

MIKHAIL BAKHTIN
MAN AND HIS PENULTIMATE WORD
A RADICAL HUMANISTIC PHILOSOPHY OF THE UNFINALIZABLE WHOLE

by

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B.A., Antioch University, 1978
M.A., Simon Fraser University, 1983

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in the Department
of
English

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SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

October 1988
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TITLE OF THESIS: Mikhail Bakhtin: Man and his Penultimate Word
A Radical Humanistic Philosophy of the
Unfinalizable Whole

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Mikhail Bakhtin: Man and His Penultimate Word: A Radical Humanistic

Philosophy of the Unfinalizable Whole

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Abstract

Mikhail Bakhtin's work is often misunderstood by contemporary critics and elucidators. It is abstracted, fragmented and reinterpreted in order to conform with contemporary literary theories. Bakhtin is claimed by some as a follower of the Russian Formalist school, by others as a semiotician, and by still others as a deconstructionist. As well, his work is hailed as a political attack on Stalinist authority, and moreover is seen to be a rejection of official cultural forms in literature. My position is that Bakhtin is a humanistic and holistic philosopher who creates a humanistic and holistic philosophy of language and literature. This philosophy acknowledges the unity and continuity of human experience and its representation in language and artistic works throughout the centuries-long history of man's cultural development.

This study seeks to differentiate Bakhtin's work from current critical thought and practice, primarily through an expository elucidation and discussion of his writings, and secondarily through comparison and contrast with aspects of current theory. In Chapter I Bakhtin's disagreement with the Russian Formalists and Marxist contemporaries of the 1920s and 1930s is outlined as a means of defining his position. In Chapters II and III Bakhtin's philosophy of the word is presented in order to show how he constructs a theory of dialogism and discourse within a radical humanistic framework. These chapters introduce problems taken up in Chapter IV where the central thesis of this study, Bakhtin's

exploration of the problem of presenting real-life discourse in artistic creation and his understanding of the development of the novel in culture and history, is elaborated upon in terms of his ideas about the novel in history which culminates in his study of the work of François Rabelais. The final Chapter V is an interpretation of Bakhtin's work in the light of the problem of his reception in the English-speaking realm by some of his major commentators and translators.

In this study I substantiate that Bakhtin's work is fuller, more comprehensive than contemporary critical positions allow and moreover that Bakhtin's task is not one of simplistic notions of opposition, but rather is a radical aesthetic endeavour of revolution which does not elevate the low at the expense of the destruction of high and official forms. Rather, it reintegrates, reunifies what has been isolated, fragmented and made abstract, or has been lost and repressed in history. His work is a basic reorientation and reorganization of approaches to linguistic and literary theory which restores man's integral connection to his works, thus emphasizing change and generation. Bakhtin's approach to language and literature is a humanistic, philosophical-anthropological approach which seeks the essence of man and his creations within mankind itself. This reorientation and reorganization of aesthetic perception defines the holistic and humanistic nature of Bakhtin's work which is denied or implicitly negated in the fragmented and abstracted absorption of Bakhtin into contemporary literary theory.

Research becomes inquiry and conversation, that is, dialogue. We do not address inquiries to nature and she does not answer us. We put questions to ourselves and we organize observation or experiment in such a way as to obtain an answer. When studying man, we search for and find signs everywhere and we try to grasp the meaning.

Mikhail Bakhtin, "The Problem of the Text."

The text is the primary given (reality) and the point of departure for any discipline in the human sciences. It is the aggregate of various kinds of knowledge and methods called philology, linguistics, literary scholarship, scientific scholarship, and so forth. Proceeding from the text they wander in various directions, grasp various bits of nature, social life, states of mind, and history, and combine them - sometimes with causal, sometimes with semantic, ties - and intermix statements with evaluations. From indications of the real object one must proceed to a clear-cut delineation of the objects of scientific research. The real object is social (public) man, who speaks and expresses himself through other means. Is it possible to find any other approach to him and his life (work, struggle, and so forth) than through the signifying text that he has created or is creating? Is it possible to observe and study him as a phenomenon of nature, as a thing? Man's physical action should be understood as a deed, but it is impossible to understand the deed outside its potential (that is, re-created by us) signifying expression (motives, goals, stimuli, degree of awareness, and so forth). It is as though we are causing man to speak (we construct his important testimonies, explanations, confessions, admissions, and we complete the development of possible or actual inner speech, and so forth).

Mikhail Bakhtin, "The Problem of the Text."

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Chapter I

Towards an Understanding of Artistic Creation as a Whole

As a working hypothesis material aesthetics [Formalism] is harmless, and with a methodologically clear recognition of the limits of its applicability, it can even be productive in studying technique in artistic creation. But it becomes unmitigatedly harmful and unacceptable whenever an effort is made on this basis to study and understand artistic creativity as a whole, in all its aesthetic uniqueness and significance.

Mikhail Bakhtin, "Toward the Aesthetics of the Word."

There is a disturbing trend in the English-speaking world on the part of contemporary, linguistic and literary theoreticians to ignore, to dismiss or to not comprehend the philosophical, anthropological, contextual, thematic understanding of the word, of discourse, of life in its *meaning*-filled wholeness and continuity interwoven throughout Mikhail Bakhtin's writings. Instead, these theoreticians select aspects or fragments of his work and claim them for their particular positions and, as a consequence, distort the meaning (and in some instances radically so), and moreover, deny the coherence and the complexity of Bakhtin's discourse. There is a danger in the plethora of recent scholarship on Bakhtin and his work to disregard or to discount the essential nature of his position which is one of perspective rather than of frame.

In my view Bakhtin is an important figure, his thought and work are an essential contribution to linguistic and literary studies, a necessary amelioration to the predilection in contemporary literary theory towards isolation, fragmentation and abstraction, a readiness to banish history and to deny meaning and relevance to life, to the human and to human creations. His work, his understanding of the novel and of the "novelness" of life is of crucial importance to literary studies. And it is my opinion that it is impossible to approach the study of Bakhtin and the relation of his thought to a particular novel (a study beyond the scope of this work) until one understands that Bakhtin's work is not theory in the sense of a scientific application of concepts and principles. Rather it is a philosophical perspective (a way of understanding) which he brings to bear in his study of the genre of the novel, a perspective which views the novel in a larger sense as the vehicle most able to reveal the essential nature of the life experience of man and of the "powerful deep currents" of changing cultural and historical forces which "determine the creativity of writers" and which shape our understanding of these writers and their works.¹

Bakhtin has gained a worldwide reputation in the humanities, in the fields of linguistics, literary theory and cultural studies. And with little exaggeration it can be stated that he has been *universally* acclaimed for his contributions to the fields of linguistic, literary and cultural studies. The importance of his brilliant, complex, multifaceted and controversial work is sometimes disputed. However, of more concern, it is more frequently misunderstood by contemporary critics and elucidators. Aspects of his thought are selectively acclaimed and claimed by literary theorists as diverse, for example, as formalists, structuralists, semioticians, deconstructionists, neo-Aristotelians, and diverse

Marxists. Furthermore, his work is hailed by some as a mere political attack on Stalinist authority and, moreover, as a rejection of official forms in opposition to classical or official ideology and forms in literature and culture. While it is true that Bakhtin experienced hardship, imprisonment, exile, and difficulty in disseminating his ideas during the Stalinist era, his thought and work are fuller, more comprehensive than mere political tracts and, furthermore, fuller, more complex and comprehensive than any of the above contemporary, critical positions allow.²

Bakhtin (1895-1975) was born in Orel, a provincial town, south of Moscow, into an old noble but landless family which had "always been prominent in intellectual circles." He entered the historical and philological faculty of the university of Odessa in 1913, and in 1914 transferred to Petrograd University (1914-1918) into an exhilarating, stimulating, intellectual climate filled with debates between the Symbolists, Acmeists, Futurists and Formalists. In 1918, amid an atmosphere of political and social upheaval, and the revolutionary excitement of creating a new society following the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution, Bakhtin moved to Nevel'. And from 1918 until the end of the 1920s Bakhtin was the intellectual leader of an informal "tightly knit group of friends and intellectual equals who met regularly for intensive philosophical discussions," first "in the cities of Nevel' and Vitebsk, later in Leningrad, to reflect on cultural problems and principally on matters of aesthetics and literary theory." The Bakhtin circle, as it became known, according to Michael Holquist "dominated the intellectual and cultural life of Nevel'" and "felt a sense of mission to enlighten the masses."³

Later, in Leningrad in 1929, just preceding publication of Bakhtin's first major work, the Dostoevsky book, Bakhtin and other members of his circle were arrested, victims of Stalin's first purges of intellectuals.⁴ Because he was afflicted with osteomyelitis and suffering from deteriorating health, Bakhtin was transferred from prison to hospital and, perhaps because of petitions on his behalf by his wife and friends, his ten-year prison sentence to the Solovki Islands was commuted to a six-year exile in the town of Kustanai, in Kazakhstan to which he was accompanied by his wife.⁵

Banned from teaching, he worked as a book-keeper in the new co-operative of the newly collectivized system, and at this time wrote his brilliant and complex, long essay, "Discourse in the Novel." In 1936, after completion of his term, with the help of Pavel Medvedev, Party Member and fellow circle member, he was given a teaching position at the Mordovian Pedagogical Institute, a teacher's college in Saransk, a town four hundred kilometers from Moscow. However, Stalin's Great Purge and a wave of arrests by the secret police of former prisoners and exiles in 1937, forced Bakhtin and his wife to leave for the village of Savelovo, about one hundred kilometers from Moscow, the closest to Moscow those with political records were allowed to live.⁶ At this time, because of increasing pain, his right leg was amputated. However, on the brighter side, the political climate became more liberal and he was able, in a small way, to re-enter into intellectual life with a contribution (though it never appeared) on satire to the *Literary Encyclopedia*. As well, he reviewed for publishing houses, participated in scholarly functions in Moscow, and in 1940, and again in 1941, was invited to lecture at the Gorky Institute of World Literature, a part of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. The majority of his works were written at this time and include the essays which appear with "Discourse in the Novel" in

the collection translated into English as *The Dialogic Imagination*, together with a major work which, regrettably, was destroyed in the publishing house by a bomb from a German plane and the only remaining manuscript copy smoked up by Bakhtin because of the scarcity of cigarette paper. A mere fragment remains which is translated into English as "The *Bildungsroman* and its Significance in the History of Realism" and is published in *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*. At this time Bakhtin also wrote a doctoral dissertation for the Gorky Institute, later translated into English as *Rabelais and His World*, which he was unable to defend at that time because of the war.

Bakhtin was exempted from army service because of ill-health and the loss of his leg. Because of a shortage of teachers he was permitted to teach German, and later Russian, in the local schools; according to Holquist, Bakhtin utilized the German propaganda leaflets dropped from the air as his texts. After the war Bakhtin was able to return to Saransk where he became chairman of the Department of General Literature and promoted to "the rank of docent." He lectured "primarily on Western literature, teaching courses on European literature of the classical and medieval periods, the Renaissance, and the nineteenth and twentieth centuries."⁷

His dissertation defence took place on November 15th, 1946 but, unfortunately for Bakhtin, a new wave of repression, "a new dark age of Soviet culture" had set in. His subject, the Rabelais work, was extremely controversial, considered subversive by some, and was stormily argued over for more than seven hours by the committee. No decision was made and a second defence took place on May 9th, 1947. Consideration was postponed until June of 1951 when Bakhtin was awarded a candidate's degree, a lesser

degree than the doctorate. Bakhtin remained at Saransk until he retired in 1961. In 1957, the Khrushchev era, the Institute was upgraded to University status and "Bakhtin himself was elevated to Chairman of the Department of Russian and Foreign Literature." In addition to his University teaching, Bakhtin conducted seminars and gave lectures to the Saransk community at large; for example, he taught seminars on aesthetics to the Mordovia Theatre for Music and Drama and lectured on aesthetics in the local light bulb factory.⁸

In the late 1950s, "former Formalists" Victor Shklovsky and Roman Jakobson "played a major role in bringing Bakhtin back to scholarly attention," and he "became widely known for the first time." A young graduate student, Vadim Valerianovich Kozhinov, at the Gorky Institute, discovering that Bakhtin was not dead as he had believed, "entered into correspondence with him" and, with others, played a major role in the republication of the Dostoevsky book and later in coercing the authorities to allow the publication of the Rabelais work. The reappearance of the Dostoevsky book "created a sensation that helped to rekindle interest in basic questions of literary study." And Bakhtin's last years "were busy and fulfilling . . . finally bringing him the fame and influence" so long denied him.⁹

With the translation of his entire work into English now almost complete, he has become a major and controversial figure. His ideas have been claimed, and subsequently distorted in some instances, by such disparate linguistic and literary theorists as Wayne Booth of the Chicago neo-Aristotelians, semioticians of such varying factions as the Tartu School of Yuri Lotman, of Ann Shukman, and Julia Kristeva of *Tel Quel*, structuralists

such as Tzvetan Todorov, and Marxists, Raymond Williams, Terry Eagleton and Fredric Jameson. However, of more concern to me, Bakhtin is in danger of absorption into some sort of Christian, capitalist neo-Derridean deconstruction collage in North America. The principal proponent of this movement into absorption is, unfortunately, his major translator and explicator, Michael Holquist, and in minor roles are Caryl Emerson and Gary Saul Morson. A current debate also rages around the question of Bakhtin's Marxism, and a very apparent downplaying of this aspect of Bakhtin's thought, and an emphasis on Bakhtin's religiosity takes place in Holquist's work.¹⁰ More importantly, Holquist translates Bakhtin's work utilizing the language and concepts of deconstruction. All these factors, intended or not, dilute the complex wholeness, the radical and revolutionary nature of Bakhtin's thought, a facet easily visible to the Stalinists. As a consequence of Holquist's emphasis on Bakhtin's purported quixotic religiosity (which he claims Bakhtin deleted from his texts), and as a consequence of his emphasis on Bakhtin's purported oppositions (which either melt into the innocuity, the insipidity of a "non-simultaneity friendly to man" or, on the other hand, negate each other in a conservative Derridean deconstruction of meaninglessness), the fullness, the richness and *meaning*-filled understanding of life and its ambivalence, of the human generating ideology and ideological artifacts is *de-meant*, is in danger of dismissal and repression.¹¹ However, I do not intend to argue that Bakhtin is a Marxist, not merely because of the plethora of Marxist theories,¹² but because in my view it is unnecessary and perhaps an error to categorize him, to canonize him, to close him down within some political or, on the other hand, some *effete* intellectual camp-ground. His work, his thought, evidenced by his many and diverse claimants, is larger than this; it cannot be confined; it is unfinalizable.

In this study, at the risk of reduction and distortion (perhaps inevitable in such an undertaking), I intend to focus on Bakhtin's study of the creative process, his understanding of the dynamics of generation and regeneration of continuous meaning and of continuous connection, which in my view is the fundamental philosophical premise in his work. This dynamic quality, Bakhtin's fundamental principle of dynamic forces, generating and regenerating, creating and recreating meaning in a continuing process is - if discussed, which is a rare occurrence - not understood by the majority of Bakhtin's many readers and critics. Ambivalence is misinterpreted, conflict is understood only in terms of dominance and repression. The dynamic generation and regeneration of meaning is understood only in terms of one language of truth, so that Bakhtin's work is misinterpreted as an apocalyptic nihilistic existentialist philosophy or theory of meaninglessness, deconstruction's "endlessly deferred meaning." Elements of his thought and work are taken as the whole, and in so doing it becomes possible to claim him, as literary theorists of differing and diverse factions do.

I consider my task two-fold: first of all, it is an endeavour to counter this nihilism by presenting Bakhtin's thought in its essential *meaning*-filled wholeness as a view more truly appropriate for humanities studies. And secondly, it is an endeavour to counter the attempts of contemporary linguistic and literary theorists to absorb Bakhtin's thought into a nihilistic void. My approach, therefore, is, essentially, to allow Bakhtin to speak for himself through an exposition of the development of his thought, placing emphasis in his work *where he does* in order to best reveal the humanistic and holistic character of his work and, as well, to bring to awareness the complex nature of the discourse, the coherence of

his thought and his understanding of necessary connection and generation in the totality of his works.

It is necessary to place Bakhtin in intellectual history, within the context of literary discourse and literary history in order to fully understand and appreciate his humanistic contribution to the study of linguistics and literary theory. To this end, in this chapter, I intend to describe my understanding of Bakhtin's position. Then I shall summarize and discuss his major disagreements with the theoretical practices of his formalist and Marxist contemporaries, in the fields of linguistics, literary theory and the theory of the novel. These disagreements were crucial in their time and retain their importance to this day for the reason that literary theory was then, and is now, at a crossroads. And moreover, the fundamental issue of the relation of the human to linguistic and literary theory remains the same. Furthermore, Russian formalism in the 1920s and 1930s was not an isolated phenomenon but rather was connected to European formalism. Versions of formalism developed in England and North America into what became known as "new criticism" and remained the dominant trend in literary theory until the mid-1970s when structuralism moved to the forefront. It is important to understand that over forty years before structuralism gained acceptance in the Western world, Bakhtin recognized the emerging direction of the short-lived Russian formalism and vainly endeavoured to rescue literary theory from this regression into the subsequent anti-humanist nihilistic void to which it has degenerated in its post-structuralist phase. This is not to suggest that Bakhtin was a formalist, nor that he viewed his position as a departure from formalism. He was never a formalist. Rather, his understanding of the essence and nature of language and literature was a position outside of and *beyond* formalism. His concern with the abstract nature of

this linguistic and literary theory, its neglect of the human element, its divorce from the human and social realm from which, in his view, all art and other ideological artifacts emanate, is the subject of the remainder of this chapter.

In each chapter, I shall focus on one of Bakhtin's major works. The present chapter is essentially a summary of his discussion of Marxist and formalist literary theory outlined, for the most part, in *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship*. In the second chapter, I shall present and explain Bakhtin's holistic philosophy of the inner sociality or dialogism of the word. This discussion of the utterance in every-day discourse as the basic unit of language is presented by Bakhtin, principally, in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* and, as well, in several essays published in *Bakhtin School Papers* and *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. In the third chapter, I shall elucidate Bakhtin's investigation into the complexities of the problem for the artist in re-creating the concrete utterance in the artistic realm in all its *meaning*-filled, real-life context; that is to say, the problem of the creation of real-life discourse in the novel discussed, for the most part, in the essay of that name. In the fourth chapter, I shall continue to elucidate Bakhtin's ever-deepening and ever-broadening exploration into the dynamic development of prose discourse. This chapter is concerned with his formulation of a holistic philosophy for the history of the novel, his socio-cultural historical investigation into the development of the dynamic, generating and regenerating forces at work in the novel, from its embryonic beginnings in the ancient world to its fruition in the nineteenth century. *The Dialogic Imagination* forms the basis of my explication. In the final chapter, I shall discuss some of the origins of Bakhtin's thought which, by its very nature, establishes him within the historical tradition I call radical humanism. And, using *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*

as a point of departure, I shall discuss the problem of the reception of Bakhtin's holistic thought and work in contemporary literary culture which is, for the most part, unreceptive to, and uncomprehending of, a humanistic and holistic aesthetics which acknowledges the human as the centre, the hub of all his or her creations.

Bakhtin is, one could say, a meta-theoretician, a meta-critic, a philosopher, an aesthetician. In my view, his thought and work is fuller, more complex and comprehensive than contemporary critical positions allow. Moreover, his task is not one of simplistic notions of opposition, but rather is a radical aesthetic endeavour of revolution which does not elevate the low at the expense of the destruction of high and official forms. It reintegrates, reunifies what has been isolated, fragmented and made abstract, or has been lost and repressed in history. His work is radical and revolutionary; that is to say, it is a basic reorientation and reorganization of approaches to linguistic and literary theory which emphasizes man's integral connection to his works, thus emphasizing change and generation. Bakhtin's philosophy acknowledges that man is a speaking subject; acknowledges man's integral connection to his artistic and material creations and to his ideologies; acknowledges the unity and continuity of human experience and its representation in language and artistic works throughout the centuries-long history of man's cultural development.

