenes, although the novel does not represent them directly. But a metaphorical joining of hands takes place in the final chapter.

Unexpectedly the first conjoining "touch" is between Hammad and Keith. The chapter takes us back in time to the day of the attacks, and focalizes the scene through Hammad as he sits in the hijacked plane, waiting for the collision that will kill him. As the plane makes contact, the focalization jumps from Hammad (presumably now dead) to Keith, sitting on the other side of the wall: "a blast wave passed through the structure that sent Keith Neudecker out of his chair and into a wall" (2007: 239). Again, it is Hammad's Otherness that "makes" Keith. And in this re-narration of the events of Chapter 1, Hammad's death appears to bring to life a different Keith, one whom we see here for the first time taking responsibility, even acting heroically. He tries to save his dying friend's life (a former poker buddy, which retrospectively explains Keith's obsessive gambling). He helps people down the stairs, and passes objects down; he takes charge of the ownerless briefcase.

Here for the first time, too, we see Keith in sharp focus, moving through the specificity of that particular day, addressing strangers, being spoken to. As he moves downstairs and into the street, it no longer seems like a "world of heaven and hell", so in a sense the chronotope has shifted from epic back to novel. But this "addressive" Keith seems to have sprung into life straight from the deathly touch of Hammad through the tower wall. In *Libra,* DeLillo had written about the Kennedy assassination in similar terms; it was a tragedy that "made" many Americans. Of *Libra,* DeLillo had commented, "fiction rescues history from its confusions" (see Mehren 1988).

In one sense, the final chapter of *Falling Man* releases Keith, and DeLillo's readers, from the oppressive sense of being disconnected and peripheral to the events of September 11th. At last, Keith is actually *there,* and we are there with him, seeing everything in searing detail through his eyes. So one feels that finally time is moving forwards, and having re-lived the past, or perhaps living it here for the first time, Keith will be able to work through it (on "working through" trauma, see Freud 1958: 147-56). In another sense, though, the ending feels cyclical and not sequential. DeLillo returns us to the same scene depicted in Chapter 1. An empty shirt – uncannily rem-

iniscent of a falling body – flaps down from the sky, as it also did in Chapter 1. It seems that the memories will continue to resonate. And perhaps the effect of the novel is not to "work through" these memories. Perhaps rather, its effect is to give them permanence, enclosed in the echo-chambered structure of the novel.

The counter-narrative to 9/11 is heteroglossic; instead of one converging plot, it consists of hundreds and thousands of stories, films, novels, and documentaries. But it is also heterochronic, in the sense that it accommodates both a novelistic, and a newly forged epic chronotope. One hears the epic tone emerging in the last chapter, as Keith listens to people exchanging words on the stairwell above him:

> There were voices up behind him, back on the stairs, one and then another
> in near echo, fugue voices, song voices in the rhythms of natural speech.
> This goes down.
> This goes down.
> Pass it down. (2007: 245)

Falling Man reproduces the "rhythms of natural speech" as the basis for a novelistic counter-narrative to 9/11. But those rhythms are also pared down and reshaped so that they echo against each other in the sung voice of epic.

Endnotes

1.   Other 9/11 narratives include: Martin Amis, "The Last Days of Muhammad Atta", a fiction essay published in *The Observer* (3 September 2006); Frederic Beigbeder, *Windows on the World* (2003); Paul Greengrass, director of the film, *United 93* (2006); Jay McInerney, *The Good Life* (2006); Jonathan Safran Foer, *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (2005); and Art Spiegelman's graphic novel, *In the Shadow of No Towers* (2004). As Mars-Jones notes, DeLillo's title also echoes Saul Bellow's *The Dangling Man* (Mars-Jones 2007).

2.   At the end of *The Readie and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* (1660), Milton writes, "I trust I shall have spoken perswasion to abundance of sensible and ingenuous men: to som perhaps whom God may raise of these stones to become children of reviving libertie; and may reclaim, though they seem now chusing them a captain back for *Egypt,* to bethink themselves a little and consider whether they are rushing" (Milton 1953-, Vol. 7: 463).

3.   For a persuasive discussion of Milton's sympathies with Puritan dissenters, who were persecuted under Charles II, see Keeble (2001: 130). The pre-eminent example in *Paradise Lost* of a dissenter defying the threat of persecution is Abdiel (PL.5.897-903).

4.   Compare Bakhtin: "Eschatology always sees the segment of a future separating the past from the end as lacking value; this separating segment of time loses its significance and interest, it is merely an unnecessary continuation of an indefinitely prolonged present" (FTC: 148).

"It was not Death":
The Poetic Career of the Chronotope

Joy Ladin

for Caryl Emerson

When we talk about what Bakhtin called "literary-artistic chronotopes", we tend to talk about narratives, particularly prose narratives.[1] Bakhtin developed the concept of the chronotope via a historical, cross-cultural and teleological study of the novel, and as Morson and Emerson note, "the chronotope essay and related writings were part of Bakhtin's great project of his third period to elucidate and exalt the genre of the novel" (1990: 372). Though Bakhtin asserted that all language is inherently chronotopic, both Bakhtin and later chroniclers of the life of the chronotope have found that prose narratives most readily exemplify those "fusion[s] of [spatial and temporal] indicators" through which literary "[t]ime […] thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible" and literary "space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history" (FTC: 84). The centripetal forces of syntax, character, scene and plot make most "literary-artistic" prose narratives fertile ground for the emergence of what I have called "incidental", "local" and "major" chronotopes, and dense webs of relationships among them.[2]

As a graduate student, I was dazzled by the chronotope's potential for unlocking the mysteries of literary ontology. In a series of pre-doctoral epiphanies that culminated in my essay "Fleshing Out the Chronotope" (1999), I saw chronotopes and chronotopic relationships everywhere, from Jane Austen novels and Alfred Hitchcock films to shopping malls and cereal boxes. As a poet, I found it inconceivable that chronotopes would not play an equally starring role in my literary-artistic medium of choice. If all language is chronotopic, how could poetry not be? Hence, "Fleshing Out the Chronotope" suggests rather than demonstrates that literary artistic chronotopes function in poetry – even poetry as concise, fragmentary and centrifugal as Emily Dickinson's quatrains – in the same ways in which they function in the prose narratives that provide the bulk of the examples I consider in the essay.

Since the publication of Caryl Emerson's *Critical Essays on Mikhail Bakhtin*, "Fleshing Out the Chronotope" has often been cited in works of chronotopic analysis. However, once I completed my degree, I started avoiding the term "chronotope". In teaching literature to undergraduates, I looked for less-daunting ways of talking about literary space and time. Since experiences on the job market suggested that Bakhtin in general, and the chronotope in particular, were not very marketable, I also

steered away from using the "c" word in critical essays and job interviews, and soon became adept at finding other ways to refer to textual spatiality and temporality.

However, euphemisms come at a price. Having foresworn a consistent, precise critical language for chronotopic analysis, I found myself unable to conduct sustained examinations of literary time-space. I went from seeing chronotopes on cereal boxes to averting my eyes from them even in textual analyses. Even when writing narrative poetry, I never turned to the elaborate taxonomies of "Fleshing Out the Chronotope" in order to sort out my own literary-artistic construction of time-space. When I wrote non-narrative poetry, I didn't think about chronotopes at all.

If the chronotope was as central to literature as I believed, why didn't I ever find it necessary to apply the concept as a poet? I successfully avoided such questions until fall 2007, when I taught my first graduate class in the craft of poetry to poets in the prestigious Master's program in Creative Writing at Sarah Lawrence College. The students were fascinated by the concept of the chronotope, inspired by the idea that they had been unconsciously shaping literary time-spaces – and utterly baffled as to how to apply their new awareness of the chronotope to the process of writing and revising their own poetry. Without rereading the essay, I handed out copies of "Fleshing Out the Chronotope", confident that it would answer all their questions. To my dismay, however, the essay's definitions and demonstrations only confused them more – and when I tried to point them to passages in "Fleshing Out the Chronotope" that would clear up their confusion, I found, to my embarrassment, that the essay assumes rather than explains the chronotope's applicability to poetry.

As I struggled to explain the role of chronotopes in writing poems, I began to question my assumption that the chronotope concept is as applicable to poetry, particularly non-narrative poetry, as it is to narrative prose. As Bakhtin noted, chronotopes arise from the density and fusion of temporal and spatial indicators. In prose narrative, the density of temporal and spatial indicators arises as a natural consequence of setting scenes and explaining action, and those indicators are fused by the centripetal forces of plot, character and so on that encourage us to read the various elements of the text as aspects of a coherent story and world. In non-narrative poetry, however, there is no story to drive the setting of scene or generation of character; there may not even be scene or character. As a result, temporal and spatial indicators can be quite sparse, and there may be little centripetal force to encourage their fusion. In a textual environment bereft of character, plot, scene, in which even the centripetal forces of syntax are frayed by linebreaks and other poetic devices, how can chronotopes form and function? I began to think what had been for me unthinkable: that poetry – at least in its less narrative, more centrifugal forms – might not be chronotopic at all. Perhaps the chronotope, so vital to the life of prose narratives, was, when it came to non-narrative poetry, nothing more than dead and deadening jargon, because in such centrifugal environments, chronotopes cannot be born.

If my despair had proven correct, this would be a very short paper. But when I re-examined "Fleshing Out the Chronotope"'s assumption that chronotopes function

the same way in poetry as in prose, I found myself moving toward a very different understanding of the chronotope than that which had grown out of my analysis of prose narratives. In the centripetal environment afforded by most prose narratives, the stable chronotopes and the relationships among them define consciousness, world and values. In the centrifugal environment of non-narrative poetry, chronotopes flicker and flow in a series of hints, glimpses, dissolves, defining consciousness, world and values via evanescence rather than stability. However, as I hope to show below, the evanescence of chronotopes in non-narrative poetry can be as central to the vitality and meaning of those texts as the stability of chronotopes is to the vitality and meaning of prose narratives.

My new understanding of the chronotope's role in poetry began with re-opening the question regarding chronotopes and poetry that "Fleshing Out the Chronotope" had forestalled. The relevant portions of "Fleshing Out the Chronotope" read as follows:

> [T]hough the chronotopic implications of individual words and sentence fragments are, in ordinary uses of language, absorbed into larger syntactical structures, the chronotopic energies are still present. By changing the balance between centripetal and centrifugal forces, literary texts can harness this energy and allow normally invisible chronotopic implications to take on weight and significance, generating what I call "micro-chronotopes" out of units of speech smaller than a sentence. Micro-chronotopes are arguably more prominent in lyric poetry […] than in other literary forms […] [I]n lyric poetry, centripetal linguistic forces are interfered with by rhyme, meter, enjambment and other devices, giving the centrifugal forces of individual words and phrases greater play. (1999: 216)

This argument is based on Bakhtin's assertion that language is permeated by chronotopic energy. Words can't help but imply "micro-chronotopes". In non-literary contexts, the centripetal forces of language tend to moot or erase these chronotopic implications, reducing them to the verbal equivalent of static. Literary language is inherently more centrifugal than "ordinary uses of language", if only because it is set apart from the practical imperatives that require the language used in daily life to be contextually appropriate, comprehensible, unambiguous and otherwise functional. If centripetal forces tend to weed out chronotopic implications, centrifugality must nourish them – and in the centrifugal soil of literary language, chronotopic energies must more or less automatically bear fruit.[3]

Since lyric poetry is among the most centrifugal of literary forms, it seemed obvious to me that poetry must be at least as chronotope-friendly as prose narrative. Indeed, I suggested, via one brief example, that poems generate chronotopes much more readily than prose:

> [T]he opening of one of Dickinson's most famous poems, "My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun" […] creat[es] a unique space-time (a micro-chronotope) that literalizes the distance between life and self. This process

begins with the capitalization of "Life", which gives the word equal visual weight with "My", and calls attention to the autonomy of "Life" as a noun. The next word, "had", introduces time into the metaphysical space in which the speaker possesses his or her "Life" [...] [and] turns the poem into a narrative. This narrative could, of course, remain an abstract and non-chronotopic relation of time without space [...] However, the word "stood" consolidates the fledgling micro-chronotope by providing a concrete spatial indicator. "Stood" gives a literal, spatial quality to the distance between speaker and "Life"; "Life" is now not only something that can be possessed but also something that was located in a particular place at a particular time, and perceived by the speaker from both a spatial and temporal distance [...] In other words, Dickinson has disrupted the centripetal tendencies of language sufficiently so that the conventions that ensure that the phrase "my life" will be taken idiomatically rather than as a fully operative chronotope are no longer dominant. Thus, by harnessing the latent chronotopic energies of seven simple words, she creates a micro-chronotope in which a speaker's life becomes [...] an object with physical and potentially lethal properties [...]. (ibid.: 216-7)

The problem with this demonstration is that it reifies rather than tests my assumptions about the genesis of literary artistic chronotopes. While it is true that Dickinson's centrifugal defamiliarization of the cliché "my life" is essential to the blossoming of its peculiar chronotopic implications, centrifugality alone does not – cannot – generate the density and fusion of spatial and temporal indicators necessary for chronotopes to emerge. As a composition teacher, I have read a lot of essays with little grasp of centripetal conventions; none has managed to put flesh on time or make space move to the respiration of history. Clearly, the impairment of centripetality does not a literary artistic chronotope make. The "intersection of axes and fusion of [spatial and temporal] indicators" (FTC: 84) necessary to generate a chronotope could not possibly be accomplished via diffusive centrifugal forces. Dickinson, and the lyric language she here represents, certainly releases chronotopic energies via the disruption of certain centripetal forces; but if those chronotopic energies do indeed coalesce into chronotopes, as I suggested, there must also be centripetal forces at work. Indeed, as Bakhtin emphasizes, centripetal and centrifugal forces are interdependent. By failing to identify those centripetal forces, my analysis gave a profoundly misleading account of the genesis of literary artistic chronotopes in general, and their poetic careers in particular, begging the very questions I purported to answer.

Even now, my reading of "My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun" does not strike me as wrong. However, though the poem does indeed expand the implications of the cliché "my life" into a functioning chronotope, in the opening line, that expansion barely begun; the chronotope doesn't fully emerge until the end of the first stanza, when the voice of the initial speaker is displaced by the voice of the "Gun" that she had offered as a metaphor for "My Life":

My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun –
In Corners – till a Day
The Owner passed – identified –
And carried Me away –

And now We Roam in Sovreign Woods –
And now We hunt the Doe –
And every time I speak for Him
The Mountains straight reply –
(Fr 764: 722)[4]

My claim that the spatial implications of the word "stood" fused temporal and spatial coordinates into a functioning chronotope mistakenly projected my synchronic reading of the poem as a whole back onto the opening words.[5] In the process, I fudged the actual process by which this chronotope takes shape – and, in so doing, drastically simplified the chronotope itself. If we read the opening stanza diachronically rather than synchronically, we see that though the word "stood" does indeed give startlingly spatial qualities to the temporal abstraction "My Life", the fusion of literalized space and abstract time is deferred by the implicit simile, "My Life had stood [like] a Loaded Gun". It is quite common for similes and metaphors to illuminate temporal abstractions by mapping them onto concrete spatial equivalents. Though the metaphoric mapping stimulated by these rhetorical gestures suggest the chronotopic fusion of temporal and spatial concepts, they also defer that fusion by encouraging us to think of time in terms of space rather than conceiving a time-space.

However, as the stanza unfolds, it becomes harder and harder to read the space the poem describes metaphorically, and thus to understand time – "My Life" – as distinct from it. In the second line, the phrase "In Corners" drastically amplifies the spatial implications of "stood". The metaphorical "Loaded Gun" that stands for "My Life" is no longer standing in an abstract space, but in a space that has "Corners", a narrow, interior, domestic space defined by junctures of walls. The plural "Corners" also carries a whiff of temporality – technically, a gun can only stand in one corner at any given moment, so if this gun has stood in multiple "Corners", it must have been moved over time. That whiff of temporality begins to blossom into full-blown diegetic time in the following phrase, "till a Day", which places the metaphorical "Gun" in the narrative realm of befores and afters; the next line, "The Owner passed – identified", peoples this metaphorical narrative realm with a character who has his own story – he is just passing through this cornered domestic interiority – and even his own perspective: for an instant, we glimpse him "identifying" the "Gun". In the final line of the stanza, the speaker is completely displaced by her own metaphor. Now, and for the rest of the poem, the first person pronouns refer not to a person whose life had stood like a loaded gun, but to the gun itself, which "roams" an adventurous frontier world (as Susan Howe has pointed out) in the hands of the distant "Owner" it adores.[6]

In other words, over the course of the stanza, the spatial metaphor expands into a metaphoric narrative and then blossoms into a time-and-space-fusing narrative in its own right, a story of the deliverance, vitality and angst that follow a lifetime of standing in corners, awaiting identification and identity. That narrative embodies and pushes to absurd extremes the chronotope I describe in "Fleshing Out the Chronotope", in which "Life" becomes a thing that can be owned and understood as distinct from its "Owner". Though that chronotope is suggested by Dickinson's centrifugal attenuation of the conventions that minimize the ontological implications of figures of speech in the opening line, as the above analysis suggests, the chronotope is constituted and rendered functional by the centripetal forces introduced in subsequent lines. We only really enter a time-space in which "Life" has a life of its own when the spatial and temporal implications that the metaphoric structure kept separate have been fused by the centripetal forces of character, plot, and perspective.

If this were a prose narrative of the types from which "Fleshing Out the Chronotope" draws most of its examples, the "My Life" chronotope would be the "major chronotope" that defines the overall time-space of the narrative and the relationships among the minor chronotopes of which it is composed, such as that which appears at the end of the second stanza, in which the Gun becomes the meeting point between the voice of the "Owner" and the "voice" of nature. However, even a cursory examination of the poem as a whole reveals that that is not what happens:

My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun –
In Corners – till a Day
The Owner passed – identified –
And carried Me away –

And now We Roam in Sovreign Woods –
And now We hunt the Doe –
And every time I speak for Him
The Mountains straight reply –

And do I smile, such cordial light
Upon the Valley glow –
It is as a Vesuvian face
Had let it's pleasure through –

And when at Night – Our good Day done –
I guard my Master's Head –
'Tis better than the Eider-Duck's
Deep Pillow – to have shared –

To foe of His – I'm deadly foe –
None stir the second time –
On whom I lay a Yellow Eye –
Or an emphatic Thumb –

> Though I than He – may longer live
> He longer must – than I –
> For I have but the power to kill,
> Without – the power to die –
> (Fr 764: 722-3)

Somewhere during the adventures of Gun and her emotionally distant but fatally attractive Owner, the "My Life" chronotope vanishes – and with it, any sense that there is a speaker other than Gun, or that Gun's actions, reflections, and yearnings are merely an allegory for some "real" speaker's life. In fact, this narrative is defined not by the consolidation of a major chronotope amid a web of chronotopic relationships, but by the dissolution of the major chronotope (and the character whose consciousness was to be manifested through it) and the absence of any stable relationships among the chronotopes that emerge in each stanza.