Bakhtin looks back to a preclass time, to a collective, work-oriented "agricultural stage in the development of human society." He does so not as a primitive utopian, but rather to seek understanding of the generating forces at work in culture and in consciousness which he traces in an historical study of literature in order to understand

how meaning is continually recreated in the history of human civilization. One of his greatest insights in his study of the novel is the illumination of the process of creation, of *how* the novel means; of the resurrection of the novelist as a creative artist who is able to take in and make use of all the voices, all the languages of his time, in order to recreate, though in a refracted way, the full, rich experience of real-life in the novel, in the life of the work. Bakhtin resurrects the human, the speaking subject, crucified by the formalists, structuralists and later (after Bakhtin's death), deconstructionists, to return the novel to the realm of socio-historico-cultural discourse, the realm of speaking subjects.¹³

In *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, Bakhtin attributes the quality of profound insight to Dostoevsky, which, perceived in the totality of Bakhtin's own writings, can speak for Bakhtin himself. He writes that Dostoevsky struggles against "a *reification* of man, of human relations, of all human values. . . ." In his view, Dostoevsky "was able to see how this *reifying devaluation* of man had permeated all the pores of contemporary life and even into the very foundations of human thinking." He goes on to say that it is Dostoevsky's "*larger sense of his artistic form* , which liberates and de-reifies the human being." It seems to me that these statements regarding Dostoevsky constitute the essential focus of Bakhtin's thought, that is to say, it is Bakhtin's own perspective. His life's work, his scholarship, is directed towards the fight against this reification and repression of the human and human values, and towards their restoration to their rightful place as the essence, the living dynamic factor in all the creations of man.¹⁴

In his discussion of individual texts, that is to say, the works of Dostoevsky and Rabelais, and in his essays on the novel, translated into English as *The Dialogic*

Imagination, it has been suggested by several critics that Bakhtin analyses or discusses portions, aspects of the novels in order to illustrate a larger purpose:

He is fond of explaining the "spirit of a time" through a single writer: Rabelais for the Renaissance, Dostoevsky for the polyphonic second half of the nineteenth century. But Bakhtin is not primarily interested in the individual novelist as such or in the individual novel as an artistic whole. He does not do the traditional "close readings" of the novels he so admires. Rather, he analyses small chunks, scenes, patterns, always seeking an artistic imperative more fundamental than the particular structure of any single finished work.¹⁵

The fact that Bakhtin appears to have a larger purpose does not detract from his valuable contribution to literary theory and to the theory of the novel. Rather, it is an invaluable and much needed contribution to a static, fragmented condition, a nihilistic vision, and has important implications not only for literary theory but for humanistic studies, for modern philosophy, for epistemology: for how we think about ourselves, how we know what we know, how we arrive at the truth. His study of the novel, his metalinguistics, and his understanding of the history of the novel become the domain for elucidating and illuminating a philosophy of man, and as well, a critique of culture.

Bakhtin viewed himself "less as a literary critic than as a 'philosophical anthropologist'" and his reflections on the question of man, his essence and his relation to culture permeate his entire works. As Ann Shukman says, and it is true of all his writings, "one is left with the feeling that what *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* is ultimately about

is a philosophy of man rather than a theory of literature." The terms most suitable as a designation for Bakhtin are, first of all, one he liked himself, a philosophical anthropologist, one who seeks the origins and the nature of the human and his creations within mankind, that is to say, the human as the hub of all his creations. Or, alternatively, one which I prefer, a radical humanist and holistic philosopher. The term "radical" I use in its meaning as "fundamental", inherent in the nature or essence of a thing or person. To make an analogy to medieval philosophy, it is the "moisture naturally inherent in all plants and animals, its presence being a necessary condition to their vitality." It is the human being's vitality, his or her dynamic nature, in Bakhtin's view, which gives life to the life, to the generation and regeneration of his or her language, to literature, to all ideological artifacts, to the creation of culture.¹⁶

The term "holistic" I use to describe the essence of Bakhtin's work, his understanding of human experience, that is to say, lived experience as an unfinalizable whole, a continuous creation of *meaning*-filled events - a philosophy which illuminates and which is illustrated in his writings in linguistics, in literature and literary theory, in his exploration and investigation into the origins, the creative forces in the novel. The term "holistic" I use in a special sense in order to express this dynamic, generating and regenerating quality, this open-ended unity as distinct from the seemingly similar concept of organicism. Arnold Hauser, in his discussion of the work of the European formalist, Heinrich Wölfflin, describes Wölfflin's theory as organicist, and defines it as one which "emphasizes inner equilibrium," as a "quietistic philosophy, an ideology of appeasement, which will not recognize social conflicts, classwar, and revolution." He argues that the concept of the whole in Wölfflin's style-forms "is in the Aristotelian sense 'prior' to the

parts," that the parts are "pre-eminently structural unities" rather than "mere aggregates," that they are homogeneous rather than heterogeneous, and that they are interdependent rather than independent in their functions. With the exception of the latter, which I would modify to "relatively independent," Hauser's antithetical distinguishing characteristics, that is to say, the parts of a whole which are aggregates, heterogeneous and relatively independent, and therefore active, dynamic, immediate and regenerating (rather than quietistic and prior) corresponds with my understanding of holism.¹⁷

Bakhtin's holistic philosophy is more comprehensive, more complex than the more simple organicist theory or doctrine. Sergei Averintsev, a Russian "philosopher and historian admired by Bakhtin," confirms this view when he says that Bakhtin was a "thinker who could retain the whole in his mind and take the particular in its interpretative relation to the whole without being tempted for a moment by a docked, simplified, abbreviated image of the world." As well, it is his opinion that Bakhtin did not think of life or view life, in terms of opposition: "the essence of Bakhtin's position," he writes, "consisted in never being 'against', but always 'for': not in dispute or in refutation, but in affirmation, in defending the rights of the whole against the wrongful claims of the particular." In "Discourse in the Novel" (1934-1935) Bakhtin himself writes - in fact his first words are - that "the principal idea of this essay is that the study of verbal art can and must overcome the divorce between an abstract 'formal' approach and an equally abstract 'ideological' approach." With the possible exception of the book-length essay, "Freudianism, A Critical Study" (1927), he follows the practice of neither negating nor reconciling competing theories, but rather, supplementing their deficiencies: recreating the

open-ended wholeness in order to leave open a way for discussion, critique and the possibility of renewed or reaccentuated meaning.¹⁸

Bakhtin's domain is that of radical humanism which defends and upholds the human's right to "existence as a subject," a speaking subject. This is the central focus of exploration in Bakhtin's thought, the thematic unity, approached in a number of different ways in his writings: for example, *in linguistic terms*, in dialogue "as the root condition of the human being"; in dialogic relations between "speaking subjects"; in utterance, "an unrepeatable, historically unique, individual whole" as a link in a very complexly organized chain of other utterances. *In psychological terms*: in the inseparable link between self and other, the *I and thou*; in consciousness awakening "wrapped in another's consciousness." *In terms of literary aesthetics*: in the necessary and integral relation between author, hero, and responding listener; in the inseparable link between literature and culture; in the work of art which "extends its roots into the distant past"; in the idea that "great literary works are prepared for by centuries"; in culture as the accumulation of centuries of lived experience and wisdom, and in art which reveals this accumulated wisdom born of lived experience. *In philosophical historical terms*: the human as, not a monad encapsulated in the vacuum of the present, but rather, as an historical being; the culture of an epoch, "no closed and finalized" Spenglerian construct. *In the unifying power of laughter*: "everything that is truly great must include an element of laughter" for "laughter lifts the barriers and clears the path . . . laughter only unites: it cannot divide." *In the human's integral connection to the world*: the grotesque body in "its two-fold contradictory process" inseparable "from the rest of the world," the "ever-unfinished, ever-creating body, the link

in the chain of genetic development . . . from one body a new body always emerges in some form or other."¹⁹

Bakhtin's humanistic and holistic philosophy, the "notion of man and of human values as the hub of all literary activity," underlies all his thought and is approached in numerous ways in the diverse areas of his discourse. His stated intention, in the early writings now attributed to him, calls for a revision of Marxist theory, and he undertakes the task of providing a Marxist work on the philosophy of language, for the reason that this and other fields of knowledge were, in his words, "untouched, or only perfunctorily touched upon, by the hands of Marxism's founders, Marx and Engels," and remain "arrested at a stage of predialectical mechanistic materialism." However, by the late 1920s, when Bakhtin (Medvedev) was writing *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, and in the 1930s, the "literary theories of the Marxist camp were characterized by an increasing dogmatic ideologism." And the political climate of the increasingly monologic, authoritarian Stalinist era was antithetical, to say the least, to Bakhtin's philosophy of the dialogic, constantly renewing nature of language and thus was a subject "too dangerous to tackle if one wanted to survive." In fact, both P.M. Medvedev and V.N. Vološinov, the named authors of *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* and *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* respectively, disappeared in the Stalinist purges of the 1930s. Medvedev died and the fate of Vološinov remains a mystery.²⁰

The question thus arises as to whether or not Bakhtin's larger purpose was in part motivated by an increasing authoritarianism and dogmatism in the Soviet Union, and that the lacuna in Marxist theory was perceived by him and his circle as an appropriate means to

articulate a critique. However, this speculation is outside the subject of this dissertation. Wlad Godzich does point out, however, that Bakhtin, unlike his contemporaries, does not embark upon "polemical denunciations" of "the Formalists from a Marxist perspective." Rather, he articulates his philosophy of language "through a critique of the Formalists." In the early major works now attributed to Bakhtin (P.M. Medvedev's *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* and V.N. Vološinov's *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*), to extend Godzich's thought, he pursues his own theoretical and methodological concerns through the close examination in the field of linguistics, of the works of Ferdinand de Saussure, Wilhelm von Humboldt and the Vossler school; in literary theory, in the works of Russian formalists and contemporary Marxist ideological reflection theorists. He expresses his dissatisfaction with the reductionist practices of these theorists, the limitations of their theories, but to a lesser extent with those of Humboldt and the Vossler school. Later in his life, Bakhtin expresses criticism on similar grounds of the structuralists and the semioticians, all of whom treat the subject of their study in isolation, and deal with merely an aspect, or part, of the subject as though it were the whole, the totality: in his words, "*they try to find the whole in part.*"²¹

Bakhtin's concepts are always holistic concepts. He writes that what he has in mind in the study of the word, or discourse (*slovo*) is "language in its concrete living totality, and not language as the specific object of linguistics." For this reason he chooses to define his study as *metalinguistics*, "the study of those aspects in the life of the word, not yet shaped into separate and specific disciplines." Bakhtin is concerned with aesthetics, with the creative process, the dynamics of the relationship between author and character, the dynamics of the discourse in the novel, the relationship between content and form,

between everyday language and verbal art, in the aesthetic object as "a form-content category, the result of the interaction of creator (author) and content."²²

Herein lies his disagreement with the major movements in contemporary scholarship in linguistics and literary theory. While Bakhtin recognizes the value of the study of grammar, the study of the mechanics of language and the literary process, in his view, this is only one aspect of language. This is merely a study of the dead material of language. Thus he is critical of the Cartesian abstract objectivism of Saussure (and other abstract objectivists of the rational school, Durkheim, Meillor etc.) on two counts: first of all, he is critical because Saussure divorces utterance or the speech act (*la parole*) from the language system (*la langue*) and contends that "language as a system of normatively identical forms," that is, language as a static system, is the point of departure for a study of linguistics; that the speech act (*la parole*) is unworthy of study because it is "individual." The second point of disagreement is the Saussurian contention that, to quote Bakhtin, "language stands in opposition to utterance in the same way as does that which is social to that which is individual." The utterance (*la parole*) is defined by Saussure as a purely individual act while "the system of language as a phenomenon . . . is purely social and mandatory for the individuum."²³ Ladislav Matejka summarizes Bakhtin's perspective:

Vološinov [Bakhtin] . . . regarded the speech act and the language system as an indivisible coupling that cannot be studied by isolating one pole from the other. Throughout his entire book he makes it clear that the concrete utterance cannot be adequately handled without simultaneously taking into account the system of language. And, conversely the language system, in his opinion, cannot be analytically grasped without the simultaneous consideration of concrete utterance. Or, as he puts it, "the actual reality of language-

speech is not the abstract system of linguistic forms, not the isolated monologic utterance, and not the psycho-physiological act of its implementation but the social event of verbal interaction implemented in an utterance or utterances." Thus linguistic inquiry is placed by Vološinov [Bakhtin] into a sociological framework where not only the opposition between language and speech has to be taken into account, but also the opposition between speaker and hearer . . . [whose roles] have to be considered complementary and mutually dependent in the process whereby the abstract language system is deployed to execute the concrete utterance.²⁴

Bakhtin, in his discussion of the Cartesian abstract objectivism of Saussure, also undertakes a critique of a second trend in linguistic thought, that of the individualistic subjectivism of Humboldtian linguistics and its followers, primarily the Vossler school. While Bakhtin is in agreement with the Humboldtian concept of language as activity, as an unceasing process of creativity, he rejects its premise that the creativity of language is an individual act. The Vosslerians are criticized by him for their contention that utterance is an individual speech act, because of their primary focus "on subjective, psychological factors and on individual intentions." Language, for them at times, Bakhtin writes, becomes "a mere plaything of individual taste," the monologic utterance, the basic reality.²⁵

The word, Bakhtin believes, is a social act and real-life dialogue is "the simplest and most classic form of speech communication" and the foundation, or potential, of artistic interaction. In Bakhtin's view "the words of a language belong to nobody." The speaker, he writes, "is not after all, the first speaker, the one who disturbs the eternal silence of the universe." An infant, when he learns to speak, enters into the stream of language. "I live in a world of other's words." "The unique speech experience of each individual," Bakhtin writes, "is shaped and developed in continuous and constant interaction with other individual utterances." This experience, in his view, "can be

characterized to some degree as the process of *assimilation* - more or less creative - of other's words."²⁶

Bakhtin's premise of the integral connection between the social realm, that is to say, real-life situations, and art, is not an argument for contemporary Marxist sociological theory of literature as a "direct reflection of social life or as an agency for registering the effects of other ideological systems." Rather, Bakhtin takes a critical view of contemporary Marxist literary criticism and literary history which "were characterized by an increasing dogmatic ideologism," a rift between form and content, and a disregard of the technical framework. And as well, he refers to the rift between theory and history and a consequent denigration of the place of the literary work in the culture, where the work of art is reduced to merely an "ancillary technical role of reflecting other ideologemes," other ideological products.²⁷ Bakhtin criticizes contemporary Marxist criticism for committing three "fatal, methodological errors":

- 1) It limited literature to reflection alone, that is, it lowered it to the status of a simple servant and transmitter of other ideologies, almost completely ignoring the independently meaningful reality of the literary work, its ideological independence and originality.
- 2) It took the reflection of the ideological purview to be the direct reflection of existence itself. It did not take into account the fact that the literary reflects only the ideological horizon, which itself is only the refracted reflection of real existence. To reveal the world depicted by the artist is not to penetrate into the actual reality of life.
- 3) It finalized and dogmatized basic ideological points reflected by the artist in his work, thus turning active and generating problems into ready-made theses, statements, and philosophical,

ethical, political, religious etc. conclusions. It did not understand or consider the vital fact that the essential content of literature only reflects generating ideologies, only reflects the living process of the generation of the ideological horizon.²⁸

In Bakhtin's view, the literature becomes merely a "philosophical, ethical, political, religious" or other tract, a closed, fossilized artifact stopped in or outside of history, time or life, rather than a dynamic work engaged in a continuous living process of questioning, discussing, creating, generating and regenerating meaning. This understanding of generating and regenerating ideology, of living history, in a continuous movement forward to a future of ever-broadening and deepening horizons is the radical and fundamental essence of Bakhtin's thought.²⁹

Bakhtin makes this understanding clear when he points out - using as an example, Bazarov, the Nihilist hero of Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* - that the hero is not a reflection of the social reality. Rather, he is "an ideological refraction of a given social type," in this case, of a classless intellectual "in the social consciousness of a specific social group." In real life, life outside the novel's structure, "in the ideological horizon of any epoch and any social group there is not one, but several mutually contradictory truths, not one but several diverging ideological paths." Thus it is impossible to state that Bazarov is merely a reflection of the social reality. Bazarov is a structural element of the poetic work, a psychological, ethical, philosophical, ideological product *in creation*, as well as a social statement. In the social consciousness of the liberal gentry, the class to which Turgenev belonged, he is the artist's idea of a classless intellectual. The idea, "its ethical-philosophical spirit becomes an ingredient of the poetic spirit," and has a specific artistic

function in the plot, the theme, and in the construction of the work as a whole, and is consumed by the "totality of the author's artistic responsibility for the whole of his artistic statement." Bakhtin goes on to say that it is difficult to separate the ideological product from the thematic unity as a whole, for "the hero is an extremely complex literary formation . . . constructed at the point of intersection of the most important structural lines of the work. It is for this reason," he continues, "that it is so difficult to separate the non-artistic ideologeme which lies at the basis of the hero from the purely artistic fabric which envelops it."³⁰

Bakhtin is critical of those Marxists who impose "a thesis on the artist, a thesis in the sense of the 'last word', and not the generation of an idea," and of those who forget that "there is no philosophy in literature, only philosophizing; no knowledge, but only the process of cognition."³¹

Throughout *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship*, a critique of Russian formalism, Bakhtin places himself in a paradoxical position. He criticizes formalism from a Marxist perspective yet argues that Marxist theory is still "in the embryonic stage" and, to quote Wlad Godzich, "has not worked out a poetics from which to undertake such a critique," while, at the same time, inveighing against contemporary Marxist theoreticians. It has been suggested by Godzich that the critique was undertaken in order to head off an obvious attempt by formalists, Roman Jakobson and Yury Tyniavov, to reconcile Marxism and formalism, a project which would "not only be injurious to Marxism, but would erase what was best about formalism," harden it into a position later held by French structuralism. Given the above, it is not difficult to understand why there is much

controversy about Bakhtin's Marxism. One could speculate that he was romantic and idealistic and possessed the hope (the idea) that he could effect change, or provide guidance in formulating a truly humanistic poetics and philosophy of language in his "modest task of delineating the *basic directions* that genuine Marxist thinking about language must take."³²

The philosophy of language, which for Bakhtin is the philosophy of the sign, was considered by him to be an important issue of dialectical materialism. "First and foremost," Bakhtin writes, "the very foundations of a Marxist theory of ideologies - the bases for the studies of scientific knowledge, literature, religion, ethics and so forth - are closely bound up with problems of the philosophy of language." In positing a theory of semiotics, grounded in the social, that is to say, the sign consisting of inseparable components of the speaker and the hearer, the sign located between individuals, the medium of their communication (and therefore a humanistic semiotics), Bakhtin moved towards a Marxist sociological poetics. However, the "binary nature of the sign and the incessant generative process of language creativity" were, according to Matejka, "too dangerous" in the Soviet Union in the 1930s and for decades "the sign was taboo." Although it was the Soviet semiotician V.V. Ivanov, who claimed Vološinov's *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, and Medvedev's *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* to be works actually authored by Bakhtin, and present-day semioticians, such as Julia Kristeva, claim Bakhtin as one of them, his work is more profound than the theories of this discipline: to quote Ann Shukman, "Kristeva's epistemological void is alien to Bakhtin's personalism, steeped as it is in Western humanist values."³³ Bakhtin himself writes critically of semiotics:

Semiotics deals primarily with the transmission of ready-made communication using a ready-made code. But in live speech, strictly speaking, communication is first created in the process of transmission, and there is, in essence, no code. . . . Context and code. A context is potentially unfinalized; a code must be finalized. A code is only a technical means of transmitting information, but it also has cognitive, creative significance. A code is a deliberately established, killed context.³⁴

Although the eminent Soviet semiotician, Yury M. Lotman, is praised by Bakhtin in a late essay (1970), because he does not separate literature from culture, and he strives to understand "literary phenomena in the differentiated unity of the epoch's entire culture," Bakhtin is critical of Lotman's analysis of *Eugene Onegin*, as "a recoding" which "leads to a falling away of that most important dialogic aspect and to the transformation of a dialogue of styles into a simple coexistence of various versions of one and the same style." "Behind styles," in Bakhtin's view, "lies the integral viewpoint of the integral individual personality," while a "code presupposes content to be somehow ready-made and presupposes the realization of a choice among various *given* codes."³⁵

The issue of the static, reifying nature of theory is taken up by Bakhtin in his critique of formalism or *material aesthetics*, as he also defines it. In the history of literary scholarship, Bakhtin argues, the formalists played a productive role in delineating the most important problems. However, in his view, they did not manage to solve these problems. The formalists' attempt to "resurrect" the word - from the Symbolists' ideologically overburdened word and from the Acmeists "exoticism" and "primitive stylization" - means that the word becomes merely its linguistic reality, the word "first and foremost" its phonetic, morphological, syntactic structure. The study becomes a study of technique, the

mechanics of the literary process in artistic creation; thus in Bakhtin's view, it is only part of the study. For Bakhtin, this "literary technology," though a necessary aspect and of great value to literary scholarship, "becomes unmitigatedly harmful and unacceptable whenever an effort is made on this basis to study and understand artistic creativity as a whole, in all its aesthetic uniqueness and significance." His argument with the formalists is on these grounds: they treat the dead material of language, the mechanical aspects as though they were the totality of the aesthetic experience. They lay "claim to the role not only of historical poetics but also of theoretical poetics." They isolate the work of art from its context, from the necessary interaction between the creator, the work of art and the perceiver.³⁶