In terms of the definitions offered in "Fleshing Out the Chronotope", this is not a narrative at all, but some sort of anti-narrative, a perverse negation of the normal chronotopic functioning of narratives. But once we accept that chronotopes lead very different lives in the more centrifugal environment of poetry, we can see that the poem's treatment of chronotopes as transitory rather than stable is not perverse at all, but typical of poetry, an inevitable outgrowth of poetry's emphasis on the centrifugal aspects of the centrifugal/centripetal symbiosis that is inherent in all language use.

Contrary to my claims in "Fleshing Out the Chronotope," chronotopes don't emerge from either centrifugality or language *per se*; they emerge from language's role in mediating the relationship between subjectivity and intersubjectivity, in the reciprocal transformation of individual, idiosyncratic perception into communicable accounts of the world, and of shared but abstract terms into templates that give intelligible form to private perception.[7] Pure centripetality, if such a thing were possible, would produce language of Platonic sterility and stasis; pure centrifugality would be a tale told by an idiot, signifying nothing. The centrifugal qualities of chronotopes – their basis in the mysteries of individual perception and the flux of consciousness – were obvious to me when I wrote "Fleshing Out the Chronotope". However, I overlooked the crucial role of centripetal forces in making perception and consciousness intelligible to others, and thus expanding language from the medium of personal subjectivities into an intersubjective means of sharing the world with others.

Literary chronotopes represent shifting balances between the centrifugal forces which connote the idiosyncratic, ultimately incommunicable nature of perception, and the centripetal forces which subsume purely personal perceptions into generally agreed upon terms. The more the balance in a given chronotope favors the centripetal, the more stable the chronotope will seem, the greater its intersubjective effectiveness in structuring individual readers' experience, the more pervasively it will structure the elements of the text and the experience of reading it – and the closer it will approach the transhistorical stolidity that for Bakhtin was the holy chronotopic grail. The

more the balance favors the centrifugal, the more fleeting, fragmentary, phantasmal the chronotope will seem, the harder to recognize or define – and the more closely it will reflect the idiosyncratic, transitory nature of individual perception. If the balance is too heavily weighted toward the centripetal, the chronotope will collapse from a fleshy, plot-responsive time-space into convention or cliché, language whose well-worn predictability testifies to its incapacity to reflect or even acknowledge the mysterious richness of individual experience. But if a chronotope is insufficiently defined by centripetal forces, it will not be a distinguishable, functional chronotope at all, but rather an arcane trace of private, incommunicable experience.

In most literary prose narratives, the centripetal forces of genre, character, plot, syntax and so on facilitate the emergence of relatively stable chronotopes, and the bestiary of chronotopic relationships partially taxonomized in "Fleshing Out the Chronotope". I think it is fair to say that chronotopes, failed or otherwise, are an inherent aspect of all narratives, literary or otherwise. Even in as brief and fragmentary a narrative as "My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun", the centripetal forces evoked by narrative are sufficient to give chronotopic form and efficacy to the fleeting time-space implications of "My Life". But poetry does not need to be narrative; some poems, like the following phonemic smear by Clark Coolidge, don't even include words:

> listene
> secting
> erences
>
> miliari
> ontempt
> opposit
>
> compani
> bilitie
> pontane
>
> nerously
> ercussi
> ndition
>
> aluable
> rievable
> fluence
>
> berness
> ionalis
> deliber
> (Gach 1998: 113)

Though this is an extreme example of poetic centrifugality, even more traditional poems often lack the centripetal forces necessary to consolidate chronotopic implica-

tions into chronotopes.[8] Successful poetry has been made out of pure argument, abstract rhetoric, and expressionistic blobs of language, with nary a functional chronotope in sight. In non-narrative poetry, the chronotope is an option, not a necessity – and even in narrative poems, like "My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun", chronotopes may play very different roles than we find in prose narratives.

Because chronotopes are options rather than necessities in poetic language, poems can experiment with highly unstable balances of centrifugal and centripetal forces, creating language that brings us to the borderline between subjectivity and intersubjectivity. As David Porter, reflecting on Archibald Macleish's earlier observations, observed, Dickinson was quite fond of such experiments:

> "Amethyst remembrance", "Polar expiation". [None] of these exists upon the retina. [None] can be brought into focus by the muscles of the eye. The "blue and gold mistake" of Indian summer seems to exist somewhere in the visible – or would if one could only get rid of that "mistake" […] But who can describe the graphic shape of "that white sustenance/Despair"? And yet all of these present themselves as images, do they not? – *act* as images? Where can remembrance be amethyst? Where but in the eye? (Porter 1981: 26-7; emphasis in original)

In such "drained images", as Porter calls them, Dickinson jams together sensory referents ("blue and gold", "amethyst", "Polar", "white") and asensual abstractions ("remembrance", "expiation", "mistake", "sustenance", "Despair") – "idea" words and "perception" words – in ways that simultaneously suggest both the hermetically sealed specificity of individual perception and the intersubjective generality of phenomenology. In these phrases, the centripetal force of syntax (specifically, the relationship between adjectives and nouns) is strong enough to stimulate us to try to construe a chronotope, but not strong enough to actually define one. For example, a phrase like "Amethyst Remembrance" combines the spatial implications of "Amethyst" (you can't have color without a space in which it can be manifested) and the temporal implications of "Remembrance" (you can't have memory without time), but doesn't exert sufficient centripetal force to fuse these implications into a functional time-space through which world or consciousness can be concretely imagined. (Dickinson carefully attenuates the centripetal force by using an atemporal noun for the time-connoting word in this pair, rather than a verb like "remembering" which would carry stronger implications of lived duration and character.) The result is suggestive but maddeningly ephemeral. The abstraction "Remembrance" almost becomes visible, while the crystalline violet translucence evoked by "Amethyst" seems to shimmer with insight into the nature of memory ("I held a Jewel in my fingers"; Dickinson 1998: 261). Such drained images draw unnameable perceptions toward, but not quite into, the intersubjective light of day – and as we try to construe them, we find them pulling us back into the phenomenal depths from which they emerged.

Radical as Dickinson's "drained image" experiments were (and still are), the chronotopic frontiers she explored had been long been pointed toward by seventeenth-century English metaphysical poets such as George Herbert. For example, Herbert's "Prayer (I)" begins

> Prayer the Churches banquet, Angels age,
>   God's breath in man returning to his birth,
>   The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage,
> The Christian plummet sounding heav'n and earth
> Engine against th' Almighty, sinner's tow'r,
>   Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear,
>   The six-day's world transposing in an hour,
> A kinde of tune, which all things hear and fear […]
> (Herbert 2009)

Like Dickinson, Herbert utilizes poetry's attenuation of normal centripetal forces to magnify the normally imperceptible chronotopic implications of individual words and phrases. For example, in the compound adjectival phrase "Christ-side-piercing," Herbert narrows space to a small, terrifyingly vulnerable patch of skin – the place where the spear entered Jesus' "side" – while transforming time into a constant, present-tense enactment of that "piercing". Since this is not a narrative or even a complete sentence – Herbert's poem, though written as a sentence, is simply a paratactical list of metaphors for "Prayer", *sans* the grammatically necessary verb, "is" – the centripetal forces here are much more attenuated than in "My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun". By omitting the rhetorical structure of the metaphor, Herbert weakens our impetus to perform the mapping operation that, as I noted above, would normally suspend our chronotope-synthesizing impulses. As a result, each item in the list carries a charge of chronotopic energy, the brief but palpable jolt of bumping from one kind of time-space to another. However, in the absence of larger syntactical or narrative structures, there is insufficient centripetal force for any of these time-spaces to persist beyond the phrases that evoke them.

In short, neither Dickinson's "drained images" nor Herbert's chronotopic phrases generate the sort of full-fledged, functional chronotopes or chronotopic relationships discussed in "Fleshing Out the Chronotope". They are highly localized effects, startling and transient – and effective because they are transient. The chronotopic instability of Dickinson's "drained images", our inability to bring the time-spaces they seem to imply into focus, is precisely what enables them to limn the border between subjectivity and intersubjectivity. The flickering of Herbert's list of nascent time-spaces enacts the poem's implicit argument that "prayer" is both an extraordinarily potent, cosmos-defining activity, and an endeavor so tenuous that it must be constantly renewed lest it and its effects vanish in the next breath.

In non-narrative poetry, such chronotopic friability and evanescence plays as definitive a role as chronotopic stability and relationships play in prose narratives.[9] The chronotopic stability of prose narrative enables us to imaginatively inhabit the world

of the story, to experience fictional time and space as charged with vitality and meaning. In poems like Herbert's, vitality and meaning grow out of the spectacle of time-spaces appearing, disappearing and almost-appearing before our eyes. No wonder my poetry students were confused. They knew that Bakhtin was right about the inherent chronotopic energy of language, but the conceptual framework I offered in "Fleshing Out the Chronotope" taught them nothing about how to recognize or harness that energy in their poetry.

Since prose narratives more or less automatically generate chronotopes, the challenge for their authors is to make those chronotopes vital and effective, and to bring them into meaningful relationship with one another. Poets, on the other hand, need to determine what role, if any, chronotopic energies will play in their poems, and how to stage, manage and make meaningful the evanescence of those energies in the centrifugal textual environment of poetry.

Though my students had never heard of chronotopes, a highly sophisticated handling of chronotopic energies is characteristic of the modernist American poetry on which the poetics they have absorbed through workshops and lectures are largely based. That sophistication is readily recognizable in perhaps the most canonical bit of free verse in the American pedagogical canon, William Carlos Williams' haiku-like "The Red Wheelbarrow". This widely-anthologized poem is justly famous for its use of steep linebreaks – and those linebreaks make it an equally telling example of the paradoxical way in which poetic centrifugality amplifies the chronotopic energies of language while undermining the formation of actual chronotopes and chronotopic relationships. The result is a dazzling play of chronotopic implications and evanescence:

> so much depends
> upon
>
> a red wheel
> barrow
>
> glazed with rain
> water
>
> beside the white
> chickens.
> (1985: 56)

Here, the brief, staccato lines enforce a diachronic reading; the scene and sentence unfold in pieces, with each line registering first as a phrase in itself and then as a fragment of a larger, still-unfolding whole. For example, though the first line, "so much depends", radiates faint implications of size ("so much"), pendulousness ("depends") and time (the present-tense of the verb), the absence of subject, object or image suspends us in a sort of chronotopic void. There is a voice making an assertion, but no context for the voice, and no world to which the assertion refers. In this void, the spa-

tial implications of second line, the isolated word "upon", are magnified, giving us a sense of space forming out of pure abstraction. The "red wheel" of the third line furnishes this nascent space with color and shape. Though the wheel suggests the human world of tools and purposes, for the moment, it is purely symbolic, a red wheel suspended in a void. "So much" does indeed depend upon it, for it is the sole anchor of our entire sense of time-space. The addition of "barrow" shatters that Ezekiel-esque image. The "red wheel" is not a wheel at all, it is a "wheel / barrow", a common farm implement that metonymically connotes the earthy, repetitive world of agricultural work. The "red wheel" could be an abstract shape; the "red wheelbarrow" is ineluctably part of human lives.[10]

Thus far, the poem's temporal dimension has been restricted to the vague, undifferentiated present suggested by "depends". "Glazed with rain", however, attests to an event – rainfall – and thus expands time to include befores and afters, causes – the rain that has fallen – and effects – the glaze on the wheelbarrow.[11] In the final couplet, Williams allows space to expand as well, as the image finally comes into focus. Even here, though, there is significant chronotopic play. The preposition "Beside" places the wheelbarrow into a larger spatial context, but the linebreak after "white" briefly blanks out this context, reducing it to pure, blinding abstraction. The poem teeters on the edge of the chronotopic void from which it has so painstakingly emerged – and that is what makes the resolution offered by "chickens" so comic, and so satisfying. Thanks to the chronotopic evanescence generated by its linebreaks, the prosaic noun "chickens" denotes not only poultry, but the emergence of a stable, visualized world.

Because it consists of a single image, "The Red Wheelbarrow" has become an archetypal pedagogical example of Imagist doctrine. However, when we read it from a chronotopic perspective, we see that the image of a wet wheelbarrow beside chickens plays little role in the experience of reading the poem. In fact, the poem's power grows out of its deferral of the image. The centrifugality of the enjambments transforms what would in prose be an immediately graspable scene – "So much depends upon a red wheelbarrow glazed with rain water beside the white chickens" – into a spectacular chronotopic display. The centripetal force of prose eliminates this chronotopic spectacle – and with it much of the interest of this vague assertion. It is not "the image" but the tension between the constant prompting to synthesize time-spaces and our inability to bring them into focus that accounts for the poem's effectiveness. That tension transforms language from a medium of representation (a means of creating an image) into a medium of ontology, simultaneously highlighting the power of language to summon a world into being, and its inability to render that world stable, complete or coherent. As the inarticulate whiteness the poem has kept at bay swallows the long-deferred word "chickens", it becomes clear that the language of the poem has been unable to create a world at all, that the world corresponding to the image is a world language points to rather than summons into being.[12]

For free-verse poets seeking to add the poetics of chronotopes to their arsenal of craft, Williams' little poem offers one overriding lesson: the steeper the linebreak, the greater its chronotopic effects. The steep linebreak's centrifugal disruption of syntactical and other centripetal structures releases local chronotopic energies and magnifies the chronotopic implications of words and phrases. At the same time, however, the greater the poem's centrifugality, the harder it is for chronotopic implications to fuse into functional chronotopes.

In poems in which lines are longer and linebreaks tend to correspond to syntactical units, the level of centrifugal force is lower; as a result, the play of chronotopic energies will be much more muted. When American poets think of long lines, they think of Walt Whitman. Just as Williams' short, broken lines amplify the centrifugal energies of poetic language, Whitman's prosy, barely enjambed lines amplify its centripetal energies by asserting the stabilizing forces of syntax Williams' lines disrupt. Though Whitman's poetry *is* poetry, and is still significantly more centrifugal than prose narrative, his greater centripetality has a marked effect on the chronotopic energies of his words:

> You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,
> You shall listen to all sides and filter them from your self.
> (1855: 14)

For all Whitman's programmatic *joi de vivre*, and despite his status as a pioneer of concrete description, much of his verse has the achronotopic flatness of these lines. As "so much depends / upon" demonstrates, even abstract assertion can have marked chronotopic implications. But Whitman's long, syntactically complete lines generate so much centripetal force that the implications of even chronotopically suggestive words such as "look", "eyes", "take", "listen", "sides" and "filter" are suppressed – or, to use Whitman's term, "filtered". In other words, the centripetality of Whitman's lines is so great that relatively few chronotopic implications register as we read them. To charge his language with chronotopic vitality, Whitman has to include distinct spatial and temporal indicators – and when he does so, the centripetal force of his long lines fuses them into highly localized but surprisingly functional chronotopes:

> The bride unrumples her white dress, the minutehand of the clock moves
>   slowly,
> The opium eater reclines with rigid head and just opened lips,
> The prostitute draggles her shawl, her bonnet bobs on her tipsy and
>   pimpled neck […]
> (1855: 22)

Whitman's characteristic naming of characters in terms of their role – "the bride", "the opium eater", "the prostitute" – invokes the spatial and temporal implications of their social contexts. Here, for example, the phrase "the bride" invokes a complex concatenation of intimate time and space (the relationship that led this woman to marriage, and the body she is presumably preparing to share with her husband); rit-

ual time and space (the wedding ceremony and all that surrounds it); and social time and space (that is, the time-space in which the changes in status entailed by a woman getting married take place). The verb "unrumples", itself a highly compressed narrative (only something that has been rumpled can be unrumpled), combines the dense but abstract complex invoked by "the bride" with the concrete spatial implications necessary to bring this chronotope to life. "Unrumples" distills the intersecting sequences of events implied by "the bride" into a single, interstitial moment, a moment between kisses and rituals and social configurations, and locates this moment in the intensely intimate space defined by a hand smoothing a wedding dress.

The drastic narrowing of time and space to this single gesture creates a sense of temporal suspension, as though the unrumpling motion takes place in a bubble of time outside the social whirl suggested by "the bride". That sense of suspension is given concrete expression in the phrase "the minutehand of the clock moves slowly", a juxtaposition which transforms the time-suspending hand of the bride into a literal "minutehand", yoking the intimate time-space of the first phrase to the "objective", or rather intersubjective, time-space created by the chronotopic convention by which we agree to take the motion of clock hands through space as a sign of our common motion through time.

If Whitman used Williams-like steep linebreaks, the centrifugal force would produce such a wealth of chronotopic implications that neither of these phrases would imply clear chronotopes. But his long lines generate sufficient centripetal force for each chronotope to not only be distinguished, but for them to enter into a brief but evocative dialogue. The "minutehand" chronotope prevents the bride's temporal bubble from becoming lyrically disconnected from social time and space, while the "unrumpling" chronotope saturates the motion of the "minutehand" with emotional significance, turning the clock from an objective measure of duration into a meeting-place between intersubjectivity and subjectivity, between the social time-space of rites of passage and the psychological time-space of those who undergo them.

In prose – Poe's contemporaneous concern with the collision between subjective and intersubjective time comes to mind – these chronotopes and their dialogue would have structural implications for the text as a whole. No matter how localized it was, this chronotopic dialogue would have some relationship with and make some contribution to the larger chronotopic network that would charge the story with vitality and significance. Here, however, both chronotopes are immediately displaced by the chronotope of the opium eater in the next line. Of course, there is an implicit parallel between the isolated, contracted time-space of the "just opened lips" of the opium eater and the similar qualities of the chronotopes in the previous line. But even the centripetal force of Whitman's long lines is insufficient to mesh his chronotopes into larger networks and structures. By the end of the opium eater line, the chronotopes of the previous line are already fading; by the time the prostitute draggles her shawl, they are faint echoes that are completely upstaged by Whitman's paratactical sequencing of social outcasts.

As these examples suggest, the degree of centripetal and centrifugal force in a given poem can radically alter the play of chronotopic implications.[13] In more centrifugal poems, those implications are intensified, affording chronotopic vitality to even abstract phrases, but they are in such flux that distinct chronotopes and chronotopic relationships cannot form. In more centripetal poems, chronotopic energies tend to be muted, charging language only when there is sufficient density of spatial and temporal indicators. Unlike the chronotopic flux we find in more centrifugal poems, in more centripetal poems those indicators can fuse into distinct chronotopes and chronotopic relationships. Yet even in most centripetal poems, there is insufficient centripetal force to connect these local chronotopes and relationships into the structurally definitive chronotopic networks we find in prose narratives.[14]

Thus far, I have focused on poems in which the centrifugal or centripetal force generated by linebreaks – or, in Dickinson's case, parallel devices – defines the play of chronotopic energies. But what of poems in which rhyme and meter rather than lineation are fundamental organizing principles? Do we find the same chronotopic dynamics in prosodically organized poems that we have observed in free verse poems? Such questions demand at least a book-length study, but I would like to offer a reading of a well-known poem – John Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn" – to begin the exploration of how prosody affects chronotopic energy:

> Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
> Thou foster child of silence and slow time,
> Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
> A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme […]
> (1994: 185)

While line breaks also play a role, much of the centrifugality of prosodically organized verse is generated by the conflict between syntax and the sensuous sound of words. Syntax subordinates individual words to larger structures of meaning to which the sensuous qualities of phonemes are irrelevant. Prosody emphasizes those sensuous qualities, amplifying stresses into metrical patterns, clustering words into rhythmic patterns, focusing our attention on consonance, assonance and other sonic features. Not only are these features irrelevant to syntactical structures; like linebreaks, they attenuate and sometimes disrupt those structures, drawing attention to individual words and phrases and distracting us from our sense of the whole, slowing the reading process, and tipping the balance of forces toward the centrifugal.[15] Here, for example, the sheer sonic gorgeousness of "still unravished bride of quietness" centrifugally complicates the plain sense of the words (notice how much easier and less interesting it is to say "bride who hasn't yet had sex with quietness"), facilitating the emergence of something akin to Dickinson's "drained images".[16] The three words of "still unravished bride" take three of the line's five beats. The cluster of stresses increases the sensuous density of the phrase, stretching the readerly time it takes to negotiate it, an effect furthered by the play of "i" sounds within the words and the tongue-slowing "l" and "d's" that end them. (By contrast, the only thing that slows

the reading of the opening three words of "The Red Wheelbarrow" is the linebreak that follows "depends"). The sonically intensified focus gives the chronotopic implications of the words time to blossom in the mind, evoking a highly compressed, *in media res* narrative in which the female-figured urn is equated to a woman whose involuntary wedding has taken place but whose long-awaited "ravishing" has not. The temporal implications of the phrase stretch backward into the causal mists in which the forced union was conceived and forward into the future in which it will be consummated, even as space is contracted to the sexualized zone of the "unravished bride"'s body. But this unequal chronotopic union is no more consummated than the allegorical wedding the phrase implies. "Of quietness" yokes the highly concrete image of the unravished bride to an abstraction – "quietness" – that carries only the vaguest chronotopic implications.[17] The chronotope suggested by the implied narrative of "still unravished bride" dissolves into a drained image of non-consensual sexual relations between urns and "quietness".

Like Williams' steep linebreaks, Keats' sound play interferes with the reading process, tipping the balance of forces toward the centrifugality necessary for the bizarre implications of the opening line to register.[18] Reduced to its centripetal essence, all the first line says is "Hey, urn". But though the centrifugal chronotopic fireworks midwifed by the sound play are irrelevant to the rhetorical gesture, they are central to the effect and meaning of the poem, which is all about the collision between lived human time-space and the "deep" time-space of history, and the abstract time-space art seems to offer as an escape from both.

Thus, both the content and sound patterning of the second line continue to highlight and complicate the chronotopic identity of the urn. "Thou foster child of silence and slow time" regresses the body of the unravished bride to pre-nubility, and shifts that body from the relatively concrete space of ravishing (or lack thereof) to the abstract space of genealogy. With two beats distributed among three words and no repeated sounds, the phrase "Thou foster child" is palpably less sonically dense than "Still unravished bride", and correspondingly more centripetal, more readily comprehensible – and less chronotopic. The "foster child" is merely a box on a genealogy chart, biological time translated into diagrammatic space. By contrast, the clustered "s" and modulating "i" sounds of "silence and slow time", and the metrical inversion that slows the line by ending it on two strong beats, generate enough centrifugality to afford a glimpse of a time-space in which a liaison between these non-corporeal entities might take place.

In short, these lines generate a chronotopic flux that is much closer to what we saw in "The Red Wheelbarrow" than to what we saw in the excerpts from Whitman. However, like Whitman's, Keats' longer lines leave his syntax more intact than Williams', and generate correspondingly greater centripetal force. And though Keats' heightened density of sound draws centrifugal attention to individual words and phrases, the relative predictability of the iambic throb and the abab rhyme emphasize larger, and thus more centripetal, units of meaning. As a result of this greater centrip-

etal force, the chronotopic play in Keats' poem is less evanescent than that in Williams' poem. The chronotopic implications of the first two lines are much more substantial, easier to register and explicate, than the chronotopic implications of Williams' atomized lines; the shifts from one fledgling chronotope to another are more marked, creating the potential for active competition among the nascent chronotopes. Since, as in Williams' poem, each new chronotopic implication displaces and erases its predecessors, this competition can't be said to generate dialogue or other stability-dependent relationships; but unlike Williams', these chronotopic implications are distinct enough for us to register the bump from one to another and the differences among them without intensive analysis.

Though Keats is unlikely to have thought of himself as manipulating time-space, his interest in centrifugality-generating sound clusters and in maximizing the vividness of his verse clearly afforded him a sophisticated grasp of chronotopic poetics – a grasp so sophisticated that "Ode on a Grecian Urn"' probes the relationship between art and life via its negotiation of chronotopic instability:

> Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
> Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
> And, happy melodist, unwearied,
> Forever piping songs forever new;
> More happy love! more happy, happy love!
> Forever warm and still to be enjoyed,
> Forever panting, and forever young;
> All breathing human passion far above,
> That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
> A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.
> (1994: 185)

The first seven lines present the contrast between real life and the idealized life of art that is often been represented as the "meaning" of the poem. In the "happy, happy" two-dimensional art of the urn, life surrenders growth, change and consummation in exchange for being "forever new", "warm and still to be enjoyed", and "young". The trees "cannot shed" their leaves; the piper can't stop piping new songs; the lovers can't complete the playful chase that in life would lead to sex and other complexities of intimacy. By contrast, in the changing world "far above" the urn, human life is in thrall to the bitter causal logic of desire and suffering. In a description the Buddha would no doubt have approved of, "breathing human passion" leads inevitably to sorrow, "cloyed" surfeit of pleasure, fever and unslakeable thirst.

But when we examine the chronotopes associated with each side of this binary, the relationship between them turns out to be more complex than this ontological cartoon suggests. In the "happy" chronotope of the urn, time-space is hardly static; it is charged with vitality, warmth, even creativity (the piper keeps piping "songs forever new"). Space is emotionally anthropomorphic; even the tree limbs are "happy", and

space itself is so filled with "happy, happy love" that subjects and objects barely bother to distinguish themselves. By contrast, the time-space of the "real world" is constricted and static. Time has narrowed to a single tragic chain of events, in which even breathing leads to torment; space has narrowed to parts of a single symbolic body that represents a humanity so general that it lacks gender, history, or any marks of identity.

The competition between these chronotopes would seem to be over before it begins, with the urn's aesthetic time-space winning by knockout. Yet the poem is only half over, because though the poem's centripetal force is sufficient to distinguish and contrast these chronotopes, it is not sufficient to maintain their integrity – and thus a competition between them – in the following stanza.[19] If the poem were indeed about the superiority of idealized aesthetic stasis to "breathing human passion", this chronotopic instability would constitute an ironic and grievous failure, a demonstration that the aesthetic cannot even maintain its perfection for an entire poem. But Keats turns the chronotopic evanescence that could be a demonstration of the frailty of the aesthetic into a means of undermining the apparently absolute contradiction between the aesthetic realm and "breathing" human existence – and, in the process, expands and strengthens the poem's definition of "beauty":

> Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
> To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
> Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
> And all her silken flanks with garlands dressed?
> What little town by river or sea shore,
> Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
> Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
> And, little town, thy streets for evermore
> Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
> Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.
> (1994: 185)

The centripetality of the previous stanza – its fusion of its numerous descriptions, clauses and exclamations into a single sentence, in which each chronotope is afforded a neatly delineated syntactical space – maintained the contrast between the urn's "happy, happy" chronotope and that of "breathing human passion". The question that opens this stanza – "Who are these coming to the sacrifice?" – centrifugally undermines this contrast by containing no marker to indicate to which chronotope the question refers. This omission creates what Cristanne Miller calls semantic "doubling". When we first read the question, it clearly refers back to "the sacrifice" that is an inevitable consequence of breathing human passion, but when we reach the next line it just as clearly refers to the sacrifice enacted on the urn. As Miller, who develops this concept at length in her study *Emily Dickinson: A Poet's Grammar*, points out, semantic doubling tends to blur ontological boundaries – in this case, the ontological

boundaries that maintained the contrast between the urn's time-space and that of the "breathing human" world.

Though clarity of reference is re-established in the second line, the effects of this blurring are immediately apparent. In this stanza, the chronotope generated by the description of the urn bears little resemblance to the "happy, happy" time-space of the previous stanza. In the previous stanza, we literally couldn't see the trees for the "happy" boughs. In this stanza, we see not only the sacrificial animal but the fact that it is a cow; not only a human figure but the fact that he is a priest; not only the sacrificial nature of the scene but the "silken" texture of the heifer's "flanks". Most importantly, the patent loveliness of the scene does not spare us from hearing the "lowing" of the animal being led to the slaughter. In short, the always-brimming newness of the "happy" chronotope has been replaced by a grim causality that seems to have been spliced from the DNA of the chronotope of "breathing human passion". Just as "passion" leads directly to sorrow, the Classical beauty of this scene is leading directly to death.

The loss of the brimming happiness of the urn-world – and thus of the aestheticism it represents – is reflected in the eerie depopulation that is the subject of the rest of the stanza. However lovely the "little town" may have been, its inhabitants are gone forever. The chronotope of the urn is no longer an idealized alternative to the tragedies of breathing human time and the history that accumulates in its wake. The freshness, warmth and exquisite, self-renewing vitality of art have been ineluctably infected by imminent slaughter, irreversible loss, and a "desolation" that is literally unspeakable, for in this chronotope, there is "not" and will never be "a soul" to break the "silence" and memorialize the lost population with a narrative of their disappearance.

Keats, who famously urged poets to live in uncertainty and doubt, does not resolve the conflict between the two chronotopes associated with the urn-world. Indeed, the paratactical structure of the poem – and the centrifugal force that paratactical omission of connections generates – make it difficult to perceive the conflict between these accounts. One chronotope simply decays into the next, without any centripetal framework to mark or define their relationship – and that decay tacitly but crucially expands the meaning of the aesthetic. In the poem's famous conclusion, Keats' speaker addresses the urn as follows:

> When old age shall this generation waste,
>   Thou shalt remain in midst of other woe
> Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st
> 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,'— that is all
>   Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.
> (1994: 185)

Had the poem only associated the urn with the "happy" chronotope, the statement "that is all / Ye know on earth" would be a purely sarcastic comment on "beauty"'s

self-delighting exclusion and distortion of the far-from-beautiful "truth" of the "breathing human world". But thanks to the chronotopic decay in the penultimate stanza, the urn also represents a conception of beauty that acknowledges and even comprehends sacrifice, tragedy, and unspeakable desolation – and a beauty that embraces rather than whitewashes the ugliest facts of human existence may indeed be "Truth".

Whatever one makes of this particular interpretation, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" demonstrates that chronotopic evanescence can play as significant a role in prosodically organized poetry as in free verse, and that prosodic devices, like free verse linebreaks, can amplify the chronotopic energy of language by increasing the centrifugality of the text. It also suggests that the chronotopic evanescence promoted by the centrifugality of poetic language can itself embody complex, nuanced modes of thinking – modes of thinking as complex and nuanced as, though qualitatively different from, those embodied in prose narratives by networks of interrelated chronotopes.

The centripetal forces of prose narrative can generate chronotopes stable enough to define genres, cross centuries and languages, and even survive the cultures that gave rise to them. The webs of relationships among chronotopes we find in these narratives can enable us to examine humanness from multiple perspectives simultaneously; can test the notions of morality and metaphysics by subjecting them to the very ontologies from which they were designed to shield us; and can stage with unforgettable vividness and precision the mysterious intersections between consciousness, language and reality. However, the glorious stability of prose narrative chronotopes has at least one significant drawback: there are some perspectives, some notions, some intersections between consciousness, language and reality that cannot be represented via networks of stable chronotopes. We have glimpsed such perspectives already in the phenomenological precipice to which "drained images" bring us, in Williams' visceral enactment of language's attempt to manifest reality, in the autobiography of an abstraction presented in "My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun", in Keats' chronotopic cross-breeding of "beauty" and "truth". In short, as Dickinson demonstrates in the following poem, the chronotopic evanescence of poetic language can do for ontology what "drained images" do for phenomenology – making visible the seams, the cracks, the aporia, inherent in chronotopic conceptions of reality, and the normally inconceivable vistas that lay beyond them:

> It was not Death, for I stood up,
> And all the Dead, lie down –
> It was not Night, for all the Bells
> Put out their Tongues, for Noon.
>
> It was not Frost, for on my Flesh
> I felt Siroccos – crawl –
> Nor Fire – for just my marble feet
> Could keep a Chancel, cool […]
> (Fr 355: 379)

The centripetality of narrative emphasizes chronotopic relationships, demonstrating that heterogenous, even contradictory time-spaces can compose "literary artistic" wholes. As Dickinson gleefully demonstrates here, the centrifugality of poetry emphasizes the opposite, the irreconcilable disparities between one time-space and another. Dickinson's attempt to narrate "It" – some unspeakable experience – leads her to create a paratactical crazyquilt of chronotopes, a narrative composed of narratives that fail not only to tell the story of that experience but even to locate a time-space through which the story could be conceived. The first two lines conjure a post-apocalyptic time-space in which life and death are so hard to distinguish that the speaker is forced to analyze her own posture to tell whether she herself is alive or dead. The next couplet shifts the search for "It" to a chronotope in which "Night" is a condition as difficult to identify as "Death" was in the previous chronotope. In this chronotope too, epistemology has been reduced to brute mechanical fact; it is only the grotesquely childish stuck-out "Tongues" of the "Bells" that enables the speaker to make even the simplest ontological distinctions.

As Miller observes, in poems of this degree of centrifugality, "there is no stable relation between spiritual truth, the facts of existence, and the terms of language" (1987: 39). In fact, the speaker's attempt to determine that "relation" – to define the "spiritual truth" of "It" in terms of language that denotes "facts of existence" such as "Death", "Night" and the speaker's sense of her own body – undermines the chronotopes through which she (and we) normally conceptualize the "facts of existence". When the speaker looks to the primal distinction between life and death to understand "It", she finds herself in a world in which life and death can barely be told apart; when she looks to her own bodily perceptions as a measure, she finds her body morphing wildly under her phenomenological gaze.

But as Miller points out, the centrifugality of Dickinson's language doesn't moot her epistemological efforts; paradoxically, it furthers them, as "[t]hings are perceived and understood through […] cumulative, even contradictory, definition" (1987: 147). Dickinson characteristically carries this tendency to an extreme, but the same statement could be applied to Williams, Whitman and even Keats. Indeed, this method of "definition" is a logical consequence of the chronotopic evanescence generated by the centrifugality of poetic language. Since poets' language is too centrifugal to create stable systems of chronotopic relationships, poets have no way of maintaining coherence or consistency among their chronotopes – and thus the delineation of any aspect of reality becomes, like Keats' definition of beauty in "Grecian Urn", a "cumulative, even contradictory" chronotopic process. In the centrifugal context of poetry, the very failure of chronotopic definition becomes a mode of definition. Each of Dickinson's speaker's failed attempts to delineate "It" brings her closer to the harrowing intimacy required to approach the phenomenon, from the distant impersonality of "Death" and "Night" to the bodily perception of heat and cold, to the precarious reflexivity through which we attempt to "taste" the difference between ourselves and mere versions of our lives:

And yet it tasted like them all,
The figures I have seen
Set orderly for burial
Reminded me of mine,

As if my life were shaven
And fitted to a frame
And could not breathe without a key,
And 'twas like midnight, some,

When everything that ticked has stopped
And space stares all around,
Or grisly frosts, first autumn morns,
Repeal the beating ground;

But most like chaos, stopless, cool,
Without a chance, or spar,
Or even a report of land
To justify despair.
(Fr 355: 379-80)

How does one define or even refer to a state that is "most like chaos", when the very noun "chaos" reduces the overwhelming phenomenon it is intended to denote to tidy demarcation? How can one even know whether one is trying to define a "spiritual truth", a "fact of existence", or the relation between them, when the effort to know itself undermines the chronotopic foundations of knowledge – i.e, that knowledge itself depends on our ability to conceptualize time-spaces in which we can locate and define our epistemological objects?

Dickinson gambles that by intensifying chronotopic evanescence, by using poetic language to stage and restage the spectacle of one time-space being shoved aside by another, she can enact the chronotopic equivalent of negative theology, defining an indefinable time-space by naming the time-spaces that cannot name it. From this perspective, the implicit shipwreck metaphor that emerges in the final stanza is calling attention to the vantage point the previous stanzas have created through their cumulative, contradictory failures to define a vantage point from which to know "It": a vantage point that is defined by the wreckage of the time-spaces through which we attempt to know. "It" can only be known when every attempt to define space and time founders, can only be defined or narrated through language that subjects the reader to that foundering. The failure of the chronotopic vessels that make knowledge possible becomes, here, the beginning of knowledge of what lies beyond them.

This essay cannot conclude, for at best it marks a beginning. By focusing on a few defining features of poetic language – enjambment and prosody – I have tried to suggest how the various degrees of centrifugality of poetic language may affect the "literary artistic" mobilization of chronotopic energy in poetry. This demonstration is

not only based on slender evidence.[20] It also leaves unconsidered the most interesting questions regarding chronotopes and poetry. What, for example, are the chronotopic effects of important elements of poetics such as voice, metaphor, persona, mode of address, and so on? What happens to chronotopic energies in narrative poems whose centripetal force approaches that of prose narrative? And what of the opposite end of the spectrum, poems whose rhetoric is so abstract that their language is essentially achronotopic? By delineating the shortcomings of my account in "Fleshing Out the Chronotope", I hope I have cleared the way for a full exploration of the poetic career of the chronotope.

Endnotes

1. Of course, productive work has also been done on chronotopes in dramatic literature and memoir; there has also been chronotopic analysis of some poetry, though for reasons I will explore below, the chronotope has thus far found much more limited application in poetic analysis.

2. See "Fleshing Out the Chronotope", in which I offer a taxonomy of textual (as opposed to generic) chronotopes. In this volume, what I refer to as "local" chronotopes are called "minor" chronotopes (see Bemong and Borghart).

3. Though I didn't realize it at the time, this assumption reflects the sort of moralizing ideology that often infects critical use of the centripetal/centrifugal binary. Bakhtin, of course, explicitly states that centripetality and centrifugality are interdependent, ideologically neutral forces, equally inherent in and essential to the life of language and the individualities and collectivities for which language provides the medium. In my account, centripetality is implicitly portrayed as a repressive force, centrifugality as a liberating one.

4. Henceforth I will refer to Emily Dickinson's poems following the Dickinson conventions, i.e., the Fr-number followed by the page numbers from the authoritative Franklin edition (1998).