The formalists, in an attempt to end the methodical confusion of existing theoretics, and "systemize literary scholarship as a distinct and integrated field of intellectual endeavour," adopt the scientific method of isolating the object of investigation from its environment, in this case, the work of art from its ideological and social context. The creator and perceiver remain outside the field of enquiry; the work of art is thus self-contained, that is to say, self-valuable, self-sufficient and closed on itself. Literature is thus conceived as an "unfolding of the verbal material": and the focus of study is on the function of the literary work and its constituent parts, that is to say, how it works - "Art as device." The formalist notion of device is, in their view, the basic component of literature, and the device of "making strange", the function of poetic art of "literariness". The poet, or creator, is considered a mere craftsman whose job is the manipulation of language, "a deliberate application of technique to 'materials'."³⁷

From Bakhtin's perspective this isolation of the work from its ideological and social context, its divorce from the creator and perceiver, is impermissible: "Attempting to separate the work from the subjective consciousness, the formalists at the same time sever it from the objective fact of social intercourse, with the result that the artistic work turns into a meaningless thing analogous to a commodity fetish." The resulting "negative, nihilistic slant," Bakhtin writes, "diminishes, impoverishes and emasculates reality." However, it ultimately proved impossible to banish the essential aspects of the work and the problem of content emerged and had to be dealt with. The formalists, according to Bakhtin, were "constrained to *project* the social interaction of the creator and the perceiver onto various aspects of material and devices which give it form." The value-bearing content, the ideas and the emotions were subsumed as the "material" and were defined by the formalist, Victor Shklovsky, as the "'building materials' for the job of artistic construction, phenomena of the same order as words or word-combinations": the "outside world . . . is for the painter not the content, but merely the material for his painting."³⁸

A similar conjuring trick, or sleight of hand, a like suppression of living context, a denigration of artistic endeavour, takes place in the formalists' position on genre and the constructive elements which were formulated as merely the "recombination of ready-made elements," a "ready-made hero, story, problem." Here all that is required of the artist is to combine them in a novel way into a plot, in Shklovsky's view, to combine them in a manner analogous to a chess game.³⁹

Formalist literary history, as a history of autonomous works, likewise suffers from the "tendency to tear art out of its social context" and to deny any interaction with the social

realm. The formalist history of literature is concerned only with the immanent nature of the text, with genres and devices rather than with creative personalities. Progression in literary history is merely through the device of "making strange," of, in Shklovsky's terms, an inheritance "not from father to son, but from uncle to nephew," the influence of a work upon a work unaffected by extra-literary determinants.⁴⁰

In Bakhtin's view, the formalists failed to formulate an acceptable poetics, in fact, they "radically distorted" the basic aim of poetics in their attempt to emancipate the word (to use formalist B.M. Eikhenbaum's words) "from the shackles of the philosophical and religious tendencies" of symbolism. In Bakhtin's opinion, they moved to the other extreme and thus reduced art to empty combinations of forms. And furthermore, because the subject under scrutiny is isolated and extracultural, the formalists' "material aesthetics is incapable of explaining aesthetic vision outside art"; therefore they "cannot establish the bases for the history of art":⁴¹

In order to escape the sea of subjectivism in which aesthetic judgements . . . are drowning, art scholarship is striving to find shelter in those scientific disciplines which concern themselves with the material of a given art, just as in the past . . . art scholarship has clung to psychology and even physiology. But this escape is fictitious.⁴²

In claiming Bakhtin as the formalists' "last and probably greatest genius," his work "a formalist's critique . . . in fact a logical development of formalist thinking," Gary Saul Morson misses the entire point, not only of Bakhtin's holistic approach to scholarship, but

as well, of Bakhtin's critique of the formalists, his critique of their isolation of the work of art from its relation to the human and to the socio-historico-ideological cultural context. Moreover, Morson also misses Bakhtin's critical view of the formalist's further assertion that this mere aspect of the whole is the totality of an aesthetics. Although he writes that Bakhtin's work "deals with 'the concrete life of the word'," Morson interprets Bakhtin's work through the theoretical framework of formalism, as though Bakhtin himself investigates the dead, mechanical and technical aspects of discourse and the novel. For example, Bakhtin/Vološinov, Morson says, like the formalists, is engaged in a study of embedded speech acts which is a study of "the making - and still more interesting, the breaking - of frames." And Bakhtin would insist, Morson writes, that "the 'objective incompleteness' and 'apparent monstrosity' of Russian literature is . . . deliberate, and a calling of attention to the artifice of art through a systematic violation of its norms."⁴³

Thus, in this interpretation of Bakhtin's work, Morson denudes it of its relation to the speaking subject, his particular intonation, his particular point of view which emanates from his particular social circumstances within a particular historical epoch inseparable from past and future epochs. Though he agrees that Bakhtin complements "the formalists' definition of literature with a history," Morson argues that Bakhtin assimilates the formalist Tynjanov's "theory of parody as a mechanism of literary history," and thus he appears to confuse the formalist's abstract metaphor of literature developing from uncle to nephew with Bakhtin's real-life speaking subjects in a real-life historical context and the integral relation of literature to that context. Victor Erlich writes of Bakhtin's Dostoevsky work that its "essentially structural and metalinguistic thrust . . . attests to a strong affinity for the mature phase of Formalist thinking." However, in his view, Bakhtin, "an incisive and

original literary theorist [cannot] be labeled a formalist." The confusion arises (and in Morson's essay it is confusion) because Bakhtin is not opposed to formalism in the sense that he dispenses with its theoretical insights. In fact, Bakhtin himself criticizes the formalists' position because they dispense with the theoretical insights of their contemporaries, the Symbolists, Acmeists and Futurists.⁴⁴

Bakhtin does not argue that form and structure are unnecessary or insignificant. On the contrary, he insists on their necessity, and on their necessary and inseparable relation with content. His criticism of formalism is directed at its separation of form and content, and the reduction of art to its purely material, technical aspects: "Formalism takes account of the composition, but not of the architectonics of works of art: it puts the problem of bricklaying in place of the problem of structure . . . you can't lay bricks without mortar. In the notion of form, the mortar is the principle of the unity of the artistic task which normalizes and predetermines all particulars, all details, whether of content or of form."⁴⁵

Bakhtin understands the problem of art as "not 'art as a device', but art as meaningful gesture from human being to human being." It is only within the "unity of human culture," he writes, that the "fact and the uniqueness of art can be understood." Nothing can have meaning in isolation for the reason that meaning is created *only* within the "unity of human culture," that is to say, in relation to the whole. Bakhtin considers it his task to create a larger perspective by contributing a contextual, socio-ideological, historical dimension, a humanistic aesthetics - his philosophy of the unfinalizable whole - to the various isolating, static, technical, mechanical abstract theories of his diverse

contemporaries in the 1920s and the 1930s, a contribution which is the subject of the following chapters.⁴⁶

Chapter II

Mikhail Bakhtin's Philosophy of the Word

I live in a world of others' words.

*Mikhail Bakhtin, "From the Notes Made in
1970-71"*

The word is not a material thing but rather the eternally mobile, eternally fickle medium of dialogic interaction. It never gravitates toward a single consciousness or a single voice. The life of the word is contained in its transfer from one mouth to another, from one context to another context, from one social collective to another, from one generation to another generation. In this process the word does not forget its own path and cannot completely free itself from the power of these concrete contexts into which it has entered.

Mikhail Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics

In the preceding chapter I attempted to sum up Bakhtin's essential position with regard to his major disagreement with the linguistic and literary theoreticians who were his contemporaries. It is important to stress that although Bakhtin is critical of and disagrees with these theoreticians, his argument with them is essentially based on the fact that, in his view, they choose only a segment of the work of art as the subject of their study, yet consider it the whole, an aesthetics and poetics.

Bakhtin, who understands the problem of linguistic and literary studies as a "complex and multifaceted" phenomenon - one, therefore, with no "single 'redeeming' method" - has no competing theory as such to offer in place of these theoretical positions. His focus, or, to quote Averintsev, his "particular speciality was always the whole." As Bakhtin himself says, "Methodological dissent in the field of art studies can be overcome not by creating yet another new method that will take part in the general conflict of methods, differing from them only in that it will exploit the factuality of art in its own way, but solely by means of the systematic philosophical interpretation of the fact and uniqueness of art in the unity of human culture." In his view "various approaches are justified and are even quite necessary as long as they are serious and reveal something new in the literary phenomenon being studied, as long as they promote a deeper understanding of it."¹

Bakhtin's understanding of literary scholarship differs radically from formalism, Saussurian linguistics, structuralism, semiotics, Marxist reflection theory and subjective psychologism, in that, in his view, the aesthetic object is "a multifaceted artistic formulation" and can be studied only in this complexity: the totality, the material, social, philosophical, cultural and historical context. The aesthetic object, Bakhtin writes, "understood as the content of artistic vision and its architectonics, is a completely new and real construction, not of a natural scientific, nor of a psychological of course, nor of a linguistic order. This is a unique aesthetic reality, which arises on the boundaries of the work through the subjugation of its material-corporeal, extra-aesthetic determinacy." The word, the phoneme, the morpheme, the sentence, and the semantic categories of linguistic studies are essential in order to understand "*the technical aspects* of the poet's creation,"

but, in Bakhtin's view, "lie outside the content of aesthetic perception, that is, outside the artistic object," thus are secondary to it.²

The word and the sentence are signifying units of language, but they are neutral and have no expressive aspect. They have no author and belong to nobody. However, the individual word pronounced with expressive intonation, that is, a word from a speaking subject, is no longer a word as such but a completed utterance expressed by one word. The study of language and literary forms, in Bakhtin's view, cannot be accomplished without an investigation of the language in its concrete, living reality, that is to say, without investigation of the utterance. The utterance is wholly a product of social interaction, "a unit of active living speech grounded in the reality of a particular situation," the words always filled with content and meaning drawn from behavior or ideology. The utterance, for Bakhtin, is the "basic unit of language for . . . linguistic thinking."³

In an early essay attributed to him, Bakhtin demonstrates the need to take into account more than merely the word in its materiality. Moreover, he emphasizes not only the necessity to take into consideration the intonation, that is to say, the living expression, but as well, the social context. Discourse, he writes "arises from the non-verbal real-life situation and maintains a very intimate connection with it." It is "directly filled with that life and may not be detached from it without losing its sense." He illustrates the truth of his statement by describing a scene which is, in his words, "a deliberately simplified example": a couple are sitting in a room in silence. One utters the word "Well!" The other says nothing. The utterance taken in isolation is "completely inexplicable." Yet Bakhtin says, "the couple's peculiar exchange, consisting of only one word, though one to be sure which

is expressively inflected, is full of meaning and significance and quite complete." However, when subjected to linguistic analysis, that is to say, to define the phonetic, morphological and semantic features of the word "well," there is no hope of understanding the "integral sense of the exchange."⁴

Bakhtin further develops his scene by providing a context. First of all, he writes, the word "well" was uttered in a tone "indignantly reproachful, but softened with a touch of humour." Secondly, the non-verbal context was such that the word was intelligible to the listener and therefore required no response:

This *non-verbal context* of the utterance was formed out of three factors: 1) a *spatial purview* common to the speakers (the unity of what is visible - the room, the window and so on), 2) the couple's *common knowledge and understanding of the circumstances*, and finally 3) their *common evaluation* of these circumstances.

At the moment of the exchange *both* individuals *glanced* at the window and *saw* that it was snowing. *Both knew* that it was already May and long since time for spring, and finally, that they were both sick of the protracted winter. *Both were waiting* for spring and *were annoyed* by the late snowfall. The utterance depends directly on all this - on what was "*visible to both*" (the snowflakes beyond the window), what was "*known to both*" (the date was May) and what was "*similarly evaluated*" (boredom with winter, longing for spring); and all this was grasped in the actual meaning of the utterance, all this soaked into it yet remained verbally unmarked, unuttered.⁵

Bakhtin's essential point in this example is that the word as a dictionary word, the object of linguistic analysis, is meaningless when deprived of its context. The word "well" is imbued with meaning constituted in its living context, which in this example, is the scene visible to its participants and, what is most important, the inner communality of shared

assumptions and values which are all summed up and expressed, that is, signified, by the word "well".

Another important factor with regard to this example, and one which Bakhtin discusses in several places in his work, is expressive intonation, the emotional tone, which is outside of linguistic study, for it is not inherent in the word. It is "born only in the process of its live usage in a concrete utterance." Words can be utilized by any speaker in a variety of forms and in contradictory ways. To make his point clear, Bakhtin, in another instance takes the word "joy" as an example of one of the words that "specifically designate emotions and evaluations." Used in the sentence "Any joy is now only bitterness to me," the word "joy," Bakhtin writes, "is given an expressive intonation that resists its own meaning, as it were."⁶

An essential feature of Bakhtin's thought is his view that the word and language creation is not an individual act. It is clear in the above situation that, although the speaker articulates the word "well," both the speaker and the listener participate in a non-verbal communication which is summed up and understood by both in the word "well" - it is a communal event. The word, in Bakhtin's view, is a "two-sided act," a bridge, the territory shared by the speaker and the listener, who is actually another "speaking subject." "Any word," writes Bakhtin, "exists for the speaker in three aspects: as a neutral word of language belonging to nobody; as an *other's* word which belongs to another person and is filled with the echoes of the other's utterance; and finally as *my* word, for, since I am dealing with it in a particular situation, with a particular speech plan, it is already imbued with my expression."⁷

The individual in the creative act of speech utilizes existing neutral words, the material of language, and makes use of specific speech genres," the echoes of the other's utterance" and combined with his own expressive intonation creates his own individual utterance. This understanding of the word as a social event, of the idea of "co-being" (to use Ann Shukman's term) is the crux of Bakhtin's thought. Although Bakhtin argues against Enlightenment, Cartesian abstract objectivism, against the alien word, the word divorced from its meaning, he is also critical of the individualistic subjectivism of Romanticism (itself a reaction to the Enlightenment) which asserts the primacy of the individual over the social, the individual against the social, the individual as sole author of his own word. In a passage worth quoting in full, he argues:

The correlate of the social is the "natural" and thus "individual" is not meant in the sense of a person, but "individual" as natural, biological specimen. The individual, as possessor of the contents of his own consciousness, as author of his own thoughts, as the personality responsible for his thoughts and feelings, - such an individual is a purely socioideological phenomenon. Therefore, the content of the "individual" psyche is by its very nature just as social as is ideology, and the very degree of consciousness of one's individuality and its inner rights and privileges is ideological, historical, and wholly conditioned by sociological factors.⁸

Bakhtin discusses this position more fully in *Freudianism, A Critical Sketch*, an attempt to develop a psychology for Marxism. To paraphrase him: in response to the cold, benumbing abstractions of Kantian Pure Reason and to the static lifeless schemes of the neo-Kantians, neo-Fichteans and neo-Hegelians, modern philosophy adopts the *first* part of the Aristotelian conception of man as an animal, focuses on a scientific biologism and *ignores* the *second* part of Aristotle's dictum that man is a *social* animal. These modern

day philosophers (he names Bergson, Simmel, Gomperz, Scheler, Driesch, Spengler), despite their differences, share three fundamental motifs. First of all, they conceive of the "isolated organic unity" as the highest philosophical value and criterion. Secondly, they reject Kant's theories as a doctrine of consciousness, and "minimize the role of consciousness in cultural creativity." And thirdly, they reject socioeconomic categories in favour of "subjective psychological or biological ones," and tend to "view history and culture as deriving directly from nature and to disregard economics." Modern philosophy, in Bakhtin's view, reveals a *"sui generis fear of history, an ambition to locate a world beyond the social and the historical, a search for this world precisely in the depths of the organic."*⁹

For Bakhtin man is a social animal and there can be no such thing as a human being outside of society. He writes that "animals are physically born but they do not enter into history." The human being, on the other hand, experiences a *"social birth,"* enters into, and is part of, a social whole, and only within a specific social and historical localization is he a *"real human being."* For Bakhtin, we "live in a world of other's words," we enter as another link into "the chain of speech communion." Our consciousness develops with our ability to communicate, to interact. In his view, consciousness is synonymous with the inner word, the inner sign, inner speech: "No act of consciousness can take place without internal speech, without words and intonation - without evaluations." However, inner speech is not an individual creative act. Creative individuality, in his view, "is nothing but the expression of a particular person's basic, firmly grounded, and consistent line of social orientation." The individual develops out of other. Everything which is related to the individual enters his consciousness "from the external world through the mouths of others,

. . . with their intonation, in their emotional and value-assigning tonality. . . . Just as the body is formed initially in the mother's womb (body), a person's consciousness awakens wrapped in another's consciousness."¹⁰

Bakhtin argues that individual subjectivism is wrong to derive the origin of the utterance from "the speaker's inner world as an expression of that inner world," and to ignore the social nature of the utterance. However, he is not arguing that the individual psyche can be explained by the conditions of his immediate time (epoch): the psyche is not socially determined by the immediate environment as asserted, for example, in modern (1970-80s) "psychoanalytic" theory (which is more truly social psychology) and the "naive, mechanistic," materialist theories of the American behaviourists and Russian reflexologists of Bakhtin's time (of writing, 1927). Rather, he takes a Kantian position of *a priori* schemata and a position similar to that of Sigmund Freud's theory of phylogenetic heritage in his assertion that the psyche possesses "a special unity distinguishable from the unity of ideological systems." The individual as a "purely socioideological phenomenon" is determined by the unity of the biological organism, and as well, "by the whole aggregate of conditions of life and society in which that organism has been set," that is to say, by "organic and in the broad sense of the word, biographical factors."¹¹

Bakhtin argues that the individual as a biological organism is set in a sphere of already existing conditions, an already existing socio-ideological world which he absorbs, reworks, reaccentuates to make his own. He is not the "mythical Adam," the "first speaker, the one who disturbs the eternal silence of the universe." Rather, his unique speech experience develops by assimilation, in continuous and constant interaction with

others, in dialogue, the "classic form of speech communion," the "primordial source of social creativity."¹²

Dialogue, in its full sense of speaking subjects, of open-ended unity and continuity, is the theme, the root, the fundamental essence found in all of Bakhtin's works, be they his writings in the domains of philosophy, linguistics, literary theory or in the Marxist sociological and psychological writings attributed to him. This dialogical principle, the impossibility of conceiving any being "outside of the relations that link it to the other," is the root concern, the fundamental principle, in Bakhtin's exploration of man and his relation to ideology and ideological artifacts, that is to say, his studies, in linguistics and literary theory. To put it in the words of Sergei Averintsev, a philosopher admired by Bakhtin, "his particular speciality was always the whole: that same 'unity of human culture' understood as a continuing dialogue which began before us and in which we are called upon to participate." Bakhtin himself points out that for Dostoevsky "two voices is the minimum for life, the minimum for existence."¹³

The importance of the other, the self in relation to the other is the basis of Bakhtin's philosophy and it is from this root that he develops the dialogical principle. He writes in an early work that it is impossible for the person to contemplate his total self without recourse to a mirror.¹⁴ He says, elsewhere, that it is impossible for the person to conceive of himself as a totality without reference from another:

I cannot perceive myself in my external aspect, feel that it encompasses me and gives me expression. . . . In this sense, one can speak of the absolute aesthetic need of man for the other, for the other's activity of seeing, holding, putting together and unifying,

which alone can bring into being the externally finished personality; if someone else does not do it, this personality will have no existence.¹⁵

It is only by revealing oneself "for another, through another, and with the help of another" that one is conscious of oneself. "The most important acts constituting self-consciousness," Bakhtin writes, "are determined by a relationship toward another consciousness (toward a *thou*)." The use of *thou* indicates, and this is of vital importance in Bakhtin's thought, that the other is not only not an alien other, but rather, an intimate other and, further, a relatively autonomous other, a speaking subject. This vitally important understanding of relationship (and a subject to which I shall return) also reveals its integral and, perhaps circular, unifying nature: the *I* develops out of *thou* and is dependent, looks to the other, the *thou* for confirmation of the self, for self-consciousness.¹⁶

The real-life necessity, the actuality of the necessary existence of the other is recreated by Dostoevsky in his "confessional" works, and Bakhtin brilliantly illuminates Dostoevsky's creative genius by pointing out that the characters' seeming monologues are, in fact, dialogues. They are always not only addressed to another, but the character responds as though to another, a presumed - in these instances - critical other. Inner speech, although it appears to be interior monologue, is actually dialogic and in Bakhtin's view "resemble[s] the alternating lines of dialogue." The voices are, in essence, "voices within the limits of a single dismantled consciousness." For example, he points out in his analysis of Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground* that the Underground Man's interior dialogue is a "real life human voice" and, *as well*," the other's anticipated reply."