5. A rush to synchronic reading is particularly dangerous in analyzing poetry because most poetry utilizes, and is definitively shaped by, the centrifugal force of linebreaks – specifically, their attenuation of the synchronic force of syntax, which prompts us to read sentences as entire thoughts composed of temporally synchronous elements, into a diachronic process in which the phrase-by-phrase unfolding of language generates a series of tentative readings that displace and revise one another. As I have discussed elsewhere (1994), Dickinson tends to heighten the centrifugal effects of linebreaks through her idiosyncratic use of dashes.

6. Susan Howe's *My Emily Dickinson* (1985), a central work of Dickinson criticism, offers an extended exploration of the intertextual and cultural resonance in "My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun" that profoundly shaped my reading of the poem.

7. Of course, language does not play an identical or equal role in mediating subjectivity and intersubjectivity. As Whorf and Sapir famously argued, individual perception may be shaped by language – witness the experiments that show that native speakers of Australian aboriginal language divide up a color spectrum in very different places than English speakers do. However, anyone who has spent time with preverbal infants knows that subjective perception does not depend on linguistic mediation; humans can, and do, perceive what we have no language for. By contrast, intersubjectivity *does* depend on language. Without language, there is no way to communicate individual perception, no way to externalize or generalize subjectivity, no way to put it into dialogue with the perceptions, the subjectivities, the lives of others.

8.   Many poems often self-consciously exploit poetic language's ability to straddle the worlds of pure abstraction and fleshy chronotopic vitality. For example, when Shakespeare famously asks "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day", the sonnet's answers generate a chronotope solely for the purpose of limning the non-chronotopic transcendence of the beloved. As the poem fleshes out the summer's day chronotope, it does so only to define the beloved as that which exists beyond such definable time-space, for no matter how "fair", all time-space must "from fair decline".

9.   This generalization may well hold even for most narrative poems, since linebreaks and other poetic devices tend to attenuate chronotope-stabilizing centripetal forces.

10.   Since Williams was a frustrated painter with a passionate interest in modernism's impact on traditional representational art, there is no doubt that he was aware of the play between abstract form and concrete representation that he enacts here by splitting "wheelbarrow" across the linebreak.

11.   The awkward thud of "water" is a chronotopic effect. Lexically, "rain / water" is directly parallel to "wheel / barrow" – both represent the enjambed division of compound words into their component parts. But whereas the unveiling of "barrow" radically alters our sense of what we are looking at and the time-space implied by it, "water" adds nothing to the implications of rain, and so, for a moment, space and time, which have literally mutated line by line, stop growing.

12.   "The Red Wheelbarrow" is also a famous example of the visual element of composition in free verse. Williams' arrangement of couplets emphasizes the physicality of the text, the differential space occupied by three words and one, the instability of this arrangement (if the words were my daughter's building blocks each couplet would topple into incoherence), as well as the whiteness and pervasiveness of the blank space that surrounds them. The white space crowds and permeates the text, turning it into a fragile, fitful effort of language and significance to overcome the semantic blankness of existence – to assert that "so much", or indeed anything at all, "depends upon" the details of the world we wrestle into words.
      Williams' layout makes readerly space – the readers' spatial encounter with the text – part of the experience of the poem. As my painstakingly diachronic reading suggests, the spatiality of the text – the short lines, steep linebreaks and couplets – directly structures our temporal experience of the poem. Even the least expert reader of poetry will read this poem in three- and one-word bursts divided by inexplicable pauses, and experience the halting, stop-and-start quality that is crucial to the poem's more sophisticated effects. In other words, the poem fuses textual space and readerly time, creating what is in effect a chronotope – but a chronotope that exists not in the world of the text (the realm of rain-glazed red wheelbarrows has nothing to do with the extra-diegetic plane of regard from which we perceive the poem's layout) but in the world of the reader.
      Though the fusion of the physical space of the text with temporality of the reading experience that gives rise to such "experiential chronotopes" is common in free verse, it is not ubiquitous. Many free-verse poems minimize experiential chronotopes by using long, more or less regular lines – lines, that is, in which the use of space approaches that of prose. The less the layout of the poem calls attention to itself, the smaller the role of linebreaks in structuring the flow of reading, the less likely a poem is to give rise to an experiential chronotope.

13.   Brief as they are, these bits of Williams and Whitman represent much of the range of centripetal and centrifugal force we find in free verse poetry. There are, of course, more extreme examples of both centrifugality and centripetality in free verse, but most fall somewhere in the range these examples delineate.

14.   Poetic narratives – that is, narratives which approach the qualities of characterization, plot and so on typical of prose – represent an obvious exception to this generalization. Even in Homeric

epics, though, in which chronotopes can be quite stable and extend for many lines of text, chronotopes tend to manifest locally and paratactically, displacing one another rather than contributing to larger networks of relationship. Authors like Milton and Wordsworth who seek to create the sort of chronotopic complexity we find in prose often find themselves at odds with the centrifugality of their poetic medium, which intensifies parts at the expense of wholes.

15. The conflict between prosody and syntax plays out directly whenever poets use "poetic license" to place words in the "wrong" order to maintain prosodic patterns.

16. Just as free verse poems vary in their degrees of enjambment, prosodically organized poems vary in their degrees of sonic density. Keats – Williams' model when he was young – tends to maximize the sensuous qualities of his language, and thus the centrifugality of his poems. Poets like Robert Frost or Philip Larkin tend to play down those qualities, creating a much more idiomatic, plain-spoken and centripetal poetic language.

17. The promotion of the weak final syllable of "quietness" and the open-ended hiss of the concluding "s" sound make the line, and thus the strangeness of the opening address, seem to linger.

18. Though free verse tends to be less sonically dense than prosodic verse, free verse poets also use sound and stress clustering to increase the centrifugality of phrases and lines. However, in the absence of a regular prosodic structure, those effects tend to be intermittent and fleeting, with linebreaks constituting a much more important means of controlling the speed and coherence – and thus the centripetality and centrifugality – of the poem.

19. It could be argued that this stanza represents not a competition but an example of chronotopic framing, i.e., that the words "far above" signal that the truncated tragic chronotope associated with the world of life is in fact only life as seen from the chronotope of the urn. In this reading, the "happy, happy" aestheticized time-space takes in so little of life that it cannot conceive of an entire human life, or even body. The stanza would thus present not only a view of life as seen from the world of the urn, but an implicit critique of the existential distortion built into the idealized chronotope of the urn-world.

20. The model of the poetic career of the chronotope I offer here is based on examples limited to poems in my native language, English, and to a small fraction of the forms and varieties even within this corpus – for the most part, modern American verse. This narrow evidentiary base means that the model should be regarded as a hypothesis to be tested and contested rather than an authoritative or comprehensive account.

Part V

SOME PERSPECTIVES FOR

LITERARY THEORY

Internal Chronotopic Genre Structures: The Nineteenth-Century Historical Novel in the Context of the Belgian Literary Polysystem

Nele Bemong

Chronotope Theory and Polysystem Theory

One of the most fundamental problems of systemic approaches to literature is the question of how systemic principles might be translated into a manageable methodological framework. This contribution proposes that a combination of functionalist-systemic theories (in casu Itamar Even-Zohar's Polysystem theory – especially the textually oriented versions[1] – and the prototypical genre approach proposed by Dirk De Geest and Hendrik Van Gorp 1999) with Mikhail Bakhtin's chronotope theory shows great promise in this respect. Since I am primarily interested in literary genres, the prototypical genre approach assumes a central position in my theoretical framework. My main argument is that Bakhtin's chronotope concept offers interesting perspectives as a heuristic tool within a functionalist-systemic approach to genre studies, enabling the study not only of the constitutive elements of genre systems, but also of their mutual relations.[2] Bakhtin's own vague definitions of the concept somewhat hamper the process of putting it into practice for this purpose, but with the aid of the distinction between generic and motivic chronotopes, that problem can be solved. A detailed, comprehensive account of the theoretical premises underlying my proposal can be found in Bemong (under review); here I restrict myself to the basics.

My methodological proposal takes its starting point in Bakhtin's initial conception of the chronotope (literally: the "time-space" or fictional world in the text) as a concept that "provide[s] the basis for distinguishing generic types [and that] lies at the heart of specific varieties of the novel genre" (FTC: 250-1). As noted by Bemong and Borghart in the introduction to this volume, Bakhtin's definitions of the chronotope concept in his essays from the 1930s remain very vague. Nevertheless, of the four levels on which chronotopes play a role (see Bemong and Borghart again), their role in the discerning of generic types seems to be the central one, given that it is explicitly brought to the fore in the subtitles of Bakhtin's two chronotope essays: FTC has as its subtitle "Notes toward a Historical Poetics", and BSHR is subtitled "Toward a Historic Typology of the Novel". I focus here on this generic purport of the term, concentrating on the heuristic potential of the chronotope as a concept that "both defines genre and generic distinction and establishes the boundaries between the var-

ious intrageneric subcategories of the major literary types" (Clark and Holquist 1984: 280).

As Borghart and Bemong point out, an important fact with respect to the vagueness surrounding the chronotope concept in Bakhtin's texts is the use of the term on (five) different levels of abstraction. This paper deals mainly with the levels of the so-called *minor* or *motivic* chronotopes and the *generic* chronotopes. *Generic chronotopes* are in recent Bakhtin scholarship equated with the world view of a text, while a *motivic chronotope* or chronotopic motif is "a sort of 'congealed event'", a "condensed reminder of the kind of time and space that typically functions there" (Morson and Emerson 1990: 374). Keunen (2000a), Vlasov (1995: 44-5), Ladin (1999: 213, 231) and Collington (2006: 88) have all made similar distinctions, albeit with differing degrees of explicitness and using slightly different terms.[3]

The combination of Bakhtin's chronotope concept and Polysystem theory is new, but certainly not far-fetched: there are quite a lot of similarities between Bakhtin's and Even-Zohar's views on literature and on the tasks of literary scholarship. Bemong (under review) comprehensively discusses these similarities. Here, a brief survey will suffice.

The inspiration of both scholars partly comes from the same sources (the Russian Formalists, especially Jurij Tynjanov, the Czech Structuralists, and Jurij Lotman).[4] The most salient similarity between Polysystem theory and Bakhtin's theory is the functionalist nature of their approach to literature (and culture). Such a functionalist approach does not start from the assumption that the essence of literature can be clearly defined (or, for that matter, that it *should* be clearly defined). Rather, it is intent on revealing precisely the specific synchronic and diachronic dynamics of literature within its global cultural and social constellation by meticulously analyzing and reconstructing the relationships between literature and its surrounding "systems" or "zones", such as ideology and the arts, and/or between a national literature and its foreign counterparts. The goal of such an approach is to "reconstruct the ways in which literature has been identified, demarcated and defined as a specific cultural, socio-semiotic phenomenon", determined by a particular context and prone to diachronic changes (De Geest 1997: 164). Central to both Even-Zohar's and Bakhtin's view on literature is therefore the relational approach to literary phenomena. In "Response to a Question from the *Novy Mir* Editorial Staff", Bakhtin advocates the necessity of a relational view of literature: "Literature is an inseparable part of culture and it cannot be understood outside the total context of the entire culture of a given epoch". He explicitly draws attention to "the interconnection and interdependence of various areas of culture" – both synchronically and diachronically – and emphasizes that "the boundaries of these areas are not absolute, that in various epochs they have been drawn in various ways" (2002b: 2).

The innovative feature of Polysystem theory, compared to the dynamic functionalism of the 1920s, is of course that socio-semiotic systems are held to form "a multiple system, a system of various systems which intersect with each other and partly over-

lap, using concurrently different options, yet functioning as one structured whole, whose members are interdependent" (Even-Zohar 2005: 40). In order to understand one stratum (system) of the polysystem, one has to view it in light of the other strata.[5] The different systems making up a polysystem are hierarchically structured by means of center-and-periphery relations. However, a polysystem does not consist of just one center and one periphery, but rather of several such relations. Diachronic changes take place when elements or functions start to move from one position to another.[6]

Another important similarity between the polysystemic view on socio-semiotic phenomena and Bakhtin's writings lies in the fact that in these dynamic processes of interconnection, both scholars reserve a key role for the lower cultural strata. Even-Zohar emphasizes that literary or cultural polysystems require a regulating balance between their canonized (official, higher) and non-canonized (non-official, lower) strata in order not to collapse or disappear (2005: 45).[7] In order to be able to cope with the changing needs and circumstances of the society in which it functions, any polysystem needs a strong subculture, since new elements often come from peripheral strata.[8] Bakhtin, too, stresses that "the most intense and productive life of culture takes place on the boundaries of its individual areas and not in places where these areas have become enclosed in their own specificity" and that "[t]he powerful deep currents of culture (especially the lower, popular ones) […] actually determine the creativity of writers" (2002: 2, 3). Therefore, "failure to include noncanonized strata in the analysis of the literary polysystem can obfuscate the dynamics behind interference" (Codde 2003: 113).

The last important similarity is the importance attached to diachronic intersystemic relations. (Poly)systems are not, as is often wrongly presumed, simply static, synchronic networks of relationships; they are essentially dynamic, evolving networks where "at any given moment, more than one diachronic set is operating on the synchronic axis" (Even-Zohar 2005: 39). Exactly the same idea can be found in Bakhtin's essays, when he describes several chronotopes in their intersystemic relations to other systems (older as well as contemporary, and literary as well as non-literary - see FTC: 85, 88-9, 96; BSHR: 14-5; 2002b: 5).[9] Bakhtin's added observation that all "[these] elements derived from various other genres assumed a new character and special functions in this completely new chronotope […] and ceased to be what they had been in other genres" (1990d: 89) shows clear affinities with Even-Zohar's assertion that "[a]n appropriated repertoire does not necessarily maintain source culture functions" (2005: 65).

Chronotopes, Prototypes and Systemic Relations

My central hypothesis in combining Even-Zohar's Polysystem theory with Bakhtin's chronotope theory is that the chronotope concept may be of great value for one of the major goals that Polysystem theory has set for itself, to wit the functional study of the mechanisms of intersystemic *interference* and *transfer*,[10] together with the study

of the role of *models*, the importance of which Even-Zohar has stressed from the very beginning of his publications on Polysystem theory (see 1978: 31-2). A system's dynamics, Even-Zohar argues, is not influenced by individual canonized texts, but by certain literary models that manage to establish themselves as productive principles through the system's *repertoire*, which is the aggregate of laws and elements that govern the production of texts. This idea is captured in the notion of "dynamic canonicity", which, rather than being a reference to the acceptance of a text as a finalized product in a set of sanctified texts ("static canonicity"), refers to the introduction of texts into some repertoire through a model (Even-Zohar 1990: 19).

Even-Zohar defines models as one of the structural levels of the repertoire of a polysystem. Repertoire and model both have a textual as well as a cognitive meaning (see Codde 2003, Andringa 2006 and Bemong (under review)). As such, they closely reflect the ambiguity inherent in Bakhtin's chronotope concept. Analytically, models are "the combination of elements + rules + the syntagmatic ('temporal') relations imposable on the product" (Even-Zohar 2005: 18). For the potential consumer, however, models hold a cognitive significance: "the 'model' is that pre-knowledge according to which the event is interpreted ('understood')" (ibid.: 19). Even-Zohar also links his model hypothesis expressly to the concept of *schemes* in cognitive studies (ibid.: 20), a concept that Keunen (2000a) connected to chronotopes.[11] And in a text entitled "The Making of Repertoire, Survival and Success under Heterogeneity", Even-Zohar links repertoires to people's "sense of orientation in the world", to a "recognizable way of handling life situations" (2005: 180-1), while Andringa conceives of repertoires as "a *mental equipment* that enables its users to act and to communicate in a literary (sub)system" (2006: 525; emphasis in original). All these connections warrant the link between repertoires, and more specifically, models on the one hand, and chronotopes, in the sense of world views, on the other.[12]

Since I am primarily concerned with the study of literary genres, a few more words are needed on the nature of a functionalist-systemic approach to genres. Like De Geest and Van Gorp (1999), I study genres from a prototypical perspective rather than from an ontological, essentialist point of view. Since empirical evidence confirms intuitive insights that it is wrong to assume that all members of a genre category are wholly equal (from an evaluative as well as a structural perspective), literary genres ought to be treated as *prototypically structured categories*.[13] Category (i.e., genre) membership is not perceived as a binary question, but as a matter of degree. Besides central, prototypical instances of a category, there are also more marginal, peripheral instances that nevertheless still belong to the same category. Particular instances – especially the ones that are located in the periphery of a particular category – can belong to multiple categories at the same time. Internally, each category is structured around one *or more* prototypes, as a system of the center-periphery type. The prototype is the instance that functions cognitively as an optimal representation of the entire category:[14] it maximally represents it and shares a minimal number of characteristics with other, neighbouring categories (De Geest and Van Gorp 1999: 40-1).

A prototypical genre approach thus enables one to take into account the relational aspect of literary systems, the complex interactions between diverse genres and the particular position of a genre within the global generic system, while leaving room for the study of diachronic change (ibid.: 38). It is also striking that the way in which people are believed to deal cognitively with prototypically structured categories bears remarkable similarity to Even-Zohar's description of how consumers "passively operate" a repertoire: they look for connections, for links. "A 'consumer' is an individual who handles a ready-made product by passively operating a repertoire. 'To passively operate' basically means to identify relations (connections) between the product and one's knowledge of a repertoire" (Even-Zohar 2005: 29).

Prototypes thus function in a cognitive manner, just like repertoires and models do. Generic chronotopes, which can be described as the world constructions of a literary text (expressing a certain world view), *also* function in a cognitive manner: the similarities in world constructions function as Wittgensteinian *family resemblances* that connect a text with other texts. From a prototypical view of genres, it would therefore be logical to state that generic chronotopes function as prototypes, internally structuring genre systems. The linking of chronotopes and prototypes is further warranted by the fact that temporal and spatial schemata function as substrata for other processes of meaning (Keunen 2000b: 68). Moreover, chronotopes are also related to a number of key issues such as "the time-space and the image of man in the novel" (BSHR: 19), the configuration of "'reality' within the world of a text" (Beaton 2000: 181), and the relation between characters and the diegetic world, more specifically the degree to which the two categories influence one another (see BSHR: 19-25). Ladin formulates this idea as follows: "The characteristics of a given chronotope define what actions and events are possible within it, and what those actions and events mean" (1999: 231).

When we take into account that there are two different kinds of chronotopes and reformulate these ideas in polysystemic terms, the following picture emerges. Within the internal, horizontal structure of a genre, generic chronotopes define the family resemblances with respect to historical time, social space, individual character, and moral action (Morson and Emerson 1990: 300). As such, they can play a key role in the study of synchronic *intra*systemic (i.e., intrageneric) relationships. Generic chronotopes also seem to occupy a privileged position for the analysis of various *inter*systemic relationships: (1) with extra-literary systems – Holquist defines the chronotope as "an optic for reading texts as x-rays of the [presumably extra-textual, NB] forces at work in the culture system from which they spring" (Bakhtin 1990b: 425-6); (2) between canonized and non-canonized systems of one and the same polysystem or between different canonized systems; (3) with other genres in different literary polysystems (e.g. the Belgian historical novel vis-à-vis the French, the German, the English, etc. historical novel).

Eduard Vlasov's description of "adjacent chronotopes" – what I call *motivic chronotopes* – as chronotopes that "are more 'capacious' than the basic ones and incorporate

in themselves works of different literary genres and historical periods" (1995: 44-5) suggests that the second type of chronotope might be a privileged heuristic tool for studying: (1) *synchronic* relations between the various generic chronotopes within the internal prototypical stratification of a genre, i.e., *intra*systemic synchronic relations; (In my analysis of the Belgian historical novel below, I illustrate how the chronotope of the castle comes to function as a kind of *generic marker*) (2) *synchronic* relations with other systems (i.e., *inter*systemic synchronic relations); (3) both intersystemic and intrasystemic *diachronic* relations.

Morson and Emerson's description of motivic chronotopes confirms this view: in the case of motivic chronotopes, they argue,

> [a] particular sort of event, or a particular sort of place that usually serves as the locale for such an event, acquires a certain chronotopic aura, which is in fact the '*echo of the generic whole*' in which the given event typically appears. [...] When these events or locales are used in other genres, they may 'remember' their past, and *carry the aura of the earlier genre into the new one*; indeed, they may be incorporated for this very reason. (1990: 374; emphasis added)

The potential of generic and motivic chronotopes as heuristic tools in the description and mapping out of these different polysystemic relationships (inter- and intrasystemic, synchronic and diachronic) is illustrated below in an analysis of the internal chronotopic structure of the Belgian historical novel in the 1830s and 1840s (i.e., in the first two decades after the creation of a Belgian state) in relation to neighbouring systems (both national and non-national, canonized and non-canonized). This analysis may at the same time serve as an illustration of Even-Zohar's model (he even talks about "laws") of how new, young literary polysystems establish themselves.

The Establishment of the Belgian Literary Polysystem

When Belgium became an independent state in 1830, an entire national literary polysystem still had to be "created". In this process, the sudden political independence for a state which had never before existed in the precise form that it then took played a rather prominent role. One Belgian historical novelist characterized the task of literature in the new nation-state as follows: "Create and help to create a national literature, for it will be the strongest pillar of the national building!" (Ecrevisse 1846: 15; my translation). This functionalist view of literature is in line with a statement in Even-Zohar's diachronic socio-semiotic study of the (apparently uniquely European) role of literature in the making of nations, to wit that "possessing a 'literature' belonged to the indispensabilia of power" and that every European nation since the birth of western civilization has strived after a national literature (2005: 111). In the remainder of this section, I offer a brief outline of how the canonized prose system in Belgium came to be. Following that, an analysis of the genre of the historical novel

illustrates how the chronotope concept might help us to gain better insights into the inter- and intrasystemic relations that a particular system – here, a particular genre[15] – maintains with adjacent systems of different types.

Since there was no indigenous prose tradition, Belgian novelists could not turn to or benefit from extant repertoires. According to Polysystem theory, any weak or defective literary polysystem has two major options available for becoming a proper, independently operational polysystem able to function while confining itself to its home repertoire; that is, a system that possesses a sufficient home stock (a state which, according to Even-Zohar, all polysystems strive for[16]). These options are: (1) adopting some other system (or parts of it) and its idiom, or (2) producing what is lacking by means of the home inventory (i.e., the repertoires of one's own, non-canonized systems) (Even-Zohar 1978: 56). I think that it would be a methodological advantage to bring chronotopes into this theoretical framework, especially when the study of diachronic change is concerned. In terms of an *inter*systemic extrapolation of what is known as "Shklovskij's second law" – the assumption that peripheral properties are likely to penetrate the center of a system once the capacity of the center to fulfil certain functions (i.e., the repertoire of the center) has been weakened (an assumption, that is, that operates on *intra*systemic relations; Even-Zohar 2005: 47) – one can study the evolution of the Belgian literary polysystem, and especially the ways in which it enlarged its home stock, in terms of generic chronotopes. It is my hypothesis that the transfer of models occurs by way of the transfer of generic chronotopes; thus, generic chronotopes can play a key role as a heuristic tool in the study of inter- and intrasystemic interferences.

First, however, it needs to be stressed that, given the context of romanticism and the then prevalent discourse on "the national spirit" (Herder), the first half of the nineteenth century was characterized even more strongly than other periods by a discourse that focussed on the urgent need for a nation to possess a *truly national* literature. Even-Zohar has pointed out the crucial role of literature in the creation of nations such as the German, Italian, Bulgarian and Czech. "In each of these cases", Even-Zohar states,

> a small group of people, whom I would like to call 'socio-semiotic entrepeneurs,' popularly known under various titles, such as 'writers,' 'poets,' 'thinkers,' 'critics,' 'philosophers' and the like, produced an enormous body of texts in order to justify, sanction, and substantiate the existence, or the desirability and pertinence of such entities – the German, Bulgarian, Italian and other nations. At the same time, they also had to bring some order into the collection of texts and names which in principle could be rendered instrumental in justifying what their cause [sic]. (2005: 120)

All these national identities are thus to a high degree "literary", for "[i]t is by now widely accepted that there would have been no German nation without the German literature" (ibid.).

The Belgian nation may be safely added to Even-Zohar's list. In Belgium, the question of whether this national literature should be written in Flemish or in French – both of which were "national Belgian languages" – was at first of secondary importance (see Bemong 2006b: 114-5). However, the unproblematic attitude towards this bilingual character of Belgian national literature lasted no longer than two decades or so. The change in attitude, and the ensuing bifurcation into two separate unilingual polysystems – a Flemish-Belgian and a French-Belgian – coincided with an increasingly critical attitude towards the Belgian state and tensions between the two communities which persist to this day.[17] The following passage from Even-Zohar's paper "Language Conflict and National Identity" proves that this situation is an illustration of a universal phenomenon:

> As long as no disagreement has arisen with regard to the propagated or imposed identity, even the most blatant linguistic diversity has never encouraged language conflicts. These geographically adjacent languages may be either contiguous, that is, of a rather close structural nature, or discontiguous, that is, remotely related if at all. It is only when there have emerged doubts and disagreements around the question of identity that language, having become the most marked carrier of that identity, has become an issue of often violent conflict. […] Once the dissident group manages to organize its activities, language conflicts may go on as long as the ideological conflict is not solved. They may then become part of political struggle, dragging the state to interfere, and end with geographical and/or political separation between the groups. Indeed, they may not end at all. (2005: 129)

With regard to the first two decades after Belgian independence, however – and this is most important with respect to the situation I am presenting here – there existed a single bilingual Belgian literary polysystem.

Now I want to examine how this polysystem made use of the two options available for becoming a proper, vital one and how it increased its repertoire. (Following that, I illustrate the role that chronotopes can play in the description of these processes.) According to Polysystem theory, weaker polysystems[18] – and this is the first option – will readily borrow items that they themselves are lacking from adjacent polysystems that possess them. And indeed, the Belgian literary polysystem partially built its canonized system by treating adjacent literary polysystems, especially those of the neighbouring countries France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Great-Britain, as source polysystems.[19] Thus, the Belgian polysystem acted like any new national cultural polysystem:

> when the various European nations gradually emerged and created their own cultures – most explicitly vehiced by their new literatures, languages, and official histories – certain center-and-periphery relations were unavoidably present in the process from the very start. Cultures that devel-

oped earlier, and which belonged to nations which influenced, by prestige or direct domination, other nations, were taken as sources for more recent cultures (including more recently reconstructed ones). (Even-Zohar 1990: 24)

From these adjacent polysystems, the weaker polysystem draws elements or properties (or rather: repertoires, in the *textual* sense) missing from its own, thus striving after heterogeneity and enlargement of its own stock.

On the one hand, the adoption of these foreign elements and repertoires was facilitated by the multilingual status of the Belgian literary polysystem: all languages dominant in the immediately neighbouring countries (French, German, and Dutch) were spoken by certain communities of the Belgian state.[20] On the other hand, however, two important problems presented themselves with respect to this option.

The first of these concerns the multi*cultural* counterpart of the multi*lingual* character of the Belgian literary polysystem. While the Flemish-speaking people, and especially the large numbers of Flemish working class people, were still mostly illiterate in this period, the French-speaking part of the public was better schooled and to a much higher degree familiar with foreign literary traditions. This was especially the case for French literature, but other European literatures entered the Belgian polysystem as well, albeit predominantly via *contrefaçons* (reprints that were made without consent of the author or publisher) of French translations. Walter Scott's historical novels, for example, were introduced into Belgium mainly via reprints of French translations (Deprez 1990: 124-5; Charlier 1948: 103, 329; 1959: 38). Dutch translations of these novels started to appear from 1824 onwards (more than thirty within a period of less than twenty years - Gielkens 2008: 126-7), and reprints of these might have circulated in Belgium as well.[21] However, most Dutch readers read Scott's works in French (or German) translations, just as was the case in Belgium (see Den Tenter 1984: 8).

The *contrefaçon*-practice was widespread in nineteenth-century Europe and especially flourished in Belgium, where there were no statutory regulations on the subject until the 1850s (Deprez 1990). During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Belgian market was literally flooded with French literature due to this practice. Since none of the institutions that controlled the center of the polysystem could exercise supervision over this non-canonized system operating at the margins of legality, the explicit rejection of this peripheric system by the said institutions (literary critics, the church, historical novelists) did not have much effect, especially since the reading public (the market) was rather receptive to popular novels by authors such as Eugène Sue (see Bemong 2004). Thus, certain elements or repertoires from this system were able to gain access to the center of the polysystem (e.g. to the genre of the historical novel, see below).

However, the *availability* of foreign models did not coincide with an unproblematic *accessibility*. Because of their illiteracy, many Flemish citizens had no access to these

models.[22] This potential Flemish reading public was predominantly familiar with non-canonized strata of subculture such as the rich culture of oral storytelling. And while the French-speaking public had a higher level of education, most of them had no ability in Dutch, so *they* had no access to the models from the Netherlands, which also became more widely available thanks to the *contrefaçon*.

Ideological and political motives played a role as well – and here we touch upon the second problem. The option of borrowing elements from adjacent polysystems was stridently rejected by large numbers of Belgian writers for reasons of national ideology. This is in line with a general tendency in societies that are characterized by a rising nationalism: any use or interference of "alien" systems is rejected and prohibited as "a threat to national integrity" (Even-Zohar 2005: 58). Pieter Ecrevisse voices the "universal agreement" in Belgium in a preface to one of his historical novels when he asserts that, in order to arrive at a truly national literature, the Belgians should begin by "pushing all foreign models aside" (1846: 15-6; my translation). National literature was emphatically seen as organically related to the nation itself, and both the producers and institutions of the Belgian literary polysystem emphasized the incompatibility of the national character (the *Volksgeist*) with foreign repertoires, i.e., with foreign mores and manners. Again, the Belgian situation here serves as an illustration of a more universal phenomenon, which Even-Zohar characterizes as follows: "the connection between repertoires and groups has been conceived of as an inherent relation, meaning that a certain identifiable repertoire is conceived of as built-in into the very 'nature' of a certain identifiable group" (2005: 174). Consequently, people will sometimes go to great lengths in order to maintain the existing, familiar repertoires, since these are seen as linked to their "sense of orientation in the world" (ibid.: 181).

This belief partly explains the general hostility to foreign literary models at this time. The particular, extreme hostility displayed towards French ones (e.g. Jules Janin, Eugène Sue, Frédéric Soulié, Honoré de Balzac, etc.) was also the result of the perceived immorality of French contemporary literature, which was pilloried throughout Europe in the nineteenth century (see Leerssen 2003: 55-6) and was seen as evidence for the depravity of the French people and the French nation as a whole. It was feared that an introduction of this repertoire into the Belgian literary polysystem would lead to a corruption of traditional Belgian mores and manners, which were explicitly praised in many historical novels. The fact that France kept threatening to annex the Belgian state long after its independence and the nine-year-long refusal of the Dutch King William I to recognize the new state did not help to make these foreign literary models acceptable.

The reverse logic also held: novelists believed that they could safeguard the national character and traditional mores and manners against corruption if they could only replace "the monstrous foreign literature by a chaste and truly national one" (Ecrevisse 1846: 8; my translation). That particular goal could be realized by laying more emphasis on the *second option* available for establishing a canonized system, to wit the transfer of repertoires from the indigenous non-canonized systems, such as folklore.

Even-Zohar was not the first to note that literary novelties in the canonized system are often borrowings from the non-canonized system (including e.g. folktales)[23]; Shklovskij had done so before him (see Even-Zohar 1978: 19). With specific reference to nineteenth-century literature, however, Even-Zohar added that "a non-canonized system was the *sine qua non* for a dynamic and vivid evolution of the canonized one. The canonized system got its popularity, flexibility and appeal by a constant and positive struggle with the non-canonized system" (ibid.: 19-20). Especially in Flanders, the oral folk tradition was very much alive, and it was kept vital through theatrical performances and puppet shows based on popular material.[24] A similar feeling of anti-French particularism led writers all over western Europe to turn to their own medieval literature and folk traditions: fairy tales, ballads, chapbooks, folk songs, local legends, and the like became new and important sources of inspiration (Leerssen 2003: 80-1). Moreover, the use of folkloric elements that were so widely known also aided the intended "democratization process enlarging the social range of literary consumers" (Even-Zohar 1978: 56).

Polysystem theory lends itself particularly well to dealing with such multilingual and multicultural cases because they make the heterogeneity of the polysystem quite "palpable", as Even-Zohar puts it (2005: 41). More specifically, the genre of the historical novel in nineteenth-century Belgium is a particularly well-suited case in point to illustrate the potential of the chronotope concept in a prototypical and polysystemic genre approach, both in its synchronic and its diachronic aspects. It is the *one* genre that immediately gained a central position in the *canonized* system, despite the fact that is was heavily criticized and contested *as a genre* (see Bemong 2006c).

The Belgian Historical Novel in the Nineteenth Century

Now that the wider polysystemic context has been roughly sketched, I narrow the focus of my analysis. The aspects that receive central attention in my analysis of this genre are: (1) its internal prototypical, chronotopic structure in the decades under discussion; (2) the relations of each of these prototypes or generic chronotopes with adjacent (literary and non-literary) systems.

The historical novel was the first literary prose genre introduced into the Belgian polysystem. From the outset, it was quite explicitly given the task of legitimizing the creation of a separate state in 1830 by creating a national consciousness and a national past for a nation-state that had never before existed in this specific form (see Bemong 2006b; 2008b: 115). Some five years later, a second prose genre arose: the novel of manners, set in contemporary times.[25] These two genres would dominate the center of the prose system for decades to come.

In fact, the first question that should be asked here is whether "the historical novel" was considered *as a genre* by contemporaries, or whether the subsuming of a number of texts under the denominator *historical novel* is rather an *a posteriori* construction

of literary scholars. That the former is true becomes apparent from the generic indicators in subtitles and prefaces, and from contemporary discussions between novelists, critics and historiographers concerning the benefits and dangers of the genre (Bemong 2006b; 2006c). But when one actually reads the texts that are labelled *historical novel*, it soon turns out that the texts lumped together under this umbrella term form a hybrid and heterogeneous corpus. Establishing necessary and sufficient criteria for membership would be quite a challenge. But it would also be a very reductive undertaking. It is my belief that far greater interest lies in the *functional differences* between texts that nonetheless present themselves as belonging to the same genre[26], i.e., in the internal differentiation within the genre, in how certain texts begin to function as models for other texts within the same genre system, while still others seem to be modelled after texts that belong to *other* genres (systems).

During the first two decades of Belgian independence, the poetics of the Belgian historical novel were largely determined by a number of functions which the genre was called upon to perform. The following passage from a preface reveals the diversity of communicative functions assigned to the genre (both by the novelists themselves and by contemporary critics): "Shake the dust off of our old charters; show us our privileges; add lustre to the heroic feats of our ancestors; make those glorious forefathers appear before our eyes; teach us the customs, traditions and splendor of Belgium! Let everyone present his offerings at the altar of the fatherland" (Ecrevisse 1846: 15; my translation). In fact, three separate functions that were assigned to the genre come together in this passage: (1) evoking nationalist feelings amongst the nineteenth-century Belgians through the portrayal of glorious episodes from the ancestral past (i.e., a purely *nationalist* function); (2) disseminating knowledge about the national past (a more *didactic* function); and (3) stressing the genealogical link and continuity between ancestral and contemporary virtues and manners in order to check the spread of the alleged corruption of the national *genius* by France (a corruption that, it was feared, would find its culmination in a future annexation) (i.e., a moral, *ethical* function as well as a nationalist one). The main function – creating a past for the Belgian nation and providing legitimization for the newly created state – thus consisted of several "sub-functions".

I have argued elsewhere (Bemong 2008b: 118-24) that important insights can be gained into this essentially hybrid genre if we link the abovementioned three functions with three prototypical forms of historical novel. The distinction between these three models or prototypes can be formally described in terms of generic chronotopes. The first function is predominantly realized by historical novels that draw attention to great episodes of the national past and portray national heroes fighting for the freedom of their country. The primary goal is to make these heroes serve as examples of patriotism to contemporary Belgians. The generic chronotope that functions as the world construction underlying this first type of historical novel is the *chronotope of the adventure novel of ordeal*.[27] However, compared to the *traditional* version of this chronotope as Bakhtin described it, the nineteenth-century variant in historical novels has undergone some important changes. The most significant change is that

adventure time remains "intensified", but not "undifferentiated" (FTC: 90): the actual historical context and historical time are no longer completely irrelevant with respect to plot development and characters. In historical novels of this type, historical events are allotted a certain amount of importance, enough to have an influence on the events in the individual (usually a romantic) plot-line (see Bemong 2006a: 279, 290; 2008b: 119-21).

The second function – disseminating knowledge about the new fatherland amongst Belgian citizens, who were often only acquainted with the history and peculiarities of their own region – is realized by two generic chronotopes, which are also regularly combined in one polychronotopic constellation.[28] One is the *chronotope of the adventure novel of everyday life*, the other is what Keunen has called a *documentary chronotope*.[29] These chronotopes, which provide the opportunity to include "some kind of social space" (Clark and Holquist 1984: 282) and realize everyday life within the chronotope, presented historical novelists with a model for depicting their mother country, especially different *everyday* aspects of its past. What Schmeling says about the *Satyricon* (one of the examples that Bakhtin himself gives of the chronotope of the adventure novel of everyday life), namely that it might be used "as a primary historical source to provide us with a picture of life in the first century A.D." (1996: 484), also holds for this type of novel.