In another instance, he notes that the Underground Man's interior speech is addressed not only to the speaker but also to the universe, the creator and all people.¹⁷

It is important to understand Bakhtin's view that the dialogue consists not of two, but of three parties: the speaker, the addressee and, as well, a third because with "greater or lesser awareness," the speaker "presupposes a higher *superaddressee* . . . whose absolutely just responsive understanding is presumed, either in some metaphysical distance, or in distant historical time. . . . In various ages and with various understandings of the world this superaddressee and his ideally true responsive understanding assume various ideological expressions (God, absolute truth, the court of dispassionate human conscience, the people, the court of history, science, and so forth)." Thus dialogic relations are always present in a monologic work for, though it does not presuppose a response, it is "set toward being perceived in the context of current scientific life or current literary affairs," that is to say, the author or speaker has an objectified addressee, a superaddressee in mind.¹⁸

It is also important to point out that dialogue is not to be considered in only the narrow sense of disagreement, argument, contradiction, polemics, or parody. Rather, agreement is included because, as Bakhtin says, "*agreement* is very rich in varieties and shadings. . . . *two* utterances belonging to *different* voices . . . are linked by dialogic *relations of agreement*." Further, dialogue is not to be understood as dialectics, the Hegelian compromise of thesis and antithesis in synthesis. From Bakhtin's perspective, this is monologue.¹⁹

In Bakhtin's view, both monologue and dialogue retain their simple meanings of uninterrupted utterance in the former case, and of an exchange of utterances in the latter. However, it is important to point out that Bakhtin understands both monologue and dialogue as participants in a larger whole, participants in a world of speech communication. He writes that the speaker "is not, after all, the first speaker, the one who disturbs the eternal silence of the universe." The "speaker is not Adam, and therefore the subject of his speech itself inevitably becomes the arena where his opinions meet those of his partners." Thus the monologue as an uninterrupted utterance is internally dialogic because it takes into account past meanings and relates to that to which it responds. It is a "rejoinder from a larger dialogue" and is monologic in the sense that it is authoritative, the final word, which neither seeks nor is open to response. The dialogic word, on the other hand, expects and invites an active responsive understanding: "the entire utterance is constructed, as it were, in anticipation of encountering this response."²⁰

In contrast to the closed, dead nature of the monologic word, the dialogic word is open, dynamic, ever-generating and regenerating its life and meaning. It is continually engaged in the process of taking its meaning and shape "at a particular historical moment in a socially specific environment." The dialogic word, already "overlain with qualifications, open to dispute, charged with value . . . shot through with shared thoughts, points of view, alien value judgements and accents . . . enters a dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment of alien words, value judgements and accents, weaves in and out of complex interrelationships, merges with some, recoils from others, intersects with yet a third group" and so forth.²¹ Bakhtin goes on to say:

The word in living conversation is directly, blatantly, oriented toward a future answer-word: it provokes an answer, anticipates it and structures itself in the answer's direction. Forming itself in an atmosphere of the already spoken, the word is at the same time determined by that which has not yet been said but which is needed and in fact anticipated by the answering word. Such is the situation in any living dialogue.²²

The dialogue, oriented to the future, is the basic reality of all speech activity, literary work, or other great works of art, because the activity is always directed towards a response, or perception: it is always a social event. In dialogue, the utterance ends with a change of speaking subjects and each speaker retains his autonomy, each speech act retains its own unity and open totality, that is, open to "the answering word that it anticipates." The utterance, though it is linked in the exchange, does not merge and erase the boundaries as in Hegelian dialectics. The utterance, whether it be a word, a speech, a novel, or a painting, is complete in itself yet is linked as in a chain.²³

Dialogue is an open-ended, ongoing continuous regenerating process. There is neither a first word nor a last, for dialogue extends its roots into the distant past and progresses forward to a boundless future. Even past meanings, Bakhtin writes, are constantly renewing "in the process of subsequent, future development of the dialogue." The speaker, to reiterate Bakhtin's image, is just one "link in the chain of speech communion"; that is to say he is part of a community of speakers. He "presupposes not only the existence of the language system he is using, but also the existence of preceding utterances - his own and others'."²⁴

Correspondingly, Bakhtin also writes that "it is impossible to study literature apart from an epoch's entire culture," that the literature, as a single or separate link, has no meaning in itself. Rather it is integral in the culture in which it emerges. Furthermore, it is his view that "it is even more fatal to encapsulate a literary phenomenon in the single epoch of its creation the artwork extends its roots into the distant past," for, he writes, "great literary works are prepared for by centuries."²⁵

For Bakhtin the social realm is integrally connected to the artistic realm. Artistic interaction has its foundations or potential in real-life situations and only becomes artistic in the process of the interaction between the author, the creator, and the perceiver, the responding subject. This integral connection between the social realm, the realm of lived human experience and art is the source of Bakhtin's disagreement with Russian formalism which treats the work of art in isolation, not only from both the creator and the perceiver, but as well, in isolation from the socio-ideological, cultural epoch, and further, in isolation from the socio-ideological, cultural history; that is to say, from the shared cultural consciousness of the creator, the perceiver, the cultural context itself and its history.

For Bakhtin there is little difference between utterance in the social realm and the "artistic verbal utterance." The essential distinction between real-life utterance and "the finished poetic work" is that greater demands are made upon discourse in literature. "Much which remains beyond the limits of the utterance in life," he writes, "now has to find a verbal representative. From the pragmatic view of the topic nothing in the poetic work can be left unspoken." Bakhtin's exploration and examination of the intricate and complex

process of artistic recreation of real-life experience in the novel is the subject of the following chapter.²⁶

Chapter III

The Aesthetics of the Novel: The Problem of the Word in the Novel

The novel is the only developing genre and therefore it reflects more sensitively and rapidly, reality itself in the process of its unfolding.

Mikhail Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination

Bakhtin's greatest endeavour in literary scholarship, his most brilliant work, is his exploration into the dynamics of the novel, his investigation of the problem for the artist of re-creating into the artistic realm of the novel the concrete, living, dynamic experience of real life. Bakhtin's exploration draws him, insofar as I can discover, into previously unknown, unspoken about (virgin) territory, into areas of "novel" understanding. In his attempt to elucidate and explain his extremely complex and difficult insights, he is often constrained upon to develop a new language (his own neologisms) for new concepts which create difficulty for those who seek to follow and to understand, difficulty not only for his English translators and readers but also for Soviet theorists and fellow Russian readers.

Many of his concepts (heteroglossia, carnivalesque, polyphony, loophole, sideways glance, dialogic, to name a few) have become absorbed as abstractions by some writers; they have become cant words, jargon, thrown willy-nilly into contemporary literary commentary as evidence of the contemporaneity of the essayist. Needless to say, they have, by this reification, lost the concrete meaning with which Bakhtin endowed them. In an effort to counteract this reification and narrowing down, this simplification and distortion of Bakhtin's rich and complex work, I will attempt to outline and discuss some of his most important ideas, his understanding and explanation of the dynamic forces which he discovers at work in the novel, the generating forces which make the novel "novel."

While Bakhtin's study may, in some sense, be seen as a formalist exercise of scholarship because it deals with the subject of forms, of forms for creating images of language, it differs radically from formalism because Bakhtin seeks to discover not "how it was made" but rather *how it works*. Formalism treats the work of art as a dead thing, as a "histological specimen," to use Bakhtin's terms, and defines "artistic form as *the form of the material*." Bakhtin, however, argues that the "*meaning and the sense of form relate not to material, but to content*". Thus, writes Bakhtin, "we could say that the form of a statue is not the form of the marble, but the form of a human body; moreover, form 'makes a hero' of the depicted person, either 'flatters', or perhaps 'humiliates' him (caricature style in the plastic arts), that is, the form expresses a specific evaluation of what is depicted."¹

Bakhtin's understanding differs radically from formalism because he does not sever the artist from the work. Neither does he sever the work from its socio-ideological cultural context, nor from its cultural history (the subject of the next chapter). Nor does he view the work as a single-voiced expression of the individual artist's personality which would deny or deprive the work of aesthetic significance. Rather, in his view, poetic or artistic form or style are social manifestations of the work of art which are internally dialogized. In other words, the human being, the author, the hero and the listener (the author's sense of listener, an internalized representative of the culture) are "the vital forces, determining both form and style."²

It is important to point out that Bakhtin's idea of listener, the potential speaking subject, in relation to the work of art, is not the unknown public who will eventually read the work, nor is the listener the ideal listener, that is to say, the passive listener of Saussurian linguistic theory and its followers. Rather Bakhtin's concept of the listener, the potential speaking subject, in relation to the work of art, is the author's (and hero's) idea of listener, is the one to whom the author and hero addresses himself and *one who internally determines the work's structure*. In the example from Dostoevsky's work to which I referred in the last chapter, the listener was assumed to be a critical voice. To use Bakhtin's example which is more specific, "the confessional style of Ippolit's 'Notes' in *The Idiot* is determined by the almost excessive degree of contemptuous distrust and hostility for all who will hear his deathbed confession. These tones, though a little softened, also determine the style of *Notes from the Underground*."³

It is also essential to point out that this understanding of the role of the other which develops into the literary concepts (the dialogical principle, the loophole word, the word with a sideways glance, polyphony, to name some), emanate from his understanding of the development of consciousness of a sociologically-based psychology of the individual, of the individual born into an already developed and dynamically developing social group, community culture: of the individual, the self, developing out of other, the *I and thou*. The idea of the listener, in Bakhtin's understanding of the creating consciousness, is not an individual, private isolated phenomenon. Rather, the listener is the internalized representative of the culture, "the authoritative representative" of the artist, the author's idea of his social group. For Bakhtin consciousness is a communal act embracing the individual and the external world. Inner and outer worlds are not separate, isolated, joined as by a bridge so to speak, for this would suggest a gap, an abyss. Rather, the external world becomes known, continues to be known, that is to say, consciousness develops, through the internalization of the word. Self-consciousness, self-awareness is gained by an externalization, by reference to the other, to the outer realm. This understanding recognizes that there is neither a first nor a last word, that the author and hero do not have the last word, that all discourse is dialogic, that the art work is open to a further and future word.

In Bakhtin's exploration into the dynamics of the novel, an external manifestation of this creating or creative consciousness, he argues that the literary work of art is a dynamic, essentially sociological phenomenon, a "*powerful condensor of unspoken social evaluations*." Its merely material nature is "a skeleton which is fleshed out only in the process of creative perception, consequently, only in the process of real social interaction." Every word it contains, chosen not from a dictionary, but rather from "the context of real

life," is permeated and saturated with social evaluations. These social evaluations "*organize artistic form as their direct expression*," in that they "first of all determine the author's choice of words and the listener's feeling for this selection (coselection)."⁴

The author "chooses evaluations" which are "linked to words," and this choice is made from the point of view of the embodied bearers of these evaluations (from the internalized heteroglossia, that is to say, from the "social diversity of speech types"), at all times "in or out of sympathy, in agreement or disagreement, with the listener." In Bakhtin's view, the elements of form are active expressions of evaluation of content and are oriented in two directions, towards the listener and towards the topic of the utterance, the hero. The simple selection of a quality, attribute, or a metaphor in character creation is an active evaluating act. With the aid of artistic form, the author establishes an active relation to content, for the choice of content and form are "one and the same act" and establish the author's fundamental position.⁵

In a survey of studies of stylistics - studies of form and style - in the novel, Bakhtin notes essentially two modes of literary or artistic evaluation. The first mode is formulated on the Platonic model and Bakhtin cites as an example, V.M. Žirmunsky's critique of Tolstoy's novel as not a "work of verbal art" because it "does not use words as an artistically significant element of interaction but a neutral medium." This mode of evaluation does away with any notion of a stylistics of the novel on the grounds that it is an extra-artistic rhetorical genre, the same as practical speech, denied of "any aesthetic significance"; thus it allows one "to limit oneself to purely thematic analyses" alone and is therefore outside the subject of this discussion. The second mode of literary or artistic

evaluation which Bakhtin notes is based in the Aristotelian tradition where the work is evaluated through its intrinsic merit, what Bakhtin calls the "immanent" method which conceives a literary work "as if it were a hermetic and self-sufficient whole . . . a closed system presuming nothing beyond [itself]." In his view, this method looks to find the whole in part, orients itself towards "one or another of its subordinated stylistic unities," for example, the relation between the author and his language, or the characteristics of a poetic or literary language within a particular era. This method imprisons the artistic and literary representation, the style-generating factor, either within the narrow confines of the author and his language, or within one of the "several subordinated unities" or aspects appearing in the work, for example, "epic style," particular imagery, symbolism, or other such elements.⁶

Bakhtin finds two approaches to literary evaluation within the "immanent" method. The first of these is a Saussurean individualization of language which presupposes "on the one hand a unity of language . . . and on the other . . . the unity of an individual person realizing himself in language." This approach ignores considerations of genre and the work as a whole, and transforms stylistics into a "curious kind of linguistics . . . or into a linguistics of the utterance." The second approach focuses on a narrowed perception of style, that is, on one of the subordinate characteristics within the novel. Categories of traditional stylistics are applied which, though inappropriate to the novel, are appropriate to poetry - "toward the single-langued and single-styled genres, toward the poetic genres in the narrow sense of the word." Categories such as "'poetic language', 'individuality of language', 'image', 'symbol', 'epic style'" and so forth are applied and formulated as the style-generating factor of a particular novel.⁷

Bakhtin finds the fundamental problem of the "formal" or "immanent" approach to literary presentation in the novel as twofold, one a consequence of the other: the separation of the work of art from its environment leads to the problem that stylistics is treated as an isolated theoretical factor within the confines of the literary work. Formalist stylistics divorces the form of the utterance from its meaning, separates the "form" from the "content." Formalist stylistics is thus concerned with, to reiterate Bakhtin's term, a "histological specimen" rather than with living discourse, and is consequently linked with "individual artists and artistic movements," and becomes an abstract formulation which ignores the "fundamentally social modes in which discourse lives." Most often, Bakhtin writes, "stylistics defines itself as a stylistics of 'private craftsmanship' and ignores the social life of discourse outside the artist's study, discourse in the open spaces of public squares, streets, cities and villages, of social groups, generations and epochs." For the novel, writes Bakhtin, "can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices artistically organized."⁸

The novel is an artistic creation in which sound and resound all the multiple and varied voices, the relations between people, which the novelist internalizes, assimilates to become his own internal speech "*throughout his life* in the process of his *many-sided* interaction with his milieu." The different languages and speech types, which delineate, for example, social class and region, profession, generation, age group, authority, socio-political purpose are rendered in the novel with intentional meaning and cannot be considered, as in traditional stylistics, merely lexicons. Rather, they are essentially and integrally value-bearing words, not mere phonemes, but rather *ideologemes*. Nor are they

syntactical traits but rather syntax interconnected and integral with semantics. All the "languages of heteroglossia [the social diversity of speech types], whatever the principle underlying them and making each unique, are specific points of view on the world, forms for conceptualizing the world in words, specific world views, each characterized by its own objects, meanings and values."⁹

The problem for traditional stylistics is that none of its categories are applicable to novelistic discourse. There is "no method for approaching the distinctive social dialogue among languages" which is present as a whole. There is only a method for approaching one or another of its subordinate stylistic unities. "The traditional scholar," writes Bakhtin, "bypasses the basic distinctive feature of the novel as a genre . . . he transposes a symphonic (orchestrated) theme on to the piano keyboard."¹⁰

Bakhtin approaches the problem posed by the inadequacy of the two evaluative modes of artistic and literary discourse by seeking to understand a relation between the two, to see the novel as a rhetorical form in an "uninterrupted interrelationship" with artistic genres. It is his view that the internally dialogic nature of discourse, revealed in rhetorical forms, its living diversity, is of immense importance to an understanding of the novel as an artistic genre, and novelistic discourse as poetic discourse. "The novel," he writes, "and artistic prose in general, has the closest genetic, family relationship to rhetorical forms. And throughout the entire development of the novel, its intimate interaction (both peaceful and hostile) with living rhetorical genres (journalistic, moral, philosophical and others) has never ceased; this interaction was perhaps no less intense than was the novel's interaction with the artistic genres (epic, dramatic, lyric). But in this uninterrupted interrelationship,

novelistic discourse preserved its own qualitative uniqueness and was never reducible to rhetorical discourse."¹¹

"The novel," writes Bakhtin, "is an artistic genre. Novelistic discourse is poetic discourse" but it cannot be understood within the framework of Aristotelian poetics, "within the frame provided by the concept of poetic discourse as it now exists." As Bakhtin rightly says of the Aristotelian mode, "everything works as long as there is no mention of the novel." The traditional concept of poetic discourse "from Aristotle to the present day" is grounded in certain limiting underlying presuppositions. It is "oriented toward the specific 'official' genres and connected with specific historical tendencies in verbal ideological life." It postulates, in its philosophy of language, linguistics and stylistics, a "system of a unitary language and . . . the *individual* speaking in this language," that is to say, a "simple and unmediated relation of speaker to his unitary and singular 'own' language and . . . as well a simple realization of this language in the monologic utterance of the individual."¹²

This narrow and limited perception comes about by ignoring or denying the reality of the process of the becoming of language and its interrelationships with the culture, with "the processes of sociopolitical and cultural centralization." It comes about with the "particular historical tasks that ideological discourse has fulfilled in specific social spheres and at specific stages in its own historical development." Here, Bakhtin draws attention to the necessary connection and integral relation of language to the cultural conditions (a connection and relation ignored or denied by traditional linguistics, stylistics and the philosophy of language), the tendencies at work in culture and its relation to like tendencies

in the theoretical expressions of culture, of the philosophy of language, linguistics, and stylistics. "Unitary language," he writes, "constitutes the theoretical expression of the historical process of linguistic unification and centralization, an expression of the centripetal forces of language." A unitary language, he continues, "is always in essence posited . . . and at every moment of its linguistic life is opposed to the realities of heteroglossia," the manifold and various forms of styles of speech and languages.¹³ Bakhtin writes in a passage so full, rich but nonetheless succinct that it is worth quoting in its entirety:

Aristotelian poetics, the poetics of Augustine, the poetics of the medieval church, of "the one language of truth," the Cartesian poetics of neoclassicism, the abstract grammatical universalism of Leibniz (the idea of a "universal grammar"), Humboldt's insistence on the concrete - all these, whatever their differences in nuance, give expression to the same centripetal forces in socio-linguistic and ideological life; they serve one and the same project of centralizing and unifying the European languages. The victory of one reigning language (dialect) over the others, the supplanting of languages, their enslavement, the process of illuminating them with the True Word, the incorporation of barbarians and lower social strata into a unitary language of culture and truth, the canonization of ideological systems, philology with its methods of studying and teaching dead languages, languages that were by that very fact "unities," Indo-European linguistics with its focus of attention, directed away from language plurality to a single proto-language - all this determined the content and power of the category of "unitary language" in linguistic and stylistic thought, and determined its creative, style-shaping role in the majority of the poetic genres that coalesced in the channel formed by those same centripetal forces of verbal-ideological life.¹⁴

In Bakhtin's view, traditional studies in linguistics, stylistics and the philosophy of language, in positing the dominance of a single unitary language, of acknowledging only a "single, unitary sealed-off Ptolemaic world of language," ignore or deny the great and diverse world of interanimating and mutually illuminating voices and languages (a world which includes the language of laughter) engaged in a continuous process of struggle and

change. The novel (which is an arena for the struggle between "the centralizing tendencies of a new literary language in the process of taking shape" and the restoration of an outdated language) senses itself on the threshold "between the completed, dominant literary language and the extra-literary languages that know heteroglossia [and] also senses itself on the border of time."¹⁵

Because of the complexity of its nature and because it is often simplified, it seems essential to explore the meaning of the term "heteroglossia" in order to prevent its narrowing, its hardening, its reification. While it is used interchangeably by Bakhtin (or by his translators) with the phrase "the social diversity of speech types," it is important to impart both its static and its dynamic nature which, in my view, is lost in the above phrase. If I understand correctly, "heteroglossia" is a term which Bakhtin uses in order to express a continuous process of change which takes place unremittingly within a particular sphere of action - the socio-historical ideological cultural speech or language realm, a dynamic realm: "At any given moment of its evolution," Bakhtin writes, "language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects in the strict sense of the word (according to formal linguistic markers, especially phonetic), but also - and for us this is the essential point - into languages that are socio-ideological: languages of social groups, 'professional' and 'generic' languages, languages of generations and so forth." Although "this stratification and heteroglossia once realized" becomes a "static invariant of linguistic life," *it is also the guarantor of its dynamics*. The energizing, generating forces within this constantly changing flux are centralizing, verbal-ideological unifying forces at work, together with the decentralizing and disunifying forces pressing forward in a dynamic uninterrupted process. The utterance is both the microcosm and the womb, the focus, and the area of greatest

energy of these centripetal and centrifugal forces: "The processes of centralization and decentralization, of unification and disunification, intersect in the utterance . . . a contradiction-ridden, tension-filled unity of two embattled tendencies in the life of language." Each utterance, writes Bakhtin, "participates in the 'unitary language' (in its centripetal forces and tendencies) and at the same time partakes of social and historical heteroglossia (the centrifugal, stratifying forces)." ¹⁶

"The authentic environment of an utterance," Bakhtin continues, "the environment in which it lives and takes shape, is dialogized heteroglossia, anonymous and social as language, but simultaneously concrete, filled with specific content and accented as an individual utterance." It is in dialogized heteroglossia that the style-generating forces of the novel are rooted. Bakhtin traces the development of the novel to a time of the emergence of a culture critical of all languages and dialects, critical of 'official' literary language of the time. He writes that "at the time [twelfth and thirteenth centuries] when major divisions of the poetic genres were developing under the influence of the unifying, centralizing, centripetal forces of verbal-ideological life and poetry . . . was accomplishing its task of cultural, national and political centralization of the verbal-ideological world in the higher, official socio-ideological levels," the novel "was being historically shaped by the current of decentralizing, centrifugal forces" at the lower levels of society and culture. ¹⁷

In this lower realm, at the local fairs and spectacles, "the heteroglossia of the clown sounded forth ridiculing all 'languages' and dialects." As well, a "lively play," a ridiculing, a parodic criticism of the accepted literary language "of poets, scholars, monks, knights and others," was developing in the *fabliaux* and *Schwänke*, a heteroglossia

"consciously opposed to," and "aimed sharply and polemically against" the literary language, the official language of the time. Bakhtin stresses, and this is an important point, that what was developing was not merely another of the many diverse speech types as was the 'official' literary language, but a heteroglossia consciously *opposed* to them, it was a dialogized heteroglossia.¹⁸

Traditional "linguistics, stylistics and the philosophy of language" ignore or suppress the reality of heteroglossia (defined by Bakhtin's translators as the "locus where centripetal and centrifugal forces collide") and take into account only a part of the reality of language generation, only the centralizing forces of life and language which they treat as a self-sufficient monologic text. They ignore the fact that these centralizing forces operate in the midst of heteroglossia, and as well, they ignore not only the dialogized heteroglossia embodied in the centrifugal forces in the life of language but the existence of the decentralizing forces themselves. Traditional "linguistics, stylistics and the philosophy of language . . . have sought first and foremost for *unity* in diversity. . . . Real ideologically saturated 'language consciousness', one that participates in actual heteroglossia and multi-linguagedness, has remained outside its field of vision."¹⁹

Traditional studies conceive of language and literary language through the myopic lens of *One Truth*, a single unitary language, in terms of dominance and repression. Bakhtin argues that language, literary language, the language of the novel is, in essence, a plurality of languages. The internally dialogized words, imbued with past contexts, past meanings, and interwoven with the surrounding social dialogue, the "Tower-of-Babel mixing of languages," come together in mutual recognition - a meeting place - acknowledge

each other, rather than dominate and repress (destroy). When the multiple voices and languages, the dialects, from the social realm, the concrete social context, enter into literary language, into literature, though they are in a sense de-formed, they preserve their "dialectological elasticity" and "have the effect of *deforming* the literary language" which becomes "not a single language but a dialogue of languages."²⁰

For Bakhtin only a *sociological* stylistics is "capable of dealing with the distinctiveness of the novel as a genre," only a stylistics which recognizes the novel as the creative manifestation of the concrete socio-ideological language consciousness. "The internal social dialogism of novelistic discourse," he writes, "requires the concrete social context of discourse to be exposed, to be revealed as the force that determines its entire stylistic structure, its 'form' and its 'content', determining it not from without, but from within."²¹

In one instance, in his writings, Bakhtin writes that "form serves as a necessary bridge to new, still unknown content." In earlier times, in "precapitalistic epochs," form was "a familiar and generally understood congealed old world view . . . form was content that had not yet hardened up . . . was linked to the results of general collective creativity, to mythological systems, for example. Form was, as it were, implicit context: the content of a work developed content that was already embedded in the form and did not create it as something new, by some individual-creative initiative." But with the destruction of the epic world - the world where only a single language of truth, the language of tradition, where co-existing national languages were "closed and deaf to each other," did not throw light on one another - "national tradition" as both form and content, served as the subject for art,

rather than individual or personal experience. Just as Bakhtin understands the emergence of the individual consciousness, developing out of a relationship with the social realm, so too he understands the dialogized word developing through the disintegration of the organic unity of the closed whole of the Greek era. The emergence of a new cultural and creative consciousness, a new awareness of a multi-lingual and diverse world, of interaction and mutual recognition and illumination made possible the dialogized word and the world of the novel.²²

The author of the novel, in a thoroughly dialogized world, makes use of all the multi-linguaged, multi-styled and variety of voices and speech forms, both literary and extraliterary, which are stratified and heteroglot as an expressive system; that is to say, they are forms which carry the novel's meanings, they are speech genres. And like the artist working with marble, the raw material of his trade, which is *de*-formed and *re*-formed into an "aesthetically meaningful form of *man and his body*," the writer of prose, constructs his own style, speaks through the material, "compels [it] to serve his own new intentions, to serve a second master," *de*-forms and *re*-forms the literary language which takes on new meaning, that is to say, he establishes his fundamental position.²³

Unlike the poet who "strips the words of others' intentions" and binds each word to express his meaning and his meaning only, the novelist "*welcomes* " the intentions of others infused in the heteroglot language and deploys some of them to express his intentions, to "refract" them and to "accent each of them in a particular way - humorously, ironically, parodically and so forth." And others, the novelist "*exhibits* . . . as a unique speech-thing, they function for him as something completely reified." He distances himself

from the language and "in varying degrees, from the different layers and aspects of the work." Unlike the poet, he makes use of language "without wholly giving himself up to it." He "does not speak in a given language . . . but he speaks, as it were, *through* language" his "differentiated socio-ideological position . . . amid the heteroglossia of his epoch."²⁴

The author stands "as it were, on the boundary line between languages and styles" and, thus distanced, makes use of the incorporated heteroglossia - "another's speech in another's language" - to express his own intentions which he does by a refraction of the heteroglossia. He biases it, accents it, transposes the value in order to infuse it with his own intention and meaning. "Such speech," Bakhtin writes, "constitutes a special type of double-voiced discourse," that is to say:

It serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking, and the refracted intention of the author. In such discourse there are two voices, two meanings and two expressions. And all the while these two voices are dialogically interrelated, they - as it were - know about each other (just as two exchanges in a dialogue know of each other and are structured in this mutual knowledge of each other).²⁵

To reiterate Bakhtin's fundamental premise of the essential dialogic relations between the self and other - the self becomes aware, "self-conscious" only through reference to another - so too, the author enters into a dialogic relation with the character and introduces both the character who speaks his intentions, and simultaneously introduces a second intention, another point of view, refracted in one of the many voices or languages of heteroglossia. Double-voiced discourse is most easily discernible when the author

makes use of the language of laughter, "comic parodic or ironic discourse." However, double-voiced discourse also takes the forms of "refracting discourse of a narrator, refracting discourse in the language of a character and finally the discourse of a whole incorporated genre," within which, too, the language of laughter resounds though often in muted, reduced form.²⁶

Double-voiced discourse is found also in works of a single, unitary language such as poetry and rhetorical genres. But in these works, double-voiced discourse is merely a device, a plaything, made use of in order to confirm the authority of the already chosen position of the poet, speaker, or author. In the novel, on the other hand, the author's position and the hero's position are presented by the creation of a character with a specific point of view which intermingles with another point of view on the same subject. Both these views are relativized by their social, historical contexts - they are dialects.

The effect of this double-voiced presentation is the creation of a realistic representation, of a full, multifaceted, multidimensional image of a character and an event in all its real-life incompleteness and ambiguity. And further, it brings the author, hero and the reader onto the same plane as active participants in the artistic work which remains open to question, discussion, debate, to further dialogization. For example, in some instances, extreme and opposing points of view reign regarding the nature and intention of the work. Cervantes' *Don Quixote* is an example of such a work, for it is perceived by some as tragic, by others as comic.

The "double-voiced internally dialogized word in all its diverse types and variants," the fruit of a "relativized Galilean [sic] linguistic consciousness" is, in Bakhtin's view, the central problem in prose theory. "For the novelist working in prose," he writes, "the object is always entangled in someone's discourse about it, it is already present with qualifications, an object of dispute that is conceptualized and evaluated variously, inseparable from the heteroglot social apperception of it. The novelist speaks of this 'already qualified world' in a language that is heteroglot and internally dialogized."²⁷

For Bakhtin, literary language is a "dialogue of languages," and the novel "an artistic *system* of languages" or, as he defines it more accurately, "a system of *images* of languages." He writes that:

images of language are inseparable from images of various world views and from the living beings who are their agents - people who think, talk, and act in a setting that is social and historically concrete To a greater or lesser extent, every novel is a dialogized system made up of the images of "languages," styles and consciousnesses that are concrete and inseparable from language.²⁸

The style of the novel is a combination of diverse, stylistic, relatively autonomous unities which combine to form a structured artistic system of images of languages and are "subordinated to the higher stylistic unity as a whole." The style of the novel is the "combination of its styles," the language of the novel, "the system of languages." In Bakhtin's view, the primary task for a stylistics of the novel is to uncover all the "available orchestrating languages in the composition of the novel."²⁹

Bakhtin describes the four most basic types of compositional-stylistic unities, compositional forms for appropriating and organizing heteroglossia in the novel and the subsequent creation of dialogic or double-voiced discourse. The first and most important of these forms is a "comic playing with languages": comic style which is based on the stratification of common language. The second stylistic unity is a "story 'not from the author' (but from a narrator, posited author or character)": a play with a posited author or narrator, that is to say, "*another speech in another's language*." The third most basic compositional form is stylistically individualized speech of characters. Each character's language, in Bakhtin's view, possesses its own belief system and "character zone" within the work. The last compositional form is the stylization of various forms of incorporated, artistic and extra-artistic genres, for example, letters, diaries, philosophical, scholarly or scientific tracts and so forth.³⁰

These four, heterogeneous, compositional forms combine to create the structural artistic system, and are images of language, that is to say, they are images embodying points of view, active expressions of evaluation of content. The first and most important is "a comic playing with languages" in the "so-called comic" novel: "its classic representatives in England were Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, Dickens, Thackeray . . . and in Germany Hippel and Jean Paul."³¹ In the English novels, Bakhtin writes, one finds a "comic-parodic re-processing of almost all the levels of literary language, both conversational and written, that were current at the time."

Almost every novel we mentioned above as being a classic representative of this generic type is an encyclopedia of all strata and forms of literary language: depending on the subject being represented, the storyline parodically reproduces first the forms of

parliamentary eloquence, then the eloquence of the court, or particular forms of parliamentary protocol, or court protocol, or forms used by reporters in newspaper articles, or the dry business language of the City, or the dealings of the speculators, or the pedantic speech of scholars, or the high epic style, or Biblical style, or the style of the hypocritical moral sermon or finally the way one or another concrete and socially determined personality, the subject of the story, happens to speak.

This usually parodic stylization of generic, professional and other strata of language is sometimes interrupted by the direct authorial word . . . which directly embodies . . . semantic and axiological intentions of the author. But the primary source of language in the comic novel is a highly specific treatment of "common language."³²

The "common language" is defined by Bakhtin as "the average norm of spoken and written language for a given social group . . . the *common view*, as the verbal approach to people and things normal for a given sphere of society, as the *going point of view* and the *going value*," that is to say, the particular point of view of a particular social group. The relationship of the author to the common language - and this is the important point - is a dynamic one, and demands of the "author a lively to-and-fro movement . . . a continual shifting of the distance between author and language, so that first some, then other aspects of language are thrown into relief." The author distances himself in varying degrees in order to objectify the language and form his own intentions which he refracts and diffuses "through the medium of this common view that has become embodied in the language (a view that is always superficial and frequently hypocritical)."³³

Bakhtin takes, as an example of this process, scenes from Dickens' *Little Dorrit* and illustrates how Dickens, through a variety of stratified and varied language styles (heteroglossia), reveals the hypocritical and the false in certain of Dickens' characters: "O,

what a wonderful man this Merdle, what a great man, what a master man, how blessedly and enviably endowed - in one word, what a rich man!" Merdle in this example, is unmasked within the boundaries of a single utterance which from a syntactical and compositional standpoint belongs to a single speaker. Yet, as Bakhtin points out, it "actually contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two styles, two 'languages', two semantic and axiological belief systems." The author achieves the unmasking by the simultaneous utilization of "hypocritically ceremonial common opinion" and a "parodic stylization of the everyday language of banal society gossip," a process Bakhtin calls a hybrid construction. But what is important here, and what Bakhtin is demonstrating is not how one may now take his categories and concepts and apply them towards a scientific theory in an enclosed and particular novel, but rather, the process itself - living language, constantly in motion, emerging and re-emerging, struggling to form new meaning, a meaning which is always there to be revealed. The author makes use of language as we accept it - the common view - in order to see through the decayed meaning embedded in the words, and he creates it anew. Language and meaning become both the tools and the medium (the form and the content) for their own re-creation.³⁴

This form of parodic destruction and re-creation of new meanings and forms also takes place in what Bakhtin calls literary parody "in the narrow sense," the parodying of one novel by another, "the parodic destruction of preceding novelistic worlds," for example, the works of Cervantes, Rabelais and Fielding, and the parodic destruction of "the logical and expressive structure of any ideological discourse as such," for example by Sterne. Sterne's attitude to language, like that of German comic writers, Hippel and

especially Jean Paul, is raised, Bakhtin writes, to "the level of a purely philosophical problem, the very possibility of literary and ideological speech as such."³⁵

These writers were greatly influenced by Rabelais whose work (as did Cervantes') played an enormous role in the development of novelistic prose and particularly in the development of the comic novel. In Rabelais' work, parody is "intensified to the point where it [becomes] a parody of the very act of conceptualizing anything in language." Almost "all forms of ideological discourse - philosophical, moral, scholarly, rhetorical, poetic and in particular the pathos-charged forms" are subjected by Rabelais to a parodic unmasking. The word is reduced to absurdity by a "parodic destruction of syntactic structures" and language is revealed as false and "inadequate to reality."³⁶

The importance of Rabelais to Bakhtin cannot be underestimated. Bakhtin finds in Rabelais' work a realm which illuminates and illustrates his own philosophy of language. Rabelais' "philosophy of the word" embraces the idea that there is no *one* language of truth, and as Bakhtin points out, Rabelais' practice is consistent with his philosophy, "expressed not as much in direct utterances as in stylistic practice." Rabelais reveals the relative nature of the word which is constituted and exists only in relation to another. The word, Rabelais shows, depends for meaning and significance upon its relation to other words, individual voices, languages. The word is not the material of the word, not a thing, but rather, to quote Bakhtin, "the eternally mobile eternally fickle medium of dialogic interaction." Its life is contained "in its transfer from one mouth to another, from one context to another context, from one social collective to another, from one generation to another generation."³⁷

This is a crucial point in Bakhtin's thought and one subject to distortion in contemporary criticism. Because Bakhtin insists on the relativity of language, emphasizes and delights in Rabelais' "gay relativity," Bakhtin is claimed by, and categorized as a member of, the deconstructionist school, Derrida *et al.* But the essential point which is missed by these critics, is that for Bakhtin (and Rabelais) the truth, the meaning is not relative, the truth is not abrogated - the meaning is not to be found in its absence (thus meaninglessness). Neither is the meaning endlessly deferred. Rather, the word, writes Bakhtin, "does not forget its own path and cannot completely free itself from the power of these concrete contexts into which it has entered." It is the linguistic consciousness which is relativized: the truth "reverberates . . . in the parodic and unmasking accents in which the lie is present." In Rabelais, truth "does not receive its own word . . . truth itself does not seek words; she is afraid to entangle herself in the word, to soil herself in verbal pathos." Truth is "restored by reducing the lie to an absurdity." Bakhtin brings forward as an example, "the purely Rabelaisian formulation of Sterne's Yorick," the passage expressing the "invincible dislike and opposition in his nature to gravity."³⁸ Bakhtin says elsewhere that this

relativizing of linguistic consciousness in no way requires a corresponding relativizing in the semantic intentions themselves: even within a prose linguistic consciousness, intentions themselves can be unconditional. But because the idea of a singular language (a sacrosanct, unconditional language) is foreign to prose, prosaic consciousness must orchestrate its *own* - even though unconditional - semantic intentions. Prose consciousness feels cramped when it is confined to only *one* out of a multitude of heteroglot languages, for one linguistic timbre is inadequate to it.³⁹

For the essence of style is "not the unity of a normative shared language," but rather, "the diversity of speech." Bakhtin's choice (assuming the integrity of the translation) of the word "timbre" over one such as "tone" emphasizes his understanding of the resonance, the reverberation, the many-voiced nature of the style of the novel. The predominant elements "in the comic novel are various forms and degrees of *parodic stylization*" - limited "to a principled criticism of the word as such" - of the incorporated languages of heteroglossia which enter the novel "already fully formed, officially recognized, reigning languages . . . authoritative and reactionary . . . (in real life) doomed to death and displacement." These languages of heteroglossia are simultaneously utilized by the author to refract his intentions and are "unmasked and destroyed as something false, hypocritical, greedy, limited, narrowly rationalistic, inadequate to reality."⁴⁰

The other three basic forms of appropriating heteroglossia in the novel are, like the comic playing of languages, forms for presenting many and diverse points of view, for creating dialogue, multiple and diverse verbal-sociological viewpoints which allow the author freedom from a single and unitary language. These are forms for relativizing linguistic consciousness and "permit languages to be used in ways that are indirect, conditional, distanced."⁴¹

The first of these forms is the utilization of a narrator to tell a story. The narrator's speech is "*another's speech*" in "*another's language*" - a particular verbal-ideological belief system and viewpoint which is necessarily specific and limited and which allows the author to speak, not in but through language, through a refraction of the author's intention. To put it another way, the narrator is not a representation of the author, "the author is not to be

found in the language of the narrator": the narrator's language is itself an oblique diversion or deflection of the author's intention. In creating a posited author, a narrator, the author introduces another dimension, another medium besides the subject of the story in which to manifest himself and his point of view. He creates a dialogic relationship between the author, the narrator - one point of view and evaluation opposed to another - and the subject of the work. In this way the author retains his "freedom from a unitary and singular language."⁴²

The next form, and one which is common to all novels, is the language used by characters. Each character's speech, possessed of its own ideological system, engages in a reciprocally influential relationship with the author's language, thus introduces stratification and heteroglossia which serves as the basis for style in the novel. Social heteroglossia enters the novel in direct speeches of the characters, forming highly differentiated character zones, the field of actions for the character's voices intruding "in one way or another upon the author's voice," influencing the author's speech, "sprinkling it with another's words . . . and in this way introducing into it stratification and speech diversity." Even without the comic element, parody, irony and even without a posited author or narrator, the three-dimensional, profound speech diversity, the determining factor of style, lies beneath the "smooth single-languaged surface."⁴³

Character zones are formed "from the fragments of character speech, from various forms for hidden transmission of someone else's word, from scattered words and sayings belonging to someone else's speech, from those invasions into authorial speech of others' expressive indicators (ellipsis, questions, exclamations)." Bakhtin, in examples chosen

from the novels of Ivan Turgenev, shows in several instances the intrusion of another voice in, what is conventionally judged from a syntactical and compositional standpoint, the single-voiced speech of the author. However, Bakhtin's analysis reveals the encroachment by a character in several instances into the author's realm, and in another, the intrusion of the author into a character's inner speech; both of which have the effect of creating "highly particularized *character zones*," a diffusion of the heteroglossia. In one instance, Turgenev's author tells of his character Nikolai Petrovich Kirsanof who owns "a respectable little property . . . consisting of a couple of hundred serfs - or five thousand acres, as he expresses it now." Nikolai Petrovich "has divided up his land and let it to the peasants, and started a 'farm'." Bakhtin argues that the point which the author is making is, not only grounding Nikolai Petrovich in his era, as a liberal, but he makes this point by introducing the voices, the expressions "characteristic of the era and in the style of the liberals."⁴⁴

In another example, Bakhtin points out the hidden speech of someone else in the emotional expressive structure of - when judged by the traditional syntactic markers - part of the author's speech: "Bazarov's complete indifference exasperated his aristocratic nature. *This son of a medico was not only self-assured . . .*" and so forth.⁴⁵ In a final example (of the many and differing which he gives) Bakhtin points out a form of quasi-direct discourse, of "an intrusion of the emotional aspects of someone else's speech into the syntactic system of authorial speech:

For the first time in his life he had come close to a girl, whom, in all probability, he loved; he was present at the beginning of the thing to which, in all probability, all his energies were consecrated. . . . Well? was he rejoicing? No. Was he wavering, afraid, confused?