Lastly, *idyllic chronotopes* (which often occur in combination with a chronotope of the adventure novel of ordeal, as becomes clear from textual analyses; see e.g. Bemong 2007: 518, 535) fulfil the function of emphasizing the genealogical connection between nineteenth-century Belgians and their forebears. In these historical novels, remote and rural corners of the fatherland are portrayed, where the inhabitants have lived for countless generations in the same isolated place and where, thanks to this marginal position, the ancestral virtues, customs and traditions have been preserved in a virtually uncorrupted state as reliable sources of past traditions (see Bemong 2008b: 123-4).[30]

The first generic chronotope in this prototypical structure – that of the *historical adventure novel of ordeal* – shows clear evidence of intersystemic relations with foreign models such as the French adventure novel and the *Gothic novel*, which was very popular in neighbouring countries (the French *roman noir*, the German *Ritter-, Raüber- und Schauerromane*).[31] Indeed, this prototypical category came to life partly thanks to the transposition of models or repertoires from adjacent literary polysystems such as the French and German. At the same time, this generic chronotope also ties in with certain elements and models (especially with respect to plot structures, motives, compositional-organizing devices, and characters) with which Belgian readers were familiar through their oral folk tradition. However, it is the *idyllic chronotope* which most clearly shows the influences of the non-canonized system of folklore and most distinctly proposes an alternative to the elements borrowed from other polysystems (see Bemong 2007: 518-35, 545-7).

In my analysis of the forms and functions of the genre, I stated that the second function is fulfilled by two generic chronotopes that tend to occur in combination with each other. With respect to the intersystemic relationships, however, these chronotopes help connect the historical novel to two separate systems, one literary, one more-or-less extra-literary. The *chronotope of the adventure novel of everyday life* links a certain type of historical novel to the second important prose genre, the novel of manners, and thus creates a kind of continuum. That there was no clear demarcation between the historical novel and the contemporary novel of manners was already acknowledged by the contemporary critic P.F. Van Kerckhoven, who wrote that "it would be rather difficult to state exactly until what year one could go back in time in the description of manners and events without encroaching upon the domain of the historical novel" (1845: 101). In other words, when exactly does a novel become a historical novel? The *documentary chronotope*, on the other hand, connects the historical novel to the adjacent system of historiography. In the 1830s and 1840s, historical prose fiction and historiography were not yet clearly separated from each other. Historians wrote extensive historical narratives that were founded not only on material gathered in archives and libraries but also on a heterogeneous collection of myths, metaphors, stereotypes, and allegories.[32] Conversely, many historical novelists explicitly assumed a position equal to that of historians with regard to the historical value of their works (see Bemong 2006c, 2007: 138-61). Some works are simply impossible to categorize as one or the other (something which is of course no longer necessary or relevant when one entertains a prototypical view on genres).[33]

Lastly, I want to illustrate briefly the role of motivic chronotopes in this network of systemic relationships. I take the chronotope of the castle as an example. This motivic chronotope appears in a large number of nineteenth-century historical novels. As Bakhtin himself observes, "[t]he historicity of castle time has permitted it to play a rather important role in the development of the historical novel" (1990d: 246). But more importantly, it appears in historical novels that belong to very different generic prototypes. As such, it synchronically and intrasystemically connects the different generic chronotopes within the internal prototypical stratification. This particular chronotope occurs so often that it starts to function as some kind of generic indicator. Of course, it is not restricted to the nineteenth century; as Bakhtin notes, it arose together with the Gothic novel[34], so it also links the historical novel diachronically to that particular tradition and is thus responsible for certain intersystemic relations with other European literary polysystems.

Bakhtin himself has described the role of the motivic chronotope of the castle as follows:

> The castle is saturated through and through with a time that is historical in the narrow sense of the word, that is, the time of the historical past. The castle is the place where the lords of the feudal era lived (and consequently also the place of historical figures of the past); the traces of centuries and generations are arranged in it in visible form as various parts of its archi-

tecture, in furnishings, weapons, the ancestral portrait gallery, the family archives and in the particular human relationships involving dynastic primacy and the transfer of hereditary rights. And finally legends and traditions animate every corner of the castle and its environs through their constant reminders of past events. It is this quality that gives rise to the specific kind of narrative inherent in castles and that is then worked out in Gothic novels. (FTC: 245-6)

Nevertheless, in combination with different generic chronotopes, the particular *connotations* of this motivic chronotope may vary. This is best illustrated by focussing on narrators' comments, which so often accompany the occurrences of this motivic chronotope, and which can take the form of reader addresses, evaluative comments or generalizations.

In many *historical adventure novels of ordeal*, castles play an important role as the spaces where the action takes place, and they are also typically the homes of the villains. In the tradition of the Gothic novel, much attention goes to descriptions of secret passageways, subterranean dungeons, and so on. In this type of historical novel, the castle symbolizes the arbitrariness of feudal law and the impunity with which the rich and mighty could tyrannize the poor and weak in medieval times. In prototypical *documentary chronotopes*, castles are predominantly viewed in their particularity: the reader is provided with detailed information about the particular castle portrayed: its history, its previous and contemporary owners, size, location, the state in which it has been preserved, and so on. Lastly, in an *idyllic chronotope*, usually only the ruins of a castle remain, and it becomes a place that exemplifies the transience of life. In this generic chronotope, the images of castle ruins are often contrasted to those such as rocks, rivers, and forests, to emphasize the cyclical continuity of nature versus the finiteness of man-made objects.

Conclusion

As far as this case study is concerned, I believe that only a chronotopic heuristic framework is properly fit to *describe* the heterogeneity that characterizes the corpus of nineteenth-century Belgian historical novels, precisely because the chronotope is a concept that has a cognitive as well as a textual aspect to it. But it is only when this framework is used in combination with a polysystemic framework that one can not only describe but also *explain* this heterogeneity, by mapping out the different types of polysystemic relations (inter- and intrasystemic, synchronic and diachronic) with neighbouring systems (both national and non-national, canonized and non-canonized).

Systems-theoretical approaches to literature have been received fairly critically in literary studies. For a large part, this criticism concerns the lack of methodological elaboration in the theoretical assumptions of these approaches. The methodological

framework proposed here is intended to provide a solution by meeting the need to translate (poly)systemic principles into heuristic models. As this case study demonstrates, Bakhtin's chronotope concept, and particularly the distinction between generic and motivic chronotopes, offers a promising heuristic tool for studying both inter- and intrasystemic relations, at least with respect to a functionalist-systemic, prototypical approach to genre studies. This methodological framework makes it possible not only to study the internal stratification of genres, but also to map diachronic changes in literary polysystems through a study of processes of transfer and interference.

Endnotes

1.   Even-Zohar has continually reworked and revised his Polysystem theory: 1978 – itself a collection of papers written between 1970 and 1977; 1979; 1990; 1997; 2005. In the early collection *Papers in Historical Poetics* (1978), the essays present not so much a developed theory as a collection of "mere theoretical premises" (Even-Zohar 1979: 287). His 1979 contribution to *Poetics Today*, which was given the explicit title "Polysystem Theory", offers a more synthetic treatment of what he calls the "PS hypothesis" (ibid.), and is intended to clarify some major points and comment upon some widespread misunderstandings.

   During this continual process of revision, Even-Zohar gradually moved away from the more textually oriented versions of the 1970s, which still closely followed Tynjanov's theories, and began to shift the focus from the study of literature to other semiotic sign systems and other cultural disciplines. From the 1990s onwards, his polysystemic approach to literature and culture has continuously come closer to an action-oriented approach in which the institutional component is more important and which makes use of socio-economic models and concepts along the lines of Bourdieu's field theory.

   On the face of it, Even-Zohar's textually oriented versions of Polysystem theory provide a more suitable theoretical framework for combining a functionalist-systemic approach to literature with a chronotopic approach to genres. Nevertheless, the notions of *repertoire* and *model*, which became central to the later versions of his theory, are also of great importance to my main hypothesis (on which more below). Moreover, the ideas voiced in the earlier versions are often more sharply formulated in later versions. It is for these reaons that I have decided to take most of my quotes and references from the latest version of Even-Zohar's papers (2005). Occasionally, however, when certain notions or examples that I deem relevant do not appear in this latest version, or when the formulation of certain ideas seems more adequate in one of these, I refer to earlier versions of the theory

2.   One of the most pressing questions involved in systemic approaches to literature has exactly been "how to study the constitutive elements of a system, including their mutual relations" (Fokkema 1997: 178).

3.   Keunen uses the terms "genological chronotopes" and "motivic chronotopes". Vlasov argues that Bakhtin discusses eight basic chronotopes and six "adjacent chronotopes" (1995: 44). Ladin makes a distinction between "genre-defining and historically significant chronotopes, such as the 'adventure time' of the Greek romance, the 'folkloric chronotope', the 'Rabelaisian chronotope', and the 'idyllic chronotope'" on the one hand (1999: 213), and "several 'lesser' chronotopes such as 'the road', 'the castle', and 'the threshold'" – precisely the type of chronotopes that Vlasov calls "adjacent chronotopes" – on the other (1999: 231). Finally, Collington makes no *explicit* distinction, but she does seem to hint at such a difference when she states that "cer-

tains [chronotopes] sont principaux ou organisateurs, alors que d'autres sont plutôt liés à un thème précis" (2006: 88).

4. See Even-Zohar (1990: 1; 2005: 35) and Bakhtin (2002b: 1, 2). On Bakhtin and Tynjanov, see Weinstein (1992) and Tihanov (1998: 35-8).

5. One should bear in mind that *system* is a heuristic concept (it has no ontological meaning), and that *inter-* and *intra-* might best be regarded as relative concepts that need to be defined concretely in each case. It should also be noted that the literary polysystem "is simultaneously *auto*nomous and *hetero*nomous with all other semiotic co-systems" (Even-Zohar 1990: 23; emphasis in original). The particular *degree* of autonomy/heteronomy depends on which facts or systems are at the center of the polysystem. In nineteenth-century Belgium, the degree of autonomy of the literary polysystem was still rather low, and compared to politics and ideology (especially national ideology), the *facts of literary life* – what Eikhenbaum termed *byt*: literary ideologies, publishing houses, literary criticism, literary journals, etc. – functioned less at the center than they appear to do nowadays.

6. E.g. from the center of one system to its periphery, and consequently to the periphery of an adjacent system (within the same polysystem or not), then to the center of that system, etc.

7. My use of the term *canonized* has nothing to do with the texts making up the literary canon (the so-called *classical* texts). I use the term to refer to the systems or strata that are central at a certain point in time, i.e., that are accepted as legitimate by the dominant circles or institutions (critics, periodicals, literary awards, etc.) and are productive in their role as models. See also Codde's critique of Even-Zohar's "oversimplified equation of *canon* and *center*" (2003: 103-4).

8. On the basis of these insights, Even-Zohar formulated the "universal law" that "[a]ll literary systems strive to become polysystemic" (1979: 301).

9. A detailed discussion can be found in Bemong (under review).

10. See Even-Zohar's papers "Laws of Cultural Interference" and "The Making of Culture Repertoire and the Role of Transfer" (both 2005).

11. Codde speaks of "scripts" in this context (2003: 99).

12. The cognitive functionality of literary genres that Morson and Emerson recognize in Bakhtin's writings is indeed compatible with such a view on the role of models. See Bakhtin (2002: 5) and Morson (1991: 1087).

13. De Geest and Van Gorp (1999: 39) take their cue from Wittgenstein's concept of *family resemblances*, Zadeh's concept of *fuzzy sets*, and Rosch's prototype theory.

14. These prototypes need not exist in reality; they are theoretical fictions. *Prototypical instance* might therefore be a better suited term.

15. In "Universals of Literary Contacts", Even-Zohar explicitly singled out genres as one possible type of system (1978: 50).

16. Even-Zohar calls this the "law of proliferation" (2005: 47) or "law of polysystemization" (1979: 303), and claims it to be a universal law. In the early versions of his theory, he introduced the notion of "literary optimum", the concept of which is "a hypothesis on the *optimal volume* of a polysystem, i.e., the repertoire considered necessary for those sets of relations without which the system is not considered to be able to function in an optimal way" (1978: 54-5; emphasis added). From the 1979 version onwards, however, he relinquishes this idea of an optimal volume and hypothesizes that "in order to fulfil the needs, a system actually strives to avail itself of a *growing inventory* of alternative options" (1979: 303; 1990: 26; emphasis added). Here, Even-Zohar already seems to be speaking about an *ever*-growing inventory. In 2005, the idea of a

limit (borrowing until there is sufficient stock) disappears altogether when he reformulates his law of proliferation as follows: "in order to operate and remain vital a system has to be *always enhanced* with a growing inventory of alternative options. Hence, inter-systemic transfers, in whatever constellation or volume, are inevitable, and are carried out in spite of resistance" (2005: 47; emphasis added). It should be emphasized in this context that a certain amount of change is beneficial for any polysystem and that change should not be identified with instability: controlled changes in a system's repertoire may, in fact, heighten a system's stability ("To hypothesize a relation between heterogeneity and persistence is therefore elementary in any theory of complex systems. The gist of the argument is that since it is the multiplicity of repertoires which co-exist as permanent competitors that makes it possible for a system to change; and since change is necessary because systems necessarily clash and conflict with other systems, heterogeneity allows systems to carry on"; Even-Zohar 2005: 176).

17.   It would be interesting to scrutinize the causal relations between the developments in the literary order and those in the political and social orders.

18.   Even-Zohar defines "weak" as "a situation in which a system is unable to function by confining itself to its home repertoire only. This 'weakness' is a result of the relative insufficiency of the home repertoire vis-à-vis an external system within reach, whose repertoire happens to suit its needs" (1978: 67). The degree of weakness of a literary (poly)system is conceived of exclusively in terms of literary features, although political or economic weaknesses may go hand in hand with such literary weakness: "Other factors are obviously correlated with the state governing the literary [poly]system, but it is the weakness of the latter as such [i.e., its deficiency or insufficiency, its not having all the types or genres, NB] that determines whether or not it will assume a dependent position vis-à-vis another [poly]system" (Even-Zohar 1978: 55). Thus, a whole network of intricate relations is hypothesized.

19.   English literature entered the Belgian polysystem mostly via the mediation of another neighbouring country: either through "intermediary" French (or in some cases: German) translations, or through reprints of Dutch translations, which were *also* often intermediary translations via the French (on title pages one often finds "translated from the French after the English"). See Van Gorp (1996: 5, 7, 10, 13) and Van der Wiel (1999: 69).

20.   Everyday Flemish speech was (and is) extremely close in form to everyday speech in the Netherlands and mutually intelligible to a very high degree. Whether the former should be described as 'Flemish' (suggesting a distinct language) or (a variety of) 'Dutch' continues to be a matter of contention to this day.

21.   Consequently, we should consider translated literature as "a system fully participating in the history of the polysystem, as an integral part of it, related with all the other co-systems" (Even-Zohar 1978: 22). Especially in a polysystem that has not yet been crystallized, i.e. with respect to a literature that is relatively young and still in the process of being established, translated literature "simply fulfils the needs of a young literature to put into use its newly founded (or renewed) tongue for as many literary types as possible in order to make it functionable as a literary language and useful for its emerging public. Since a young literature cannot create major texts in all genres and types immediately, it benefits from the experience of other literatures, and translated literature becomes in such a way one of its most important systems" (ibid.: 24). Therefore, translated literature as a system should always be included in the synchronic and diachronic study of the polysystem.

22.   See Even-Zohar: "For many members in a society, large parts of a repertoire, most importantly the dominating one, may not be accessible due to lack of knowledge or competence (such as lack of education, etc.)" (2005: 16).

23. Ecrevisse himself is one of the novelists who make abundant use of the rich home inventory of folklore in their novels. Many of his novels even start with a reference to the folk culture, e.g. the narrator leading the narratee into a hut on the moors, where an elderly villager starts to tell them a local legend.

24. In his memoirs, the most important nineteenth-century Belgian novelist, Hendrik Conscience (who was also the one to write the first historical novel and the first contemporary novel in Flemish), recalls a puppet show that he attended as a young boy. It was this, he tells us, that prompted him to go and read the chap books from which the material was taken. This was his introduction to the phenomenon of *literature* (Conscience 1914: 31-40). For a discussion of the importance of the oral folk tradition, see Bemong (2009a/b).

25. An interesting detail is the fact that the contemporary critic J.F.J. Heremans argued that this had been the standard chronological order in the evolution of every literary polysystem since Greek antiquity: according to him, the historical novel always preceded the novel of manners (1845: 139-40).

26. If we "look", as Wittgenstein urges us to do ("What is common to them all? – Don't say: 'There *must* be something common […] but *look and see* whether there is anything common to all. […] To repeat: don't think, but look!"; 1968: 31), at how these texts present themselves to the reader, we certainly see that they use similar generic indicators and similar paratextual strategies.

27. Bemong (2006a) presents an analysis of such a historical adventure novel of ordeal.

28. See Bemong (2008a: 279-80 and 2008b: 122-3) for discussions of an example. I would like to emphasize that all the different generic chronotopes can of course be combined in one and the same work; for reasons of clarity and brevity, I restrict myself here to the salient forms.

29. Keunen 2001: 424-7. Bakhtin uses the term "realistic novel of emergence" (BSHR: 24), while Morson and Emerson talk about "this [chronotope of] historical emergence" (1990: 411). In order to be able to speak of a documentary chronotope, two important requirements have to be met. The diegetic world should be semantically recognizable to the reader, and a strong pragmatic interaction is required: the reader should be able to learn something from the story, and this lesson should be useful in the extra-literary, social world (Keunen 2000b: 89-90. Of course, in historical novels this knowledge pertains to the past). Narrative time in a documentary chronotope can be characterized as an assimilation of historical time, and the time-space becomes identifiable with a particular historical era, showing clear signs of the social and historical forces at work. See also Borghart and De Dobbeleer elsewhere in this volume.

30. This classification into three main functions and three corresponding chronotopic forms, which together make up the internal, prototypical structure of the genre, holds for the period 1830-1850. The next question, of course, is how diachronic generic developments (i.e., changes concerning the formal elements: their renovation or replacement, etc.) help to reveal how a literary system reacts to a change in functional needs; how the functions of the literary order change in relation to the adjacent social order; in Tynjanov's terms, how the (poly)system "mutates" (Tynjanov 1971: 76). That is a question I hope to answer in the near future.

31. Van Gorp (1996) and Van der Wiel (1999: 69-77) discuss the reception of the Gothic novel and the German *Schauerroman* in Dutch literature. Since both authors deal primarily with the period just before Belgian independence (1790-1820s), their results are also relevant to the development of the Belgian literary polysystem. According to Van Gorp (1996: 18), there were also intersystemic relations between the genres of the Gothic novel and the historical novel in the Netherlands in the 1830s (he talks about "a mixture of genres").

32. See Nachtergaele (1993) and Bemong (2007: 72-84) for a discussion of the isomorphic resemblances between the two genres. These are of a narrative, documentary, spatio-temporal and functional nature. Moreover, some authors practised both genres.

33. The generic indicators in the (sub)titles of a number of works testify to this ambiguity: besides "historical episodes", "historical scenes" and the like, which are indicators that refer to already more peripheral instances than do texts labeled "historical novel", we also encounter indicators such as "history", "historical fact" and "chronicle", i.e., indicators that are used for historiographical texts as well.

34. "Toward the end of the seventeenth century in England, a new territory for novelistic events is constituted and reinforced in the so-called "Gothic" or "black" novel – the *castle* (first used in this meaning by Horace Walpole in *The Castle of Otranto*, and later in Radcliffe, Monk Lewis and others)" (FTC: 245).

The Chronotope and the Study of Literary Adaptation: The Case of *Robinson Crusoe*

Tara Collington

In the "Concluding Remarks" to the chronotope essay, Bakhtin offers the following passage to explain the complex relationship between a work of art and its socio-historic context:

> The work and the world represented in it enter the real world and enrich it, and the real world enters the work and its world as part of the process of its creation, as well as part of its subsequent life, in a continual renewing of the work through the creative perception of listeners and readers. Of course this process of exchange is itself chronotopic: it occurs first and foremost in the historically developing social world, but without ever losing contact with changing historical space. We might even speak of a special *creative* chronotope inside which this exchange between work and life occurs, and which constitutes the distinctive life of the work. (FTC: 254)

While Bakhtin seems to be referring to the myriad possible interpretations of a work of art by current and future generations of readers[1], I would suggest that one very specific interpretive act seeks fully to engage a work within various socio-historic contexts, allowing it to be creatively renewed: the process of adaptation. In reworking a familiar story according to existing social, cultural, and aesthetic norms, the adaptor ensures its "subsequent life" in a new context. While I will not pursue the notion that this situation constitutes its own special chronotope, I will argue for the centrality of the chronotope to understanding the theory and practice of adaptation.

One of the most common strategies of adaptation is, of course, to update the source by situating the story in a more contemporary and hence more accessible setting. Although Bakhtin himself does not discuss adaptation, with the transposition of spatial and temporal coordinates so often at play, the chronotope would seem a concept ideally suited to the field of adaptation studies. However, this concept has played a fairly limited role in theoretical discussions of adaptation, aside from some notable exceptions in the field of film studies.

This paper proposes a reflection on the potential of the chronotope as a heuristic tool in the field of adaptation studies. My goal is to situate the chronotope in the context of adaptation studies[2], specifically with regard to perhaps the most central treatise in the field of literary adaptation, Gérard Genette's *Palimpsests*: *Literature in*

the Second Degree, and to draw attention to perhaps one of the most overlooked works in the field of adaptation studies, Caryl Emerson's chronotope-inspired *Boris Godunov: Transpositions of a Russian Theme*. I will demonstrate how the chronotope might be used in the study of literary adaptation by examining the relationships between Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe,* its historical sources, and Michel Tournier's twentieth-century adaptation of the Robinson story, *Friday*. My analysis draws upon three of the semantic levels of the chronotope presented in the introduction to this volume: (1) chronotopic motifs linked to two opposing themes: enthusiasm for European colonial expansionism and skepticism regarding the supremacy of European culture; (2) major chronotopes that determine the narrative structure of a text; and (3) the way in which such major chronotopes may be linked to broader questions of genre.

Since its publication in 1719, *Robinson Crusoe* has inspired numerous literary and film adaptations, even giving rise to a specific term, the "robinsonade", to describe an adventure narrative in which the protagonist struggles to survive in a natural setting far from civilization (O'Malley 2009). An analysis of the network of Robinson intertexts seems almost obligatory in theoretical discussions in the field of adaptation studies, whether the focus is on cinematic adaptation (Stam 2000: 66-7; Mayne 1988: 13-9), literary adaptation (Genette 1997: 357-67; Sanders 2006: 106-12), or a more general theory of adaptation (Hutcheon 2006: 143, 170). In fact, the Robinson story fits H. Porter Abbott's definition of what he terms "masterplots": "recurrent skeletal stories, belonging to cultures and individuals that play a powerful role in questions of identity, values, and the understanding of life" (2002: 192).[3] For Abbott, masterplots are often closely linked to certain character types and also to certain literary subgenres (2002: 45). In engaging in a comparative study of three varieties of "robinsonades" (historical narratives, Defoe's novel, and Tournier's novel), I am deliberately revisiting an oft-discussed intertextual matrix for several reasons. In focusing solely on written narratives, I am deliberately dissociating adaptation theory from questions of medium specificity, agreeing with Linda Hutcheon that "not all adaptations necessarily involve a shift in medium or mode of engagement, though many do" (2006: 170). The choice of these specific texts is also in response to Genette's (in my view, mistaken) assertion that the temporal and spatial transpositions effected by Tournier have little impact on our understanding of this adaptation. In undertaking a chronotopic analysis of the texts in question, I hope to demonstrate the importance of such diegetic transpositions. Finally, in engaging in a chronotopic analysis of the relationship between source and target texts, I hope to demonstrate the heuristic potential of the chronotope as a tool for the study of adaptation, and also to suggest that it may serve as the foundation for a Bakhtinian theory of adaptation

The Chronotope in Adaptation Studies

Aside from literary studies, the chronotope is most often deployed as a tool for analysis in film studies, as film effects the visual concretization of space and unfolds over time. Among film scholars, Robert Stam was probably the first systematically to use a Bakhtinian methodology to forge an approach to comparative cinema studies that considers broad questions of history and genre while examining the representation of time and space in a film by studying aspects of setting, decor, pacing and rhythm as well as technical aspects relating to camera work. Film functions by reactivating well-recognized generic models (borrowed from literature or specific to film); therefore, the extent to which a film conforms to or deviates from the model (from our horizon of expectations), determines, in large part, our understanding and appreciation of the work in question. Stam's two monographs on cinematic adaptations of literature, *Subversive Pleasures* (1989) and *Literature Through Film* (2005a), as well as his introduction to a volume of articles on film adaptation (2005b), do in fact mention the chronotope briefly, pointing out its usefulness as a conceptual category but not according it a central role in adaptation theory. Stam and other film scholars use the chronotope not only to examine the relationship between a literary source and a film, but also to examine relationships between films as subsequent adaptations of a source text are produced. In the same vein, the chronotope may facilitate a comparative analysis of films within a specific subgenre. Thus, while some critics are concerned with the specific challenges of transferring a literary text to the screen, others use the chronotope as a means of structuring the comparison of shifting spatio-temporal frameworks between films, that is, within the same medium.[4]

In the field of literary adaptation, the most sustained examination of the theory and practice of adaptation remains Genette's *Palimpsests*. This systematic and highly-detailed account of the various processes and types of adaptation remains the cornerstone for all current criticism. More recently, as in the field of film criticism, scholars have begun to debate possible approaches to the study of literary adaptation, although no common consensus seems to have been reached, as studies adopt a wide range of approaches: those based in structuralism, genetic criticism and source-studies, and broader cultural-studies approaches (Cox 2000; Deppman, Ferrar and Grodon 2004; Scolnicov and Holland 1989; Groensteen 1998). As well, over the past decade or so, criticism has focused on shared strategies of adaptation common to various media (Mercier and Pelletier 1999; Plana 2004), and on the intersection between adaptation and the related notions of intertextuality and appropriation (Bouillaguet 1996). Interestingly, Bakhtinian methodologies have not made as substantial inroads in the field of literary adaptation as they have in cinema studies. For example, two recent studies of adaptation theory, Julie Sanders's *Adaptation and Appropriation* and Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation*, mention Bakhtin only in passing, and then only to evoke concepts such as "carnival" (Sanders 2006: 72) and the "dialogic" (Hutcheon 2006: 21).

I intend to argue for the centrality of the chronotope in a potential theory of adaptation and will juxtapose two differing perspectives regarding the significance of spatiotemporal transpositions in adaptation theory by contrasting Genette's *Palimpsests* and Emerson's *Boris Godunov*. In their studies of techniques of adaptation, both Genette and Emerson propose the dissociation of the story itself (considered a static norm along the lines of Abbott's "masterplot") from its temporo-spatial framework (which provides the locus for dynamic change). However, the two critics differ radically in the importance they accord to such transpositions. I will begin by briefly examining Genette's view on spatio-temporal transposition, and then will discuss in greater detail Emerson, whose own view of adaptation is firmly grounded in Bakhtinian literary criticism, and who uses Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope in order to outline a theory of adaptation.

In *Palimpsests*, Genette clearly distinguishes between "*diegetic* transposition" involving changes to the "diegesis", or "the spatiotemporal world" where the story takes place, and "*pragmatic* transposition, or a modification of the events and actions in the plot" (1997: 294). According to Genette, "transposition operates precisely […] by dissociating action and diegesis: e.g. by transferring the same – or almost the same – action into another world" (ibid.: 295). He terms changes to the spatio-temporal world "*transdigetization*" and acknowledges that it does not occur "without at least some changes in the action itself", noting that diegetic transposition "inevitably and necessarily entails a few pragmatic transpositions" (ibid.: 296). Genette treats other types of changes to the representation of time as a function of "potential transformations of the narrative mode" (ibid.: 286). Thus, he views changes to the temporal order – what he calls "temporal reshuffling" involving analepses and prolepses (ibid.: 286) –, as well as changes in the duration and frequency of events, as a function of narrative, analogous to changes in narrative voice.

To return to the category of diegetic transposition, Genette proposes a vast array of possible changes that it might encompass, including changes to a character's name, age and gender or nationality. He is also careful to single out as a separate category the case of "diegetic modernization" which involves the "wholesale transfer of an ancient plot into a modern setting" and the practice of anachronism, or "larding an ancient plot with modern stylistic or thematic details" (ibid.: 310). Whether or not an adaptation embarks on a wholesale modernization of the temporo-spatial framework, Genette contends that "the habitual movement of diegetic transposition is a movement of proximization: the hypertext transposes the diegesis of its hypotext to bring it up to date and closer to its own audience (in temporal, geographic, or social terms)" (ibid.: 304). In other words, adaptors rely on various types of diegetic transposition involving temporal, geographic and social translation as a means of actualizing a work for a contemporary target audience. For Genette, since diegetic transposition is merely one of many types of transposition at the adaptor's disposal, the impact of diegetic transposition on the potential reception of an adaptation can vary greatly. For example, in his analysis of Tournier's *Friday*, Genette points out that the French author shifts both the temporal framework of the story (from 1659 to 1759)

and its spatial framework (from an island in the Caribbean to an island in the Pacific) but then dismisses the significance of these changes. Genette deems the temporal framework to have been simply "arbitrarily transferred", and he contends that the "change in oceans […] has no real thematic function" (ibid.: 369). In this case, Genette seems to dismiss the possibility of according any significance to a diegetic transposition, a position with which, I think, Emerson would strongly disagree.

Emerson accords a far greater importance to diegetic transpositions, and this leads her to re-conceptualize the very nature of adaptation. In fact, Emerson's approach to adaptation is premised on the chronotope In her comparative study of various versions of the tale of Boris Godunov, she asserts that most discussions of adaptation are plagued by a confusion regarding the use of the terminology:

> Among the distinctions most often blurred is that between medium and genre. Problems ascribed to the one are often problems of the other. Discussions of transposition often delineate, for example, the move from novel to film. But to see the shift along that axis is misleading. Film, unlike the novel, is not a genre but a medium. Its equivalent would be print, or marble, or the acoustic building blocks of music – not a sonata or a sonnet. Genre has its conventions, medium its material constraints. […] Medium merely provides the material within which genre operates. (1986: 4-5)

Emerson thus suggests that we need a definition of genre that is conceptual, and not a function of the notion of medium and turns to Bakhtin's chronotope for help. The chronotope allows Emerson to distinguish between trans-media and trans-generic adaptations:

> […] if we conceive of genre in terms of chronotope, then a shift in medium may or may not occasion a shift in genre. The important changes in a narrative take place not when the medium shifts but when the chronotope changes. Within a new chronotope the events may be the same, but the probability and the significance of events happening in a certain way will have changed. There is a change in the evaluative aspect, the moral quality, of the narrative. (1986: 8)

Emerson compares various versions of the Boris story in a variety of what she terms "media"; that is, in history, folk-tales, drama and opera. She demonstrates how specific adaptors exploit the resources of their chosen medium (music in the case of opera), but she primarily focuses on generic or chronotopic transpositions, and what they might tell us about the importance of the story in shifting cultural contexts. For Emerson, these chronotopic shifts prove as interesting, if not more, than any shift in media:

> Masterpieces in a genre, powerful conceptualizations of a certain sort of time and space, always contain more than a given epoch can absorb. When these works are built upon in later times, different aspects of form

emerge as significant and thus encourage different patterns of response, specific 'counterversions'. A theme is *freed* from one context into another, and this liberation is the first step in transposing a theme. Across genres, in response to changing political needs and changing concepts of art, a known story accumulates new contexts and yet remains recognizably of one piece. (1986: 9)

As previously noted, film scholars have demonstrated that, while the chronotope may be a useful tool for examining inter-medial adaptation between novel and film, it also provides a tool for studying intra-medial adaptations. Adaptation can thus be understood not only in terms of a shift of medium, but also in terms of shifting temporo-spatial frameworks within the same medium. A change of the dominant chronotope, the overlapping of chronotopes, or the introduction of a new chronotope in subsequent versions of the same story reflect different cultural preoccupations and can account for the diversity of audience reactions to retellings of the same tale. I will turn now to an analysis of three instances of the Robinson masterplot, examining how a chronotopic approach might help us to trace shifting cultural preoccupations from historical sources to Defoe's literary text to one of its many subsequent adaptations.

From Historical Narrative to Fictional Narrative: *Robinson Crusoe* and its Sources

Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is generally acknowledged to have been inspired by a variety of historical sources such as accounts of various shipwrecks and published travel journals. Without engaging in an exhaustive study of possible sources, I have decided to focus on two of these real-life adventures as being of particular interest because of their wide-spread dissemination during the ten years prior to the publication of Defoe's novel and also because of the significant chronotopic differences between these sources and the literary work they may have inspired.[5]

The first account concerns the story of a "Moskito Indian" marooned for three years on an island in the Juan Fernandez archipelago (some six hundred kilometers off the coast of Chile), published by William Dampier in his *New Voyage Round the World* (1698: 84). The second, more famous account, relates the adventures of a young Scottish sailor, Alexander Selkirk, who was also left on an island in the Juan Fernandez archipelago in 1704 after quarreling with the captain of his ship. Selkirk spent four years and four months on the island before being rescued. Edward Cooke and Woodes Rogers, both captains on the expedition that inadvertently found Selkirk, each published their own versions of the rescue in 1712, while in 1713 the journalist Richard Steele published an article in *The Englishman* in which he recollected having met Selkirk shortly after his return to civilization. Roger's account stresses that Selkirk kept himself employed "in reading, singing Psalms, and praying; so that he said he was a better Christian while in this Solitude than ever he was before, or than, he

was afraid, he should ever be again" (1712: 5). Steele similarly highlights the fact that, after quelling thoughts of suicide, Selkirk reconciled himself to his condition through reading the Bible and through devoting himself to the hard labor of mastering his new surroundings. Indeed, he was so attuned to his environment and way of life that he had no real thought of leaving, and would later wax nostalgic about his island home: "When the Ship which brought him off the Island came in, he received them with the greatest Indifference, with relation to the Prospect of going off with them, but with great Satisfaction in an Opportunity to refresh and help them. The Man frequently bewailed his Return to the World, which could not, he said, with all its Enjoyments, restore him to the Tranquility of his Solitude" (1714: 172-3).

Although it is possible to debate whether or not Defoe *directly* adapted one or more of these sources, these historical narratives clearly formed part of the common popular imagination at the time. Two aspects of these tales are worth noting in terms of potential diegetic transformations to a readily-recognizable masterplot: (1) the time-frame of the island sojourn is fairly limited (three or four years); and (2) the island itself is situated in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Chile thus being, from a European perspective, on the far side of the world.

In suggesting that *Robinson Crusoe* is perhaps a literary adaptation of these historical sources, I am interested in two significant diegetic transformations effected by Defoe. First, the prolongation of the temporal frame: Defoe's protagonist spends 28 years, 2 months and 19 days on the island. Second, Defoe chooses to relocate the spatial context of the action. Crusoe's ship is sailing on the Atlantic side of South America, in the Caribbean, and he is shipwrecked on an island off the coast of Venezuela. Why should Defoe choose to decontextualize such a well-known story? Tournier, reflecting on the novel he chose to adapt, concludes that the new location was probably motivated by a desire to capitalize on cultural associations with this nearer location, the Caribbean, in the age of colonial expansion, being ultimately richer in connotations than the Pacific (1977: 217-8). In other words, Defoe situates his literary adaptation in a location his target audience could easily appropriate and associate with a particular colonial world view.

Paul Smethurst reaches a similar conclusion, stating that the Caribbean had "a 'special place' in the European imagination because it marked the first frontier between the Old World of Europe and the New World of America" (2000: 225). In *Robinson Crusoe*, the representation of the island space is therefore "typical of the colonialist discourse that articulates the empty place, the almost-nowhere place, the place without history and without culture" (ibid.: 224). Defoe's displacement of the action from the Pacific to the Caribbean thus fully exploits an image already present in the collective consciousness of his audience, that of the island paradise waiting for the arrival of the European settler to fully realize its potential – an element absent from the historical narratives where mere survival is at stake. I would add that this spatial transposition situates the action in an ocean frequently crossed, at the heart of maritime commerce, where one might expect a rapid rescue. The fact that Robinson's

exile lasts more than twenty-eight years exploits the spatio-temporal tension between historical reality and literary contrivance. The irony of Robinson and his island remaining unnoticed in a region so amply explored clearly situates Defoe's rendering in the realm of fiction and distinguishes it from its historical precursors.

While film adaptations of *Robinson Crusoe*[6] tend to focus only on the shipwreck and the meeting with Friday, it is important to remember that the novel comprises no fewer than five sea voyages and one long journey across France on foot. As well, right from the very first sentence of the novel, a major theme seems to be the idea of adapting to new circumstances and, indeed, of profiting from them:

> I was born in the Year 1632, in the City of *York*, of a good Family, tho' not of that Country, my Father being a Foreigner of *Bremen*, who settled first at *Hull*: He got a good Estate by Merchandise, and leaving off his Trade, lived afterwards at *York*, from whence he had married my Mother, whose Relations were named *Robinson*, a very good Family in the Country, and from whom I was called *Robinson Kreutznaer*; but by the usual Corruption of Words in *England*, we are now called, nay we call our selves, and write our name *Crusoe*, and so my companions always call'd me. (Defoe 1994: 4)

In effect, this sentence gives us the chronotopic model that governs all the subsequent action: Robinson will undergo a series of displacements and in each case he will try to acquire material security. Against the advice of his father, young Robinson opts for a life of adventure and tries his hand at international trade. During his first voyage, he is saved from a shipwreck; during the second, to Africa, he sells his merchandise for a profit. During a third voyage to Africa, his ship is attacked by a Turkish vessel, and Robinson is taken captive to become the slave of the captain. In fact, Robinson spends two years in captivity, tending his master's garden before contriving an escape. After all sorts of adventures, he finds himself in Brazil where he lives for several years, buying a plantation and cultivating the land, and, in spite of his own experience as a slave, acquiring a black slave of his own. These preliminary voyages serve as a *mise en abyme* for the fourth ill-fated voyage that ends in the shipwreck on the deserted island. The fifth sea voyage recounts Robinson's return to his island years after his rescue. The island has been colonized by Spanish settlers to whom Robinson bequeaths tracts of land. He happily enumerates the improvements made to the island by the colonists and notes that twenty or so children have been born to the settlers (ibid.: 220). In Defoe's version of the story, the island is no longer the tranquil refuge of a solitary man, but rather a bustling colony experiencing an economic and demographic boom. The island space has been tamed.