Oh, certainly not. Was he at least, feeling that tension of his whole being, that impulse forward into the front ranks of the battle, to be expected as the struggle grew near? No again. Did he believe, then in this cause? Did he believe in his own love? "Oh, damned artistic temperament! sceptic!" his lips murmured inaudibly.⁴⁶

Bakhtin points out that from the standpoint of traditional syntactic forms, the speech is authorial yet its entire emotional structure belongs to the character. It is his inner speech but controlled by the author by "provocative questions" and "ironically debunking reservations." Inside these varying character zones the author and character engage in dialogue which, though seemingly monologic, is actually a special type of novelistic dialogue in which the characters play a role in "stratifying the language of the novel and incorporating heteroglossia into it." They are another's voice in another's language introduced into the author's language and serve to "orchestrate an authorial truth of their own" and to relativize the linguistic consciousness of the author, "his consciousness as a writer of prose."⁴⁷

The incorporation of genres into the novel is the final, the most elementary and fundamental form for incorporating and organizing heteroglossia in the novel discussed by Bakhtin. He writes that almost all genres have "at some point have been incorporated into the novel" but many retain their "own structural integrity . . . independence . . . linguistic and stylistic peculiarities," or may move to and fro between "direct intentionality" and varying degrees of a refraction of the author's intentions. However, there does exist a noteworthy class of genres which "play an especially significant role in structuring novels . . . thus creating novel types named after such genres," for example "the confession, the diary, travel notes, biography, the personal letter." These genres may enter not only as a

basic structural component, "but may also determine the form of the novel as a whole (the novel-confession, the novel-diary, the novel-in-letters, etc.)." The significance of these genres for the novel is that they make points of view available which "are generative in a material sense." And because "they exist outside literary conventionality" they have the "capacity to broaden the horizon of language available to literature" introducing to literature "new worlds of verbal perception." Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe* serves as an example of a novel of letters which, for the first time in the history of the novel, made available insight into the internal life of a character, an introduction into the language of psychology. Dostoevsky's confessional novels, *Notes from the Underground* and *The Double*, however, present more fully and realistically the inner world of the individual, the multi-vocal creating, developing consciousness.⁴⁸

These four basic forms for incorporating and organizing heteroglossia in the novel, in Bakhtin's words,

permit languages to be used in ways that are indirect, conditional, distanced. They all signify a relativizing of linguistic consciousness in the perception of language borders - borders created by history and society, and even the most fundamental borders (i.e., those between languages as such) - and permit expression of a feeling for the materiality of language that defines such a relativized consciousness.⁴⁹

This is an important point, an area which creates a misunderstanding of Bakhtin's thought and makes it possible to distort his thought and absorb it into Derridean deconstruction. For Derrida, borders are margins, one plays on the margins and it is a play with nothing because margins are by definition a strip near the edge of something, a plain space round a printed page, and so forth. For Bakhtin, borders are meeting places, concrete areas of

action, thresholds where action and interaction occurs. The dialogic contrast amongst the languages of heteroglossia delineates the boundaries between these languages and creates, not only a feeling for the boundaries, but also makes possible the recognition of the pliant, flexible form and its susceptibility to the influences of different languages. The essential characteristic of the forms for incorporating and organizing heteroglossia in novels is that "the discourse in them not only represents but is *itself* represented; social language in them . . . becomes the object of a reprocessing, reformulation and artistic transformation that is free and oriented toward art." The dialogic opposition of the pure languages in the novel, taken together with the mingling in a single utterance of two or more of these languages, is a powerful means for creating images of languages.⁵⁰

These languages of heteroglossia, "pregnant with the images of speaking persons," images of language, as it were, may enter the novel in the forms of posited author, impersonal parodic stylization, inserted genres, as has been stated, or unqualified authorial speech, "insofar as such authorial language not only represents, but is itself represented." Or, these languages of heteroglossia may enter the novel as characters.⁵¹ Bakhtin writes:

Thus heteroglossia either enters the novel in person (so to speak) and assumes material form within it in the images of speaking persons, or it determines, as a dialogizing background, the special resonance of novelistic discourse.⁵²

The speaking person and his discourse is the fundamental condition of "novelness," of that which "makes a novel a novel." Although the speaking person need not be embodied in a character, the speaking person and his discourse is the essential constitutive

factor responsible for the stylistic uniqueness of the novel. The speaking person in the novel is "always, to one degree or another, an *ideologue*, and his words are always *ideologemes*." He epitomizes, or represents, "a particular way of viewing the world," a particular point of view which always strives "for a certain social significance, a social breadth," that is to say, an image of language. Bakhtin writes that the "human being in the novel is first, foremost and always a speaking human being," who brings to the novel his or her "own unique ideological discourse," his or her own language.⁵³

It is important to stress that the speaking person need not enter the novel embodied in a character, need not be the hero or a character. Rather, the representative ideological point of view also can, and does, enter the novel as part of the ideologizing background, for example as parodic stylization. The novel, in Bakhtin's understanding, is a "dialogized representation of an ideologically freighted discourse." The speaking person's discourse is an image of language, "an object of *verbal* artistic representation. . . . *artistically represented . . . by means of* (authorial) *discourse* " which, because it is a living entity, requires a special means for representation, "special formal devices of speech and its own devices for representing words." Bakhtin writes that what is "characteristic for the novel as a genre is not the image of man in his own right, but a man who is precisely the *image of a language*. But," he continues, "in order that language become an artistic image, it must become speech from speaking lips, conjoined with the image of a speaking person."⁵⁴

The character of the novel is an image of language, an embodied point of view. His or her act or action is "always highlighted by ideology, is always harnessed to the character's discourse . . . is associated with an ideological motif and occupies a definite

ideological position." Unlike the epic hero who knows only a common, shared point of view, only one ideological position which coincides with that of his community, the hero of the novel "lives and acts in an ideological world of his own . . . he has his own perception of the world that is incarnated in his action and in his discourse." Bakhtin writes that the "action and individual act of a character in the novel are essential in order to expose - as well as to test - his ideological position, his discourse."⁵⁵

The central problem for a stylistics of the novel, in Bakhtin's view, is "the problem of *artistically representing language, the problem of representing the image of a language.*" And the problem of "artistic representation of another's speech conceived as the image of language," Bakhtin asserts, is the primary problem for the novel, the artistic representation of all the heteroglot languages and voices in the social realm. Bakhtin writes that one's everyday speech is "filled to overflowing" with the words of other people: "Every conversation is full of transmissions and interpretations of other people's words." Bakhtin's understanding of the "ideological becoming of the human being" - the problem of the ever-developing consciousness - is "the process of selectively assimilating the words of others." The individual's speech is filled with the words of others which are engaged in the process of assimilation from the moment of consciousness, (and which for a long time are incapable of being comprehended as another's word, as not one's own word). Consciousness consists of a multiplicity of different languages existing simultaneously and engaged in a struggle for predominance.⁵⁶ He writes:

Within the arena of almost every utterance an intense interaction and struggle between one's word and another's word is being waged, a process in which they oppose or dialogically interanimate each other. The utterance so conceived is a considerably more complex and

dynamic organism than it appears when construed simply as a thing that articulates the intention of the person uttering it, which is to see the utterance as a direct, single-voiced vehicle for expression.⁵⁷

"The ideological becoming of a human being" consists of a "struggle and dialogic interrelationship" between what Bakhtin calls the "authoritative word," the "word of the fathers," another's word, and the "internally persuasive word," a contemporary word or one "reclaimed for contemporaneity,"⁵⁸ which is half-one's own and "half-someone's else's," a word which has no authority and is not acknowledged in society. Bakhtin writes that these two words engage in a struggle in the individual consciousness and are the determinants in the development of ideological consciousness: "another's discourse . . . strives to determine the very bases of our ideological interrelations with the world, the very basis of our behaviour." These two words, the "authoritative," and the "internally persuasive" are, according to Bakhtin, the basic modes for appropriating and transmitting another's word.⁵⁹

The authoritative word is closed, finalized, monologic and thus has no place in the novel because it cannot be argued with or discussed; it can only be accepted totally or rejected. Authoritative discourse in the novel, to quote Bakhtin, is "a dead quotation": "its inertia, its semantic finiteness and calcification, the degree to which it is hard-edged, a thing in its own right . . . renders the artistic representation of authoritative discourse impossible" because it is "incapable of being double-voiced" and thus "cannot enter into hybrid constructions." The internally persuasive word, unlike the given nature of the authoritative word, is both, one could say, given and conceived; that is to say, it is affirmed "through assimilation, tightly interwoven with 'one's own word'." It presupposes self-

consciousness, self-awareness and responsiveness. The essence of the internally persuasive word, Bakhtin writes, is its creative and productive nature, its "semantic openness to us, its capacity for further creative life in the context of our ideological consciousness, its unfinishedness and inexhaustability of our further dialogic interaction with it." The internally persuasive word is open to "maximal interaction between another's word and its context." It is an internally dialogic word and in real-life speech constitutes an "embryonic beginnings" as an object of representation. Bakhtin writes that the artist can, for example, fuse certain kinds of internally persuasive discourse with "the image of a speaking person," a process which becomes especially important where an internal "struggle against such images has already begun, where someone is striving to liberate himself from the influence of such an image and its discourse by means of objectification, or is striving to expose the limitations of both image and discourse." An internal struggle within the artist's consciousness takes place between various alien voices which seek, or have sought in the past, to influence him, "a conversation with an internally persuasive word that one has begun to resist."⁶⁰

"A variety of alien voices enter into the struggle for influence within an individual's consciousness" which provides an abundant terrain for the author of novelistic prose to "experimentally" objectify "another's discourse." Bakhtin writes that "novelistic images, profoundly double-voiced and double-langued are born in such a soil, seek to objectivize the struggle with all types of internally persuasive alien discourse that has at one time held sway over the author." The "embryonic beginnings" of the essentials for an artistic representation of another's word are found in imagining and guessing how internally persuasive discourse "can be fundamentally and organically fused with the image of a

speaking person," how he might conduct himself. In such guesswork, the "image of the speaking person and his discourse become the object of creative artistic imagination."⁶¹

Bakhtin refers to the works of Dostoevsky as an example, *par excellence*, of this creation of an image of the objectified struggle of alien voices. He writes, and it is worth quoting in full:

The acute and intense interaction of another's word is present in his novels in two ways. In the first place in his characters' language there is a profound and unresolved conflict with another's word on the level of lived experience ("another's word about me"), on the level of ethical life (another's judgement, recognition, or nonrecognition by another) and finally on the level of ideology (the world views of characters understood as unresolved and unresolvable dialogue). What Dostoevsky's characters *say* constitutes an arena of never-ending struggle with others' words, in all realms of life and creative ideological activity. . . . In the second place, the works (the novels) in their entirety, taken as utterances of their *author*, are the same never-ending, internally unresolved dialogues among characters (seen as embodied points of view) and between the author himself and his characters; the characters' discourse is never entirely subsumed and remains free and open (as does the discourse of the author himself).⁶²

For Bakhtin language is alive, speaking, responsive, historically real: "a process teeming with future and former languages." His understanding of the creation of an artistic image is that of a dynamic interrelation and interanimation of languages. In his view, the only possible way to penetrate the ideological meanings, "in the area of poetics . . . (and in the history of ideologies in general)" is to find the meaning dialogically, to initiate in "talk not only about words but in words," in the double-voiced representations in prose discourse: "one may speak of another's discourse only with the help of that alien discourse."⁶³

The aesthetic-historical problem for the novel is how to adequately and accurately present this multi-linguaged diverse nature of discourse, to represent in the novel, that is, in a verbal formulation, the "possible inner [dialogized] monologues of developing human beings, the monologue that lasts a whole life"; to present the word in its living continuous succession of changes and resistance to authority.⁶⁴

An image of language for Bakhtin is an "image assumed by a set of social beliefs, the image of a social ideolegema that has fused with its own discourse, with its own language." Specific novelistic images of languages, he says, are created by language's ability to enter into relatively autonomous dialogical interanimating relations with another language: "to represent another language while still retaining the capacity to sound simultaneously both outside it and within it, to talk about it and at the same time to talk in and with it"; and further, because the represented language is able "simultaneously to serve as an object of representation while continuing to be able to speak to itself."⁶⁵

Bakhtin writes that although the "devices in the novel for creating the image of a language" are "always inextricably woven together into the unitary artistic fabric of the image," it is possible - but in theory only - to reduce and separate three basic categories: "hybridizations," the "dialogized interrelation of languages" and "pure dialogues." Hybridization, the first of these, according to Bakhtin, is "one of the most fundamental devices for structuring the image of language" in the novel. Like all his conceptions, hybridization is a dynamic one, an encounter or collision between two languages, two different and individualized linguistic consciousnesses "within the limits of a single

utterance." The artistically organized novelistic hybrid is a deliberate and conscious artistic device "having as its goal the illumination of one language by means of another . . . one language is actually present in the utterance, but it is rendered in the *light of another language*." Two different points of view on the world, two socio-linguistic consciousnesses, two epochs - comprised of the two individualized language consciousness, two individual language intentions, two voices and consequently two accents; that is to say, one, the representing authorial consciousness and will, and the other, the individualized linguistic consciousness and will of the character collide in an intentional artistic semantic hybrid, a "*semantics that is concrete and social*."⁶⁶

The second category of the devices in the novel for creating the image of a language can be further separated into three forms for the internally dialogized mutual illumination of languages, stylization, variation and parodic stylization. Stylization is explained by Bakhtin as "an artistic representation of another's linguistic style, an artistic image of another's language." Stylization and variation, however, are similar in that they both require two individualized linguistic consciousnesses: one which expresses the linguistic consciousness of the author, and the other which expresses the linguistic consciousness of that which is represented. These devices differ, however, in that in stylization, the author uses only the stylized language as his raw material in order to speak about the subject directly, while with variation, the author "freely incorporates material from alien languages into contemporary topics, joins the stylized world with the world of contemporary consciousness . . . testing [the stylized language] in situations that would have been impossible for it on its own."⁶⁷

The nature of parodic stylization, the third device for the mutual illumination of languages, is a destructive one. A struggle takes place between the parodying and the parodied languages: "The intentions of the representing discourse are at odds with the intentions of the represented discourse" - a "real world of objects" is presented as "an *exposé* to destroy the represented language." Bakhtin writes that there are a variety of forms between the extremes of stylization and parody, "forms that are themselves determined by the most varied interactions among languages, the most varied wills to language and to speech, that encounter [and engage in a struggle] with one another within the limits of a single utterance."⁶⁸

The third and final category of the devices in the novel for creating the image of a language which Bakhtin discusses, is a dialogue. Bakhtin's essential point in this discussion is that dialogue is *never* a simple exchange between characters, that is, a compositional form. Behind every dialogue are social forces, social languages and ideologies. To quote Bakhtin, the dialogue in the novel:

can never be exhausted in pragmatically motivated dialogues of characters. Novelistic dialogue is pregnant with an endless multitude of dialogic confrontations, which do not and cannot resolve it, and which, as it were, only locally . . . illustrate this endless, deep-lying dialogue of languages; novel dialogue is determined by the very socio-ideological evolution of languages and society. A dialogue of languages is a dialogue of social forces perceived not only in their static co-existence, but also as a dialogue of different times, epochs and days, a dialogue that is forever dying, living, being born: co-existence and becoming are here fused into an indissoluble concrete unity that is contradictory, multi-speeched and heterogeneous. It is freighted down with novelistic images; from this dialogue of languages these images take their openendedness, their inability to say anything once and for all or to think anything through to its end, they take from it their lifelike concreteness, their "naturalistic quality" -

everything that so sharply distinguishes them from dramatic dialogues.⁶⁹

The role of pure languages in the novel, the dialogues and monologues of the characters, is the creation of images of languages. It is the task of the plot to reveal these socio-ideological languages, to expose "the experience of a discourse, a world view and an ideologically based act, or the exhibiting of the everyday life of social, historical and national worlds or micro-worlds . . . or of socio-ideological worlds of epochs . . . or of age groups and generations linked with epochs and socio-ideological worlds." It is the task of the plot to "represent speaking persons and their ideological worlds."⁷⁰

The novel, an artistically created system of images of languages, a language of dialogues which takes as its material, its ground (its form and its content) the dialogue of languages, the socio-ideological points of view in the real-life social realm, is not formalism's "sum-total of devices employed in it." Rather, it is a manifestation of dynamic forces, generating and regenerating which make a novel what it is, "novel," of a new kind, ever-new. These dynamic forces are determined by the ceaseless activity of continuous and ever-colliding, ever-changing, ever-developing languages in the social realm, linked to a distant past and open in the present to a continuing developing future. Bakhtin writes that "every truly significant step forward is accompanied by a return to the beginning . . . or more exactly to a renewal of the beginning. Only memory . . . can go forward." The novel's integral connection to the social realm, its process of development from the ancient historical past through the ages is the subject of the next chapter.⁷¹

Chapter IV

Towards a Philosophy for a History of the Novel

The literary process is a part of the cultural process and cannot be torn away from it.

Mikhail Bakhtin, "From Notes made in 1970-71."

The novelistic word arose and developed not as the result of a narrowly literary struggle among tendencies, styles, abstract world views - but rather in a complex and centuries-long struggle of cultures and languages. It is connected with the major shifts and crises in the fates of various European languages, and of the speech life of peoples.

Mikhail Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination

Bakhtin's exploration of heteroglossia, the multiplicity of language styles, the varied speech and voice forms, their dialogic nature and their utilization by the author - creator in his representation of life in the novel, is motivated by his belief in the integral relationship between literary forms and every-day, real-life discourse in its multiplicity and complexity. The novel, in his view, is the genre which is most able to represent and reveal the struggle, the centralizing and decentralizing forces, to reveal the ambivalence which is the root condition of human beings and the condition of their culture, their social realm. The novel is the only literary form which is able to represent and to reveal the unceasing

flow of living energy, the nature of man in his development, his incompleteness and the incomplete nature of the social realm - the continually changing milieu - that is to say, in its ability to reveal man as the image of language in living history, for "the internal dialogism of discourse is something that inevitably accompanies the social, contradictory historical becoming of language."¹ To quote Bakhtin:

the art of prose is close to a conception of languages as historically concrete and living things. The prose art presumes a deliberate feeling for the historical and social concreteness of living discourse, as well as its relativity, a feeling for its participation in historical becoming and in social struggle; it deals with discourse that is still warm from that struggle and hostility, as yet unresolved and still fraught with hostile intentions and accents; prose art finds discourse in this state and subjects it to the dynamic-unity of its own style.²

The novel is the literary vehicle most able to present the "contradictory and double-faced fullness of life," to represent and to reveal the multitudinous languages and voices, "a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses."³

The novel, Bakhtin writes, is a developing genre, it is anticanonic due to the very fact that it is in continuing development - it is never completed. Bakhtin understands the novel as radical and revolutionary because of its ability to unmask the nature of its cultural realm, its ability to reorient and reorganize one's perception of the world, because of its living, dynamic quality and protean changeability, an ever-seeking, ever-questioning way to knowledge. It is an artistic re-creation or representation of all that is living, concrete and experienced in life. It is a microcosm of the socio-ideological voices of its era. What Bakhtin says by implication if not directly is that the novel is a representation of consciousness, not a particular individual consciousness, but a representation of life in

living discourse. For Bakhtin, the novel is a "dialogue of languages." In his view, man is a signing animal and language is man's signifier. What is most fundamental and characteristic of man as a species is human language. Language, or the speech act is the dominant characteristic of human behaviour: "The sign is nothing but the materialization of [social] communication [The] word is the purest and most sensitive medium of social intercourse." Bakhtin writes that without signs there is no ideology. For Bakhtin the concept of "ideology" is not used in the Marxist sense of "false consciousness." Rather, it has a radically different meaning. Ideology is "the very broad and yet specific sense of human socio-cultural activity. Arts, sciences, philosophy - all the domain of human values, belong to the domain of ideology." "Consciousness," he says, "becomes consciousness only once it has been filled with ideological (semiotic) content, consequently, only in the process of social interaction." Understanding "is a response to a sign with signs." The word is a social sign and "the primary medium of the individual consciousness."⁴

The novel parallels the struggle of the development of human consciousness; the struggle to find one's word among all others' words with which our speech is overflowing. "Novelistic images, profoundly double-voiced and double-languaged . . . seek to objectivize the struggle with all types of internally persuasive alien discourse that had at one time held sway over the author." The novel, like man, is always in the process of becoming. Bakhtin avoids an existentialist position in that he posits existence in an intimate participatory integrated world of meaning-filled events. That is to say, man enters into "the chain of speech communion," into an already existing community engaged in social intercourse. "Individual consciousness is not the architect of the ideological

superstructure, but only a tenant lodging in the social edifice of ideological signs," or as Bakhtin says elsewhere, we "live in a world of others' words." Man's consciousness develops out of other consciousnesses, he is not the self-creating being who chooses his character and goals, he is not *endowed* with the consciousness conceptualized in the existential philosophy of Kierkegaard and Heidegger. Rather his consciousness develops out of other's consciousness and a "chain stretches from individual consciousness to individual consciousness, connecting them together."⁵

Because the novel is a developing genre it "reflects more deeply, more essentially, more sensitively and rapidly, reality itself in the process of its unfolding . . . it best of all reflects the tendencies of a new world still in the making." Bakhtin defines three basic characteristics which "fundamentally distinguish the novel in principle from other genres." These are, in his words, first, "its stylistic three-dimensionality, which is linked with the multi-linguaged consciousness realized in the novel"; second, "the radical change it effects in the temporal coordinates of the literary image"; and third, "the new zone opened by the novel for structuring literary images, namely, the zone of maximal contact with the present (with contemporary reality) in all its openendedness."⁶

The development of the novel is not, in Bakhtin's view, an evolution in an isolated world of literary artifacts; nor is it an actual real-life struggle among schools, "from work to work, from style to style, from school to school," generated by, for example, the Formalists' psychic law of "automization perceptibility." Neither is it a psycho-physiological history of succession as in Formalist Victor Shklovsky's "uncle-to-nephew" theory. Nor is it an Oedipal overcoming or destruction of the father by the son as in Harold

Bloom's psychoanalytic theory; nor can the development of the novel be attributed to the invention of the printing press and the consequent rise of a new reading public as Ian Watt theorizes. Rather, Bakhtin understands the development of the novel as broader and more complex than these theories. In his view, the history of the novel is first of all, a struggle within the novel itself, between already completed genres and of their relationship to reality. Moreover, it is a development inextricably connected and integral with the socio-ideological cultural consciousness of particular epochs, that is to say, in "an epoch's entire culture." Bakhtin writes that the work of art is "an inseparable part of culture and cannot be understood outside the total context of the entire culture of a given epoch." However, this is not to say that the work is an epoch-bound, isolated phenomenon. But rather it is part of a long chain of literary development of autonomous but connected works, related to each other and inextricably connected to the work's particular epoch. Great literary works, in Bakhtin's view, undergo a "lengthy and complex process of maturation," and in the "epoch of their creation it is merely a matter of picking the fruit that is ripe." To confine "within an epoch," Bakhtin continues, "also makes it impossible to understand the work's future life in subsequent centuries Works break through the boundaries of their own time, they live in centuries, that is, in *great time*." Each age adds its own emphasis, its own cultural values, to its understanding of works from its past. In fact, writes Bakhtin, "the historical life of classic works is . . . the uninterrupted process of their social and ideological re-accentuation."⁷

Bakhtin looks more deeply into the origins of the novel than the above-named theorists, and views its origins and development as a complex and far-reaching phenomenon. For Bakhtin, the novel as "the only genre born of this new world and in

total affinity with it," has its origins in the distant past and is related to the emergence and development of a critical consciousness, a critical awareness effected by "a very specific rupture in the history of European civilization: its emergence from a socially isolated and culturally deaf semi-patriarchal society, and its entrance into international and interlingual contacts and relationships."⁸

Perhaps a way into a deeper understanding of Bakhtin's philosophy of the word and his philosophy of the novel is to refer to a rather cryptic entry in his notebooks: "Metalinguistics and the philosophy of the word. Ancient teachings about logos. John." An editorial note refers the reader to the Book of John I:I, "In the beginning was the Word. . . ." I speculate, because this is the generating philosophy behind Bakhtin's thought, that for Bakhtin, as for Goethe's Faust "In the beginning was the *Act*," that word and act are synonymous. The word is a vehicle in motion: Time is reflected and revealed in the word and in language - not Frederic Jameson's "prison house," but rather a "treasure-house of images." Language, writes Bakhtin, "is something that is historically real, a process of heteroglot development, a process teeming with future and former languages The image of such a language in the novel is the image assumed by a set of social beliefs." Language as the image of man, his consciousness reflecting and refracting the "living concrete environment," is always in the process of becoming a "concrete heteroglot conception of the world Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life." A history of the novel, a history of prose discourse, is thus a philosophy of a living history intrinsically related to the living concrete external realm.⁹

The emergence of the novel, "the expression of a Galile[o]an perception of language," occurred most noticeably at particular periods in history. Bakhtin writes that the change from a Ptolemaic to a Galilean perception of language is born out of particular changes in the socio-ideological cultural realm. For example, when "a national culture loses its sealed-off and self-sufficient character, when it becomes conscious of itself as only one among *other* cultures and languages" as in the Hellenic era. Or "with a decay and collapse of the religious, political and ideological authority connected with that language," as in the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance. And what emerges is a decentering of languages from a unitary and single absolute to a perception of other languages both national and social, an awareness of other, the emergence of a critical consciousness. Bakhtin writes that there were several epochs in history when the novel became the dominant genre, when all literature was "caught up in the process of 'becoming', and in a special kind of 'generic criticism'." This happened, he writes, "several times in the Hellenic period, again during the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, but with special force and clarity beginning in the second half of the eighteenth century," the age of the Enlightenment. The "germs of novelistic prose appear in the poly- and heteroglot world of the Hellenistic era, in Imperial Rome and during the disintegration and collapse of the church-directed centralization of discourse and ideology in the Middle Ages."¹⁰

At these times in linguistic history, language barriers disintegrated. National languages which previously co-existed ceased to be "closed and deaf to each other," and became aware, saw themselves in light of another language. In the same way that the self becomes aware, can only comprehend himself or herself as a whole through reference to

another (engage in dialogue, so to speak) so too a language becomes aware. Bakhtin writes that

Languages throw light on each other: one language can, after all, see itself only in the light of another language . . . there is no more peaceful co-existence between territorial dialects, social and professional dialects and jargons, literary language, generic languages within literary languages, epochs in language and so forth.

All this set into motion a process of active, mutual cause-and-effect and interillumination.¹¹

It is Bakhtin's view that the first glimmer of novelistic or critical awareness took place in the Hellenic era. The novel, he believes, has its roots, its embryonic beginnings in writings of this period, in Menippean satire and in the Socratic dialogues which, he says may be called "the novels of their time." Although the dialogues are recollections, characteristic for the genre of the novel of the memoir type, contemporary reality serves as the subject, in the form of a speaking conversing hero. The immediacy of the present is one of the significant characteristics for the novel (even though historical novels, memoirist novels, etc. look back to the past their perspective is that of contemporary reality). To quote Bakhtin: "To portray an event on the same time-and-value plane as oneself and one's contemporaries (and an event that is therefore based on personal experience and thought) is to undertake a radical revolution, and to step out of the world of epic into the world of the novel." In the Socratic dialogues as the "starting point we have contemporary reality, the living people who occupy it together with their opinions."¹²

The importance of the image of Socrates in Bakhtin's thought should not be underrated. The image of Socrates as the wise fool, his domain not of Plato's lofty grove, for example, but rather the marketplace, his - characteristic for the novel - dialogic questioning (the origins of the dialogism of literary discourse) in search of truth and values, is the central image of man, the central image of language in Bakhtin's work. He writes that the Socratic dialogues with the "spoken dialogue framed by a dialogized story the proximity of its language to popular spoken language . . . a rather complex system of styles and dialects, which enter it as more-or-less parodied models of language and styles laughter, Socratic irony, the entire system of Socratic degradations combined with a serious, lofty and for the first time truly free investigation of the world, of man and of human thought . . . bring the world closer and familiarize it in order to investigate it fearlessly and freely." We have here, he writes, "a remarkable document that reflects the simultaneous birth of scientific thinking and of a new artistic-prose model for the novel."¹³

At this time, however, these elements, these characteristics, did not come together to form the "mighty body of the novel." The Sophistic novels, "characterized by sharp and relentless stylization . . . a purely monologic - abstractly idealized - consistency of style . . . express most fully the thematic and compositional nature of the novel as a genre in its ancient form." The Sophistic novels powerfully influenced "the development of the higher generic types of the European novel up until the nineteenth century" and to "a significant extent . . . determined theoretical presumptions about the novel as a genre."¹⁴

In his development of a history of the novel, one that acknowledges the integral connection of the work of art to the human, to the culture and to the cultural history, Bakhtin moves towards a historical understanding of the novel along two paths which, like all of Bakhtin's thought, merge, diverge and intersect. The first of these paths is his investigation into the history of the development of the stylistic three-dimensionality in the novel, the evolution from a single-voiced literary language to the multi-languaged consciousness of the modern novel. The second route he takes is an exploration into the history of the creative process of "assimilating real historical time and space in literature," a study of chronotopes. Bakhtin attempts to classify historically "how the image of the main hero is constructed," to trace the "image of *man in the process of becoming* in the novel," the emergence of man in real historical time. In this study Bakhtin looks to prehistory, to a time when man considered himself an integral part of a synthetic whole - a closed whole, one that did not conceive of a future, that is to say, man had no history. It was a time when there was no conception of background, landscape or environment for man was an integral part of his world. Through a historical study of literature Bakhtin traces the disintegration of this synthetic whole and its gradual re-emergence in a new openended form in, first of all, Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel* which in his view is "the greatest attempt at constructing an image of *man growing in national-historical time*." In his study Bakhtin finds aspects of the emergence of the image of man in real historical time in, for example, the novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in which the hero's image becomes dynamic and the "changes in the hero himself acquires *plot* significance." Bakhtin names as examples, the novels in cyclic time of the "*humoristic branch* of the *Bildungsroman*," the novels of Sterne, Hippel and Jean Paul, and as well, the novels of Goethe; the novels in biographical time of Fielding (*Tom Jones*) and Dickens (*David Copperfield*) in which

"man's life-destiny fuses with the emergence of man himself"; and the "didactic-pedagogical" novel, *Émile* by Rousseau. However, in these novels the image of the hero develops against the background of a stable and unchanging world, a world to which he adapts. In Rabelais, in von Grimmelshausen's *Simplicius Simplicissimus* and in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, by way of contrast, the image of man "emerges *along with the world* and he reflects the historical emergence of the world itself." This re-emergence of a synthetic but openended whole reaches its peak in the great realist novels of the nineteenth century, the novels of Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, Dickens and Thackeray.¹⁵

In his study Bakhtin makes use of the term "chronotope" which he borrows from Einstein in order to emphasize (more correctly, to *insist* upon) his understanding of the inseparability of time and space. This understanding is based in the Kantian imperative of time and space as indispensable forms of cognition, but differs from Kant in that for Bakhtin time and space are concrete rather than abstract forms, "forms of the most immediate reality." The chronotope can be explained, perhaps, as living time in space, the place where things are happening, the meeting place. Chronotopes are manifested in the literature through the ages in various forms: the *agora* of the Greek world, the carnival of the Middle Ages, the Rabelaisian grotesque body, the salons in Balzac and Stendhal, the castle in Scott, the threshold in Dostoevsky and so forth.¹⁶

Bakhtin's understanding of the historical development of the novel, the evolution of its stylistic three-dimensionality and the development of its chronotopes is given expression in all its complexity, fullness and coherence in the essays written between 1934 and 1941 and translated into English as *The Dialogic Imagination*. I regard these essays as

Bakhtin's most powerful, brilliant and complex achievement, an achievement unequaled in the realm of literary scholarship. These essays reveal not only Bakhtin's detailed knowledge of European cultural history, philology, literature and his "preternatural erudition" (to use Holquist's term), not only his ability to understand the deep, powerful, regenerating historical and cultural forces at work, but as well, they reveal his ability to bring this knowledge of the dynamic process of regeneration and change to his in-depth analysis of the novel, an analysis which is as profound and complex in its understanding of the dynamics of the literary process, of literature and its integral relation in culture as are the insights of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, his understanding of the dynamics of the development of the individual and his relation to culture and history. In the discussion which follows I endeavour (and, as always, at the risk of reduction and distortion) to bring together and in some sense, to organize and distill to its essence Bakhtin's historically and culturally grounded discussion and understanding of particular writers and their works which, in his view, reveal these deep, powerful, regenerating historical and cultural forces at work in the epoch of their creation.

My focus on and discussion of Bakhtin's understanding of the historical development of the novel is undertaken through Bakhtin's study of individual writers and their works and is divided into two parts which essentially follow the paths taken by Bakhtin himself. However, my study is to some extent a reorganization of his work, a reorganization which is undertaken, not because his work is (as some critics argue) in any way repetitious and lacking coherence, for I do not believe that this is so. While ideas do recur, they are always augmented by a new aspect, a new thought, or with a differing emphasis as Bakhtin develops and gives expression to his perspective in its essential

complexity and generating wholeness. My reason for presenting his work in the following way is rather to counter those modern theorists, for example Michael Holquist, who argue that Bakhtin elevates the low in order to destroy the high official forms. And as well, to counter those theorists, such as Aron Gurevich, who argue that Bakhtin does not do justice to the official side of human culture. In my view, the first problem arises for the reason that Bakhtin's major work, essentially dealing with popular cultural forms, *Rabelais and His World*, was the first of his named-works published in the English-speaking world, a work which in spite of the fact that Bakhtin clearly states that "the immediate object of our study is *not the culture of folk humour* but the work of Rabelais," has captured the imagination of the Western literary and cultural critical world as a definitive work on popular culture and as an anti-authoritarian statement which, as Holquist sees it, serves an attack on the Stalinist regime. The reason for the second problem is less apparent and therefore more difficult to understand. Thus I can only speculate that the individual reader and critic is more responsive to what Bakhtin calls the "internally persuasive word," the one found in the humorous and popular forms of culture, in those which are dialogic, and for this reason, readers and critics do not give the same degree of attention to Bakhtin's exposition on the official forms of high culture and thus fail to understand the openended, holistic nature of his thought.¹⁷

Although the above cause is mere speculation on my part, it is for this reason that in the first part of the following discussion, the discussion of the development of the stylistic three-dimensionality of the novel, I separate into two segments, the study of the stylistic lines, a study which, in Bakhtin's essay, "Discourse in the Novel," is integrated, in order to give due emphasis to the high official novel forms. First I focus on the "classical" or

"official" forms and then discuss the comic, carnivalesque and grotesque forms, both of which come together in the early nineteenth century to form the modern novel. For the same reason, in the second part of my study, I integrate the study of the development of individual chronotopes in both low and high genres, for the most part, into a conventional progression through history, a study which Bakhtin has treated in parts and not necessarily progressing in a linear mode. My intention in so doing is to emphasize what I believe to be crucial to Bakhtin's work, that is to say, to illuminate the holistic quality, to reinforce his understanding that the novel becomes what it most truly is in the great realist novels of the nineteenth century when the essential elements of both the high and low genres come together, coalesce, to form the "great body of the novel." In this historical study of the differing forms of time and chronotope in the developing novel which culminates in Bakhtin's examination of the Rabelaisian chronotope, in his understanding of Rabelais' task, the humanistic and holistic essence of Bakhtin's work is most fully revealed.

The Development of the Stylistic Three-Dimensionality in the Novel

In his historical investigation into the development of the stylistic three-dimensionality of the novel and its relation to the multi-linguaged consciousness both in the novel and in the cultural realm, Bakhtin defines two essentially separate stylistic lines

which, though separate, do in fact intersect and interweave with each other, and which he calls the First and the Second Stylistic Lines.

The First Stylistic Line "knows only a single language and a single style," and is the constituting factor of the high genres, the classical or official forms of novelistic discourse throughout the developing history of the novel. This line finds its first voice and its already fundamentally complete form in the Sophistic novels of the Greek era. Throughout the novel's development the First Stylistic Line remains essentially unchanged in the medieval novel, the "fifteenth-and-sixteenth century 'novel of gallantry'," the pastoral novel, the Baroque novel and the Sentimental novels of the eighteenth century. This line is, in substance, monologic and authoritarian and has as its guiding principle an all-encompassing singular unitary point of view. It is dialogic and acknowledges another point of view only in its relation to the world outside the novel with which "the language and world of the novel is polemically . . . implicated." Novels of the First Stylistic Line recognize the heteroglossia of living experience, recognize that "literary consciousness . . . no longer possesses a sacrosanct and unitary linguistic medium for containing ideological thought," but "*descend*" onto the multi-form and varied nature of spoken language and the "multitude of different semi-literary genres," and "'aspire' to organize and stylistically order" them, to eliminate the heteroglossia, in order to present a "single-imaged, 'ennobled' language."¹⁸

It is important to point out that this approach differs from poetry in that the novel of the First Stylistic Line is *aware of* and makes uniform the heteroglossia while poetry works *as if* language were already unitary. Bakhtin argues that poetry works as if it were an

expression of a Ptolemaic world (to borrow his analogy). Novels of the First Line, on the other hand, acknowledge that they are an "expression of a Galile[o]an perception of language, one that denies the absolutism of a single and unitary language," but aspire to the Ptolemaic unity and uniformity of poetry.¹⁹

The novel of the Second Stylistic Line, on the other hand, is a true expression of Galileoan linguistic consciousness and "refuses to acknowledge its own language as the sole verbal and semantic centre of the ideological world." Unlike the novel of the First Line, the novel of the Second Line "incorporates heteroglossia *into* [its] composition, exploiting it to orchestrate its own meaning and frequently resisting altogether any unmediated and pure authorial discourse." It transforms the "already organized and ennobled everyday and literary language into essential material for its own orchestration, and into people for whom this language is appropriate, that is, into 'literary people' with their literary way of thinking and their literary ways of doing things - that is, such a novel transforms them into authentic characters." The novel of the Second Stylistic line is a multi-voiced, multi-languaged or dialogic novel. It recognizes that the language of truth resounds and reverberates from within the many voices, the many languages, the many points of view which constitute the novel of the Second Stylistic Line. For Bakhtin this is the true form of the novel whose greatest expression is realized in two great novels of the Renaissance, the novels to use Bakhtin's term of "grotesque realism," the works of Rabelais and Cervantes. It was not until the nineteenth century, Bakhtin writes, that "the distinctive features of the Second Line become the basic constitutive features for the novelistic genre as a whole The Second Line opened up once and for all the possibilities embedded in the novel as a genre; in it the novel became what it in fact is."²⁰

The First and Second Stylistic Lines, consistent with Bakhtin's philosophy of integral connection, are not strictly separate, and are, in his view, an arbitrary division at best. They both consist of features or elements of the other: for example, Bakhtin finds an element of parody in the Sophistic novels, but he remains sceptical of the "actual weight such discourse carried in them." As another instance of the mingling of the two Stylistic Lines, Bakhtin makes reference to Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*, an early thirteenth-century chivalric romance in verse. He notes that *Parzival* is "the first German novel to be profoundly and fundamentally double-voiced" and, therefore, "can no longer be considered a pure example of the First Line of novelistic development." *Parzival* escapes its single-languagedness into a critical double-voicedness, to quote Bakhtin, "removing it ever so slightly from the author's lips by means of a faint smile."²¹

Bakhtin, in his investigation of an integrated literary history, his understanding of the integral connection between the work of art and the culture, singles out the epoch in which the chivalric romance in verse blossoms as worthy of note. The epoch interests Bakhtin because of the complexity of its cultural consciousness and because of the heterogeneous and multi-languaged, multi-cultural nature of the era. He describes the literary language consciousness of the creators and audience of the chivalric romance as "almost a caste consciousness." Yet despite the highly centralized ideological language consciousness, the almost caste consciousness, this culture, unlike epic, lacked a unitary language, "one fused organically with its cultural-ideological world of myth, customs, sets of beliefs, traditions, ideological systems." The literary language consciousness lived in a decentralized world of alien languages and cultures of contemporary reality. Bakhtin writes

that this "consciousness was constantly obliged to deal with an alien discourse and alien world: ancient literature, early Christian legend, Breton-Celtic oral tales . . . all of this served to intensify the heterogeneous and polyglot material . . . in which the unity of the socio-economic class consciousness of the chivalric romance was clothed, a unity that was nevertheless strong enough to overcome the alien qualities of the material."²²

The creators of the chivalric romance were forced to deal with a gap in the literary language consciousness between "language and expressive material" which was not there for the creators of epic whose material was a given closed whole. They were also forced to deal with a "gap between this material and contemporary reality." The chivalric romance was the result of the creative endeavours of separate individuals who were forced to piece together the multitudinous and alien fragments which were subjected to a translation, reworking, reconceptualization, re-accentuation, an assimilation and subjugation into the "unity of a belief system of a type peculiar to class society and its ideals," a centralized, unified, monologic belief system "ultimately opposed to the surrounding heteroglot world created by the popular lower strata."²³

With the exception of von Eschenbach's *Parzival*, the classical chivalric romance in verse is essentially an expression of the First Stylistic Line which has its origins in the Sophistic novel, the Greek romance (for example, third-century Heliodorus' *Aethiopika*), and moved forward in history to strongly influence and become the stylistic basis for the chivalric romance in prose, the Baroque novel (seventeenth-century Honoré d'Urfé's *L'Astrée*, Anton von Braunschweig's *Aramena*, Madelaine de Scudery's *Le Grand Cyrus*, Daniel von Lohenstein's *Arminius*, to name some), and the eighteenth-century Sentimental

novels of Samuel Richardson and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, for example. The chivalric romance in verse is for Bakhtin, "defined by a rupture between material and language" which it overcomes through assimilation of the material to its language, thereby creating a "special variant of authentic novelistic style." However, this gap between material and language is the constituting factor in what Bakhtin considers the unhealthy direction of the continuing development of the chivalric romance, that is the chivalric romance in prose, the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth century novels of "gallantry" which reach their high point in the Spanish novel, *Amadis*.²⁴

Because of the gap between language and material, the language of the chivalric romance and its successors, the chivalric romance in prose, the novels of "gallantry" lack a "firm, unitary social basis." Bakhtin writes that this early prose form is a "discourse divorced from its material and not permeated by the unity of a social ideology; it is surrounded by speech as well as language diversity, it lacks any support or center," and, therefore, is socially disoriented. As well, this social disorientation "becomes deeper and more pervasive" with the printing of books which served to "shift and displace" the audience, to change literary discourse from an oral to a mute mode, a movement critical for the novel as a genre. Empty of soul and ego-less, with no centre, no ideological unity, the language of the chivalric romance and its successors, "expository discourse," was "forced to conform to a conventional external structure": it seeks a form which "will permit this rupture [between language and material] to be overcome by style." In my view this is a position consistent with modern developments in literary theory and criticism, formalism's dream, structuralism's practice.²⁵