To this mastery of space can be added mastery of time, even without traditional tools for measuring its passage. Although Robinson states that "as for an exact Reckoning of Days, after I had once lost it, I could never recover it again", when he is rescued he learns that he has in fact "kept a true Reckoning of Years" (ibid.: 179). Defoe's

Robinson succeeds in mastering time and also in harnessing the cycle of nature on the island for agriculture; eventually, thanks to the birth of the settlers' children, he will also see the temporal continuity of a human presence on the island guaranteed.

In Bakhtinian terms, I would identify a "colonial chronotope"[7] as the central structuring principal of Defoe's novel. Robinson's project on the island resembles his project in Brazil and even his chores when a captive: his task is to take a series of circumscribed spaces (the garden, the plantation, the island) and impose on them an agricultural rhythm. We see the creation of a colonial plantation, surrounded by a hostile wilderness on which the colonist attempts to impose order. The fluidity of time, marked by the monotony of a series of indistinguishable days, is segmented and organized by the settler. As other critics have already so aptly noted, Defoe's novel can be considered "*the* prototypical colonial novel of the eighteenth century, if not in all of English literature" (McInelly 2003: 1), thus creating a new novelistic subgenre. At the time Defoe composed his text, the European colonial project was still in its infancy, still promising and prosperous. The European who braves the test of solitude proves equal to the task: he succeeds in his colonial project, exploiting the natural space and imposing on it his orderly routines and daily rhythms. Furthermore, he emerges from his trial unscathed, his Christian piety stronger than ever. Not until the early twentieth-century, after increasing failures and various wars for colonial independence, does the colonial novel begin to register the moral degeneration of its protagonists (I am thinking in particular of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, published in 1902), which leads me to *Friday*, Michel Tournier's mid-twentieth-century adaptation of the Crusoe story.

Friday: A Twentieth-Century Adaptation of *Robinson Crusoe*

I have already mentioned that Tournier makes two important diegetic transpositions in his literary adaptation of the Robinson story. First, he delays the action by a full century, situating the shipwreck in 1759. Several critics have noted that this date marks the publication of Rousseau's *Emile*, in which the author proposes one single book as the object of study of his pupil: *Robinson Crusoe*.[8] Not that Rousseau recommends reading the entire book; rather, "this novel stripped of all of its irrelevancies, beginning with Robinson's shipwreck on his island and ending with the arrival of the ship which comes to take him away, will form both Emile's amusement and his instruction" (Rousseau 1969: 455; my translation). This passage seems to provide the guiding principle for most subsequent adaptations (whether literary or cinematographic) of Defoe's text, as the story is reduced to the essential shipwreck and struggle for survival. The twenty-eight years that Tournier's Robinson spends on the island thus cover the years 1759 to 1787. This is, of course, the period that sees the beginning of the end of the French colonial empire, and later of the English empire as well. The Treaty of Paris at the end of the Seven Years War resulted in the loss of Canada and several other colonies, including Dominica in the Caribbean. The independence

of Haiti would soon follow. This period is also marked by the War of Independence in the United States and announces the Civil War to follow.[9] It is interesting to note that Tournier's Friday is half Araucanian (indigenous Chilean) and half African. He is a visible product of a century of colonization, exploitation, and the forced relocation of Africans, his mixed race serving as a reminder of the slave trade at the heart of colonial commerce in the New World. In Defoe's novel, the exploitation of supposedly inferior races is a given: there is no question that Robinson will have a black slave in Brazil and another slave on the island. Furthermore, rather oddly, Defoe's Friday has very little to offer Robinson other than his labor. In Tournier's adaptation, Friday is clearly more independent, and more capable than Robinson of living in harmony with the island. For example, during his first night on the island, Friday refuses Robinson's food and instead "chewed constantly some sort of wild berry, making Robinson wonder for a moment where he had found them" (Tournier 1997: 136). Tournier's Friday thus taps into resources overlooked by Robinson. The temporal context in which Tournier situates his adaptation encourages the reader to re-evaluate the colonial project of the preceding century and also to re-evaluate the portrait of Friday found in Defoe. While it is true that Defoe's Friday very quickly learns to accomplish any task Robinson sets for him, it is also true that he has no insight to offer in return: he more closely resembles what one might imagine a European outsider to be like rather than the indigenous person he is supposed to be.

Aside from this temporal transposition, I have already mentioned that Tournier chooses to adhere more closely to (possible) historical sources of the Robinson tale, situating his adaptation on the island of Juan Fernandez.[10] Tournier's Robinson finds himself on a Pacific island, far from Europe and the colonizing imperative governing the Caribbean, an island which, far from being a blank slate for the European capitalist imagination has a strong temporo-spatial identity. The island space seems impossible to conquer, always threatening to revert to overgrown nature. This island may also be said to be "out of time", in the sense that this region of the Pacific Ocean, unlike the Caribbean, is not firmly associated with historical events relating to European colonial expansion. Once shipwrecked, Robinson loses track of the historical progress of the century and, unlike his literary precursor, loses his very ability to track time. In fact, the narrator tells us that "Robinson felt himself cut off from the human calendar as much as he was separated from mankind by the expanse of waters, reduced to living on an island in time as well as in space" (Tournier 1997: 47).

Tournier's Robinson, like Defoe's, tries to organize the island space and impose the calendar of colonialism. As a youth, this Robinson had to memorize aphorisms taken from Benjamin Franklin's *Almanac*, and once on the island he engraves them onto wooden signs, decorates his cave with mosaics of words, and even hoists himself up with a precarious sling to carve onto a rock face: "*Do not waste time, it is the stuff of life*" (Tournier 1997: 131).[11] He desperately tries to imprint onto the very space of the island a conception of time utterly foreign to it, that of the industrious colonist. The irony, of course, is that once Robinson has completed his colonizing project, he has all too much time to contemplate his solitude. Eventually, Friday inadvertently

blows up not only all the outward signs of civilization on the island, but also the water-clock which Robinson had used to mark the passage of time. The island then returns to its pre-colonial identity, or rather, Tournier's Robinson learns that the island was not a blank slate upon which he could impose a new spatio-temporal identity. Robinson comes to realize that his domination of the island was illusory. In his book *The Postmodern Chronotope*, Smethurst identifies in Tournier's work what he more specifically terms a "post-colonial island chronotope" (2000: 235-41) in which the representation of time and space lead the reader to a re-evaluation of the colonial project, to adopt a skeptical view of such endeavors, and to accord more importance to the indigenous perspective.

I would like to return to the idea of living on an island in time as well as in space, as this evokes for me a particular chronotope identified by Bakhtin. I am thinking of the threshold chronotope so prevalent in twentieth-century literature. The threshold chronotope presents a tightly circumscribed space, literally or metaphorically a transitional space between two worlds. Temporally, it presents a suspended moment of change or crisis, detached from the normal flow of biographical and historical time (FTC: 248). The island of Juan Fernandez seems to me to be just such a liminal space far removed from the ebb and flow of historical time, a space in which Robinson undergoes a radical transformation of his identity. After the explosion, Robinson writes in his log-book:

> What has most changed in my life is the passing of time, its speed and even its direction. Formerly every day, hour, and minute leaned in a sense toward the day, hour, and minute that was to follow, and all were drawn into the pattern of the moment, whose transience created a kind of vacuum. So time passed rapidly and usefully, the more quickly because it was usefully employed, leaving behind it an accumulation of achievement and wastage which was my history. (Tournier 1997: 203).

Previously, the passage of time was inscribed in the very space of the island, leaving its trace in the form of monuments. Now, Robinson is acutely aware of the cyclical nature of time, the eternal return of the seasons, of the shrinking of time to one essential moment:

> For me the cycle has now shrunk until it is merged in the moment. The circular movement has become so swift that it cannot be distinguished from immobility. And it is as though, in consequence, my days had rearranged themselves. No longer do they jostle on each other's heels. Each stands separate and upright, proudly affirming its own worth. And since they are no longer to be distinguished as the stages of a plan in process of execution, they so resemble each other as to be superimposed in my memory, so that I seem to be ceaselessly reliving the same day. (Tournier 1997: 204)

In fact, the original French title of Tournier's novel, *Vendredi ou les limbes du Pacifique* [*Friday or the Pacific Limbo*]*,* conveys the idea of being suspended in time and space. Limbo is, of course, a liminal state of suspension between life and grace, a place where non-baptized souls await the second coming. Tournier's protagonist thus finds himself in a state of suspension, awaiting rescue and reintegration into society. However, as Anthony Purdy (1984: 222) notes, "the *limbo* of the book's subtitle refers precisely to the time and place of Robinson's spiritual metamorphosis". Tournier's Robinson, offered redemption in the form of rescue, makes a surprising decision. He chooses to stay on the island, rejecting what he thinks of as the "degrading and mortal turbulence of the times in which they lived", in favor of the "eternal present, without past or future" (Tournier 1997: 226). In fact, he seems to be rejecting the legacy of colonial history, thinking to himself that he will console Friday regarding the decision by telling him "what he had learned […] of the horrors of the slave trade and the life that awaited the blacks in the plantations of the New World" (ibid.: 230). (I note in passing that Friday, unaware of these details, opts to sneak away secretly and join the vessel, leaving Robinson apparently alone.) Given that the world seems to have become hell on earth, Tournier's Robinson opts to remain in limbo, in the quiet antechamber of the island, his choice hearkening back to Alexander Selkirk's nostalgia for his lost island paradise.

Tournier's literary adaptation of both Defoe's novel and the historical sources of the Robinson story is structured by the interaction of a series of superposed chronotopes. First, there is the colonial chronotope encompassing the circumscribed natural space on which the colonist attempts to inscribe the rhythms of commercial agriculture and the weekly patterns of European Christian civilization (calendar time, clocks to measure the passage of time, Sunday as a day of rest, etc.) which links this adaptation to Defoe's text. However, this colonial chronotope is undermined by diegetic transformations which situate the action outside the geographic heart of colonial maritime expansion and hundred years later than the original, by the presence of a mixed race Friday who actually knows how to live off the island without resorting to Robinson's contrivances, by Robinson's rather pathetic attempts to literally engrave his vision of time on the space of the island, by the destruction of the water-clock and the various buildings and monuments of Robinson's created civilization, and by the protagonist's rejection of a return to a world governed by a colonial model gone wild, in which slavery and cruelty rule. This destabilisation of the colonial chronotope underlines the failures of the colonial project. However, I would not go so far as Smethurst in proposing the creation of a new post-colonial chronotope in Tournier's novel. After all, despite its title, the character of Friday still occupies a peripheral role in this twentieth-century adaptation of the Robinson story. In a novel that readily shifts from a first-person (Robinson) to a third-person omniscient narrator, Friday is never accorded a narrative voice. I therefore see in Tournier's adaptation the deformation and destabilisation of an existing generic pattern, rather than the full-fledged creation of a new novelistic subgenre.

This destabilized colonial chronotope is furthermore undermined by the shifting narrative perspective that includes introspective journal entries that in no way resemble Defoe's protagonist's matter-of-fact journal in which he records his doings. Tournier's Robinson engages in philosophical meditations on the nature of his identity and on his perception of time, musings which suspend the chronological forward momentum of the narrative and create a chronotope of the threshold. The chronotopic transpositions effected by Tournier, as well as the deformation and juxtaposition of these two predominant chronotopes – one clearly reflecting the expansionist enthusiasm of the eighteenth-century novel and the other signaling the introspection and self-doubt of the twentieth-century novel – create a tension at the heart of Tournier's adaptation that provokes a re-reading of its literary source. Where Defoe's novel boasts of the ingenuity and industry of the solitary man, Tournier's text points to the fragmentation of personal identity once distanced from the structuring framework of historical time and 'civilized' spatial contexts. In choosing to remain on the island Tournier's Robinson calls into question the value of the European conceptualization of the rapport between humans, space and time, in which we seem inevitably to choose to exploit our surroundings for maximum profit. As Emerson notes, "[t]ransposition can do more […] than merely provide a focus for viewing generic innovation. It can serve as indication of changes in cultural sensitivity from one era to the next. Within the same culture, different elements emerge and expand at different times to carry the weight of the story" (1986: 209). In short, the transposed chronotopic framework of Tournier's adaptation reflects a new socio-historic sensibility proper to its mid-twentieth-century context: a profound uncertainty and skepticism regarding the civilizing potential, durability, and moral righteousness of the colonial project.

Epilogue

Having undertaken a comparative study of three instances of the Robinson story, I would argue that the chronotope, far from being limited to the study of changing settings, encompasses a much broader spectrum of changes which for Genette would be separate concerns; that is, pragmatic, diegetic, and narrative transpositions. Using the chronotope as a heuristic tool in the study of adaptation, we can examine not only the obvious shifting of the temporo-spatial setting of a given story, but also questions relating to the representation of this fictional world and to the narration of events. Within a new chronotope, the duration, frequency, unfolding and significance of events may change. Furthermore, as Emerson (1986: 209) notes, changing chronotopes may also account for changes in the representation of the characters who inhabit the textual space (recall Abbott's notion of character "types" associated with particular masterplots). In addition, the chronotope allows us to address another important type of textual relation termed "architextuality" (Genette 1997: 1, 4); that is, a given work's relationship to its generic model. Given that major structural chronotopes are linked to the formation of distinct literary genres, a chronotopic approach to adap-

tation encourages us to compare the adaptation and its source in terms of their ability to conform to or deviate from generic models that establish our horizon of expectations. The chronotope also allows us to consider overlapping or competing temporo-spatial frameworks within a single text, a situation Genette does not address but which is crucial in the study of adaptation. As I have demonstrated in my analysis of Tournier's *Friday*, an adaptation may, on one level, reactivate the chronotopic models and generic expectations of its source, only to destabilize and distort these models in order to undermine the specific ideological perspective of its source. Finally, I would argue that the chronotope addresses an aspect of adaptation which Genette does not, namely the particular socio-historic context of the adaptor. For Bakhtin, the lived chronotope of the author becomes reflected in the fictional chronotopes of the work of art. This assimilation of a historical consciousness by a work of art is, to my mind, absolutely crucial in the field of adaptation studies. Why after all, do we persist in reworking and retelling familiar tales? Perhaps because we have a basic need to see canonical stories re-framed in such a way as to reflect changing values, changing self-perceptions, and a changing understanding of the world around us. A Bakhtinian approach to adaptation studies, one which has at its heart the chronotope, would provide a viable theoretical framework for examining the myriad facets of the adaptive situation, would also be flexible enough to account for transpositions in both genre and medium, and would therefore be useful in the study of both literary and intermedial adaptation

I will conclude with an anecdote demonstrating why I think it is crucial to accord greater importance to spatio-temporal transpositions, and the extent to which such concerns have been marginalized, not only in adaptation studies, but in terms of a more general understanding of our relationship to literature. In 1966, the Chilean government decided to assign new names to the two principal islands of the Juan Fernandez archipelago, Más Afuera and Más a Tierra, renaming them respectively Alejandro Selkirk Island and Robinson Crusoe Island (Bizzarro 1987: 268-9). While the historical link to Alexander Selkirk (the Scottish mariner stranded on the archipelago for just over four years) is evident, as I have repeatedly noted, in the fictional universe of Daniel Defoe, the famous protagonist never set foot on any Pacific island, being stranded in the Caribbean. This expedient transfer of spatial coordinates to serve particular socio-historic ends (perhaps, in this case, to attract tourism by foregrounding an implicit, if false, literary association in the popular consciousness) demonstrates the same type of under-appreciated chronotopic transposition that I have been highlighting, only this time a fictional chronotope has determined a historical fact rather than historical circumstances determining fictional chronotopes. If only the Chileans had waited a few more years for the publication of Tournier's literary adaptation of Defoe, they could have more accurately renamed the island "Friday".

Endnotes

1. Bakhtin is quite clearly preoccupied with the richness of possible subsequent interpretations of a given work of art as meanings are generated by new readers in new socio-historic contexts. Elsewhere, he notes: "Trying to understand and explain a work solely in terms of the conditions of its epoch alone, solely in terms of the conditions of the most immediate time, will never enable us to penetrate into its semantic depths. Enclosure within the epoch also makes it impossible to understand the work's future life in subsequent centuries; this life appears as a kind of paradox. Works break through the boundaries of their own time, they live in centuries, that is, in *great time* and frequently (with great works, always) their lives are more intense and fuller than are their lives within their own time" (2002b: 4).

2. In a forthcoming article entitled "A Bakhtinian Approach to Adaptation Studies", I argue for an even broader use of Bakhtinian concepts in the study of adaptation by discussing carnival, speech genres and dialogism, as well as the chronotope. The short section devoted to the chronotope in this more general, purely theoretical discussion of Bakhtin in the context of adaptation studies therefore echoes several passages treating the chronotope in the present longer study.

3. Sanders uses the term "master-texts" to describe Abbott's category (2006: 108). Ian Watt (1951) goes so far as to accord the Robinson story the status of a "myth", an assessment seconded by Michel Tournier, who states that every generation seems to need to view itself through the prism of this particular story, resulting in its many subsequent retellings (1977: 219).

4. For studies employing the chronotope to examine cinematographic adaptations of novels, see Collington (2002) and Massood (2005); for comparative studies using the chronotope to examine films within a specific subgenre, see Flanagan (2004), Massood (2003) and Vlasov (1996).

5. The various historical sources that I will draw upon are all available electronically through Early English Books Online and Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Short excerpts of these documents are also helpfully reprinted in the Norton Critical Edition of *Robinson Crusoe*.

6. See, for example, Luis Bunuel's *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1952), Jack Gold's *Man Friday* (1975) and Rod Hardy and George Miller's *Robinson Crusoe* (1996).

7. I have elsewhere discussed the colonial chronotope within the context of French literature. See Collington (2006: 206-7).

8. Jeffrey Hopes (1996) analyses the appeal of the desert island to Rousseau and the influence of Defoe on the French author. Lise Gauvin (1999), in her analysis of several different rewritings of the Crusoe story, also comments on the later temporal context and its importance to Robinson's understanding of his relationship with writing and with history.

9. For a further discussion of the implications and intertextual allusions of these temporal changes, see Jean-Paul Engélibert (1997: 101-3, 116-21) and Anthony Purdy (1984: 224).

10. In fact, the French author includes a scene not found in Defoe's novel but appearing in the historical accounts published by both Rogers (1712: 6) and Steele (1714: 172) recounting Alexander Selkirk's fall off a cliff while pursing a goat. Selkirk only survived because the goat fortunately broke his fall. However, in Tournier's version, Friday suffers this misadventure and not his master (1997: 187-8).

11. See Anthony Purdy (1984: 224-32) for an extended discussion of the importance of Franklin's ideals for Tournier.

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