A further consequence of the rupture between language and material in the development of the novel is that, in Bakhtin's view, prose discourse becomes in effect, styleless. In his definition style is "the fundamental and creative . . . relationship of discourse to its object, to the speaker himself and to another's discourse; style strives organically to assimilate material into language and language into material." In the chivalric romance in verse, this stylization does occur; the material is assimilated into the language - hence its unique status. In the earliest novelistic prose, the chivalric romance in prose, however, "sheer exposition" is substituted for style. The language in this genre, Bakhtin asserts, "cannot under any circumstances be organically fused with its material." Notwithstanding, a dialogism, a relationship between the language and its material does take place. "Discourse in the novel," Bakhtin writes, "is structured on an uninterrupted mutual interaction with the discourse of life." In novels, in prose discourse of the First Stylistic Line, the relationship is one of opposition between the work itself and the external realm.²⁶

Bakhtin writes that new and important elements enriched expository prose which "permitted it to approximate authentic novel style and to determine the First Line of development in the European novel." A new "category of value" developed, a concept of "'literariness of language' . . . of 'making language respectable'" which was neither a category of language nor a style. A "smoothing, an ironing-out of style" took place which deprived the utterance of a dialogizing background and was thus easy to deal with. This category of "literariness of language" played a role of enormous importance in the history of the novel and was of particular and direct significance to the novel of the First Stylistic Line and of indirect significance to the Second Stylistic Line.²⁷

"Literariness of language" attempts to regulate the area of both the literary language and the everyday language of written and spoken heteroglossia which is not already regulated; it "attempts to introduce order . . . to make a single, particular style canonical for it." The motivation may be, for example, "to preserve the socially sealed-off quality of a privileged community," to reinforce the dominance of a particular dialect in the national literary language, and so forth. It serves to establish an *elite* language of an *elite* group: "'thus should every respectable person think, talk and write', or 'every refined and sensitive man does thus and so'." Thus the chivalric romance in prose "sets itself against the 'low', 'vulgar', heteroglossia of all areas of life Thus may the ennobled word - as distinct from the poetic word - replace the vulgar word in conversations, letters and other everyday genres." It becomes a "vehicle for the *extra-generic literariness of language* - it aspires to provide norms for language in real life, to teach good style, *bon ton*, how to converse in society, how to write letters and so on."²⁸

Although the chivalric romance incorporates "a multitude of diverse genres," the one "respectable" language unifies the inserted genres into one single image. In Bakhtin's view, this "single-imaged quality" (this "unity and relentless consistency of these novels") "is purchased at the price of polemical abstraction and is therefore inert, static and moribund" which is "inevitable given their social disorientation and ideological rootlessness." He goes on to say,

The way of perceiving objects and expressions peculiar to this novelistic discourse is not the everchanging world view of a living and mobile human being, one forever escaping into the infinity of real life; it is rather the restricted world view of a man trying to preserve one

and the same immobile pose, someone whose movements are made not in order better to see, but quite the opposite - he moves so that he may turn *away* from, *not* notice, be distracted. This world view, filled not with real-life things but with verbal references to literary things and images, is polemically set against the brute heteroglossia of the real world and painstakingly (although in a deliberately polemical, and therefore tangible, way) cleansed of all possible associations with crude real life.²⁹

The novel of the First Stylistic Line begins to acknowledge real-life social and historical forces towards the end of the seventeenth century. In the pastoral novel, another essentially escapist literary form, signs of contemporary reality begin to appear. However, as Bakhtin points out, this is a reality merely "clothed in [the] alien material" of the novel, a Baroque relationship. He cites as an example the phenomenon of the "dialogues of the dead," a form which "makes it possible to converse on one's own topics (contemporary and everyday themes) with sages, scholars and heroes of all countries and all eras." This utilization of abstract idealization and abstract polemics by real-life historical forces is, according to Bakhtin, "merely initiated in the pastoral novel," but manifests itself strongly in the Baroque novel, a form of immense significance in the history of the novel.³⁰

A "marked social and political orientation" in the Baroque novel replaces the "social disorientation of the abstract romance of chivalry." Bakhtin attributes this change, in the late sixteenth century and seventeenth century, to the era's stronger and more intense sense of self which is revealed in its urge to make use of "a diversity of alien material for purposes of self-expression and self-representation." The Baroque novels dealing with heroes from history manifest most fully this new development: Heroes from all cultures, countries and ages, and exoticism of every kind are "greedily sought" regardless of the cultural ideological source. The world in the Baroque novel is transformed to an

"externally stylized shell for its own special content." The Baroque novel is a "novel of trial," its hero, "statically inert," irreproachable, heroic, noble and true; his discourse a "peculiarly novelistic pathos" of "modes of *apologia* . . . justification (self-justification) and accusation"; his heroic idealization, deeply felt and reinforced by actually existing and aware social and cultural forces.³¹

The idea of a testing of the hero appeared first in the Sophistic novel, in a form lacking a psychological or an ethical dimension. In the Baroque novel, however, everything serves as a test of the hero's qualities in accordance with the "Baroque ideal of heroism." The idea of testing the heroism and fidelity of the protagonist is organically combined with the "apologetic and polemical pathos" of the novel. No distance separates the author from the hero, thus the discourse maintains a linear single form and ignores the heteroglossia which it has incorporated into the novel but failed to incorporate into its composition.³²

The Baroque novel as "heir to the entire preceding development of the novel" of the First Stylistic Line," to use Bakhtin's words, "strives to become an encyclopedia of all the types of literary language of the epoch." As well, it "unites in itself a great diversity of inserted genres," and for these reasons it serves as an "encyclopedia of source material, a source of novelistic motifs, plot positionings and situations." In the further development of the novel, the Baroque form itself branches in two directions. The first continues the "adventure-heroic aspect," for example, the works of M.G. ('Monk') Lewis, Anne Radcliffe, Horace Walpole. The second branch, "characterized by psychology and pathos" and "genetically connected with the inserted [love] letter of the Baroque novel," is the

largely epistolary novel of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the Sentimental psychological novels of Richardson and Rousseau, for example. In these novels, the "broad political and historical scope" of the Baroque world is diminished and narrowed to a moral didacticism focussed on everyday "personal and family spheres of life."³³

The language of pathos in the Sentimental novel is of critical importance in the history of prose discourse because, like all novels of the First Stylistic Line, it is externally dialogized. But what is important here is that the dialogism is two-fold: first of all, and like the earlier forms in this Line, the Sentimental novel fails to incorporate the dialogism into its composition. It merely engages in a dialogic relationship with the world external to the novel. The second point and one crucial to novelistic history is that the Sentimental novel polemicizes against the classical "heroicizing pathos" of the conventional high literary genres. In Bakhtin's words, it is "polemical opposition to a literary style in the process of being rejected." What takes place here is a "deliberate narrowing-down of the conceptual horizon and the arena of a man's experience to his most immediate little micro-world," a deliberate foregrounding of the petty details of everyday life and, lastly, a helplessness and weakness on the part of the protagonist in place of the heroic strength of the Baroque hero. Arnold Hauser makes a similar point: Romanticism "has broken for good with the conventions of classicism, courtly-aristocratic rhetoric and pretence, with elevated style and refined language."³⁴

Even though the language of pathos in the Sentimental novel is "brought closer to the conversational norm" it is, like all novels of the First Stylistic Line, unified into a direct expression of the author's intentions. In Bakhtin's opinion, the attempt to replace or

ignore the "brute discourse of life . . . inevitably ends up in . . . unresolvable dialogized misunderstanding." With the passing of the Baroque and the Sentimental novels, the discourse of pathos "was never again the stylistic base for any of the important novel types" and assumed a "parodic ring" in the novels of the Second Stylistic Line, for example in the novels of Charles Dickens and in Stendhal.³⁵

The novel of the First Stylistic Line at times appears to conform to the theoretical presumptions about the novel presupposed in formalist traditional stylistics, and of Aristotelian poetics. However, even though this Line does not fulfil its potential as a novel, it, on the other hand, does not conform to and cannot be understood through traditional poetical theoretics, nor through rhetorical theoretics. Despite the fact that the language of the novel of the First Stylistic Line is single and unitary, this language is "structured in [an] uninterrupted dialogic interaction" with the surrounding languages. To reiterate, unlike poetry which "works *as if* . . . language were unitary," novels of the First Line incorporate the multitude of languages and work to eliminate the "brute heteroglossia" in order to replace it with a single-imaged language.³⁶

The novel, in Bakhtin's view, finds its unique, specific stylistic potential, its double-voicedness and double-languagedness in the Second Stylistic Line. It finds its prehistory, the germinating seeds in the Socratic dialogues, in Menippean satire and blossoms to its fullest expression in the works of Rabelais and Cervantes. This Line is stylistically generated by the power of laughter and includes as well (as Rabelais' and Cervantes') the works of Charles Sorel, Paul Scarron, Alain-René Lesage, Henry Fielding, Laurence Sterne, Jean Paul, Charles Dickens to name a few. The Second Stylistic Line

differs from the First in that heteroglossia not only serves as a dialogizing background as in the First Line, but as well it incorporates heteroglossia *into the composition* of the novel. The languages of heteroglossia "become implicated in each other and mutually animate each other." They function in their own right, "speak about themselves in their own language and in their own style." The author works through these languages by encasing "his own thought in the image" of these "other" languages "without doing violence to the freedom of that language or to its own distinctive uniqueness."³⁷ What takes place here is "an internal fusion of two points of view":

The hero's discourse about himself and about his world fuses organically, from the outside, with the author's discourse about him and his world. With such an internal fusion of two points of view, two intentions and two expressions in one discourse, the parodic essence of such a discourse takes on a peculiar character: the parodied language offers a living dialogic resistance to the parodying intentions of the other; an unresolved conversation begins to sound in the image itself; the image becomes an open, living, mutual interaction between worlds, points of view, accents. This makes it possible to re-accentuate the image, to adopt various attitudes toward the argument sounding within the image, to take various positions in this argument and, consequently, to vary the interpretations of the image itself.³⁸

What occurs is a living, open-ended discourse, a continually unresolved argument as in the discourse in life. As Bakhtin points out, this allows the novel, and he cites *Don Quixote* as a pertinent example, to be "re-accentuated in a variety of ways in the later history of the novel."³⁹

The novel's unique artistic system of autonomous images of languages, and its distinctive openendedness, its continually unresolved argumentative nature, owes its origins to changes in the cultural and linguistic consciousness which are revealed in their

beginnings "on the boundary between classic antiquity" and the Hellenic era. These changes amount to, first of all, a new awareness of the existence of other and diverse cultures and their languages which, for the first time, become conscious artistic choices in literary creation; and secondly, to a new temporal perspective or, perhaps better stated as, a new attitude towards the present, "an enormous revolution in the creative consciousness of man." These two essential elements of the novel are found in what Bakhtin says could be called novels *in embryo*, the Socratic dialogues and Menippean satire.⁴⁰

Contemporary reality which serves as the subject in the modern novel is denigrated in the high genres of antiquity and in the Middle Ages and is viewed as a "reality of a 'lower' order in comparison with [an idealized] epic past." The transitory nature of the present, its eternal continuation without beginning, which is the essence of the modern novel, and is rooted in the Second Stylistic Line, is depreciated as lacking "authentic conclusiveness and consequently [lacking] essence." The future, too, allowed for in the modern novel, is denied value, and is considered "as an essentially indifferent continuation of the present, or as an end, a final destruction, a catastrophe."⁴¹

Bakhtin writes that

The novel took shape precisely at the point when epic distance was disintegrating, when both the world and man were assuming a degree of comic familiarity, when the object of artistic representation was being degraded to the level of a contemporary reality that was inconclusive and fluid. From the beginning the novel was structured not in the distanced image of the absolute past but in the zone of direct contact with inconclusive present-day reality.⁴²

Laughter is the generating force at the root of the novel of the Second Stylistic Line. "Laughter paved the way for the impiety of the novelistic form," writes Bakhtin. The two decisive factors at work in the origins of novelistic prose were laughter and polyglossia, the simultaneous presence and awareness of the interaction of two or more national languages within a culture. Bakhtin writes that "the most ancient forms for representing language were organized by laughter - these were originally nothing more than the ridiculing of another's language and another's direct discourse." It is only polyglossia, in Bakhtin's view, which "frees consciousness from the tyranny of its own language and its own myth of language," from the myth of a *one* language. The parodic forms, the forms of laughter, are made possible only when a language becomes conscious of itself, an event which, in Bakhtin's view, can only take place in the light of another language, another consciousness: "Languages throw light on each other: one language can, after all, see itself only in the light of another language."⁴³

The history of the Second Stylistic Line of the novel is the history of the *artistic representation of the language through laughter*. Laughter is critique, it demolishes the distance and creates the zone for contemporary reality which, in Bakhtin's view, is the "first step in the development of the novel."⁴⁴

Laughter has the remarkable power of making an object come up close, of drawing it into a zone of crude contact where one can finger it familiarly on all sides, turn it upside down, inside out, peer at it from above and below, break open its external shell, look into its center, doubt it, take it apart, dismember it, lay it bare and expose it, examine it freely and experiment with it. Laughter demolishes fear and piety before an object, before a world, making it an object of familiar contact and thus clearing the ground for an absolutely free investigation of it. Laughter is a vital factor in laying down that prerequisite for fearlessness without which it would be impossible to

approach the world realistically. As it draws an object to itself and makes it familiar, laughter delivers the object into the fearless hands of investigative experiment - both scientific and artistic - and into the hands of free experimental fantasy. Familiarization of the world through laughter and popular speech is an extremely important and indispensable step in making possible free, scientifically knowable and artistically realistic creativity in European civilization.⁴⁵

Both the Socratic dialogues and Menippean satire, the authentic precursors of the modern novel and *in embryo* members of the Second Stylistic Line, are generated by laughter. Both are set in a familiar world of contemporary reality and are imbued with language images of living people with their opinions. There was in the ancient world a wealth of parodying forms: whatever the type of serious, straightforward discourse, it had "its own parodying and travestying double" which was, moreover, "sanctioned by tradition and just as canonized as their elevated models." Bakhtin writes that "all the tragedians - Phrynicus, Sophocles, Euripides - were writers of satyr plays." Aeschylus' *The Bone Gatherers*, parodied and travestied the Trojan War and its heroes. Odysseus and Hercules were popular travestied figures yet, to quote Bakhtin, "the Greeks did not view the parodic-travestying reworkings of national myth as any particular profanation or blasphemy." "Parodic-travestying literature," he writes, "introduces the permanent corrective of laughter, of a critique of the one-sided seriousness of the lofty direct word." For, as Bakhtin points out, it was not the Greek heroes, "nor the Trojan War and its participants" who were parodied, but rather its "epic heroization"; nor was it "Hercules and his exploits, but their tragic heroization."⁴⁶

The effect of the parodic-travestying forms, the "laughing reflections of the direct word," and one that was decisive for the novel, was to create a distance between language

and reality: to liberate "the object from the power of language"; to destroy the "homogenizing power of myth over language"; to free consciousness "from the power of the direct word"; to destroy "the thick walls" imprisoning "consciousness within its own discourse." In other words, it was the creation, or emergence of a critical consciousness, an awareness of the self and awareness of other which enabled the creative artist to look from a distance, from outside, from another's point of view: "the creating consciousness stands, as it were, on the boundary line between language and styles."⁴⁷

The difference between the parodic-travesty forms of ancient literature and the serio-comical genre of the Socratic dialogues, for example, is that in the image of Socrates we find a dialogized form, a union of both the heroized and parodied image, a coming together of what is separate, two literatures, two languages, an interanimation of languages. Socrates is the wise fool, the hero turned jester who speaks in "ambivalent self-praise," the laughter is combined with "a serious, lofty and for the first time truly free investigation of the world, of man and of human thought." Moreover, unlike the ancient genres, the setting is contemporary reality and the dialogues "based on personal memories of real conversations among contemporaries."⁴⁸

The Menippean satire is also an important root of the novel of the Second Stylistic Line. In this literary form there is nothing "left of the distant epic image": Alexander of Macedonia, from the "historic past" for example, "jostles" with living contemporaries of the creator. In this genre is a glimmer of the utopian element: "the inconclusive present begins to feel closer to the future than to the past." It, too, is dialogic, multi-styled, parodic and travesty and "does not fear the elements of bilingualism."⁴⁹

Elements of the modern novel in its development in the Second Line can also be found in Apuleius, Lucian, Horace's satires, the *Apology* of Socrates, late Hellenistic Christian autobiography, Cicero's Letters to Atticus, Petronius, to name a few. Bakhtin includes the literature of ancient Rome in the literary history of the Hellenic era because he says, "from the point of view of polyglossia, Rome was merely the concluding phase of Hellenism." The Romans' creative literary consciousness "functioned against the background of the Greek language and Greek forms . . . the Latin literary word viewed itself in the light of the Greek word, *through the eyes* of the Greek word . . . Latin literary language . . . was created in the light of Greek literary language." The Roman literary consciousness was, in fact, trilingual and developed from the interanimation of three languages, its own, and Greek and Oscan (an old Italic, but now dead, language) which "were other but . . . *experienced* as indigenous."⁵⁰

"The culture of laughter," Bakhtin writes, "was no less rich and diverse in the Roman world than it had been in the Greek." In fact, he says, "it was Rome [who] taught European culture how to laugh and ridicule." Roman literary and artistic consciousness, like the ancient Greek, could imagine no serious form without its comic double. The serious form was considered only a fragment: totality could be achieved only by "adding the comic *contre-partie*." "As in the Saturnalia, the clown was the double of the ruler and the slave the double of the master," so in all forms of culture and literature comic doubles were created. Laughter was the corrective and critique "to all existing straightforward genres, languages, styles, voices." And in Bakhtin's view, "such laughter paved the way for the impiety of the novelistic form."⁵¹

A great number of parodic and travesty literary forms, a heritage from Saturnalia and created in a holiday and festive atmosphere, developed in the Middle Ages and functioned as an antidote to the grim seriousness and rigidity of the hierarchical social structure and its expression. A considerable licence was allowed to "laughter and the laughing word": much parodying and travesty of religious and scholarly forms by monks and scholars took place. There were, for example, the Cyprian Feasts, numerous liturgies of drunks (the *missa potatorum*) and gamblers, to name two. At school festivals, the medieval monastic pupil ridiculed "everything from Sacred Writ to his school grammar." The church engaged in parodic rites of, for example, paschal laughter and Christmas laughter. As well, parody and travesty of the sacred word took place in comic genres and other literary works. In fact, according to Bakhtin, in the Middle Ages there was "no genre, no text, no prayer, no saying that did not receive its parodic equivalent."⁵²

The language of this parodic literature was primarily Latin, partly Macaronic, that is, an intentional dialogized hybrid: the sacred, authoritative, direct word, the subject of parody, projected against the background of vernacular language, the vulgar national language.⁵³ It is here in the Latin literature of the Middle Ages, that, for the first time, *languages* are treated as a dialogue, that is to say, are treated as separate styles, as separate linguistic points of view, as, in essence, two speaking subjects. What was occurring in the Middle Ages and what reached its final intensity in the Renaissance, was an interanimation of languages bent on destroying bilingualism, that is to say, separate and isolated languages. Attempts to establish classical Latin in "all its classical purity" as the national unitary language failed and "transformed it into a dead language." The European literary

languages of French, English and German, were born when the parodic word was in the process of destroying the linguistic-cultural hierarchy. Furthermore, writes Bakhtin, it was Calvin and Rabelais who created the language of French literary prose: "Calvin's language, the language of the middle classes ('of shopkeepers and tradesmen') was an intentional and conscious lowering of, almost a travesty on, the sacred language of the Bible."⁵⁴

The struggle and the play with languages, their interanimation and mutual illumination which takes place in the social and literary realm in the Middle Ages, and finds an artistic dramatic representation in the knitting together of dialects in the *commedia dell'arte*, is an essential factor in the conditions of creation and preparation of the ground for the development of the Second Stylistic Line of the novel, developing in a dynamic "atmosphere of holidays and festivals" and modelling itself on the "folk and holiday merrymaking . . . character of carnival" and Saturnalia. The double-voiced discourse which later begins to determine the style of the Second Line, already to be sensed (a glimmer of a "faint smile") in early thirteenth century *Parzival*, develops in the ongoing history in the Middle Ages in the minor epic genres, the *fabliaux*, the *Schwänke*, and minor parodic genres.⁵⁵

The most significant development for the modern novel, in its history, is the introduction, in the Middle Ages, of three dialogic categories for organizing heteroglossia - the introduction of the rogue whose gay deception parodies high languages, the fool who only naively comprehends them, and the clown who maliciously distorts them, turns them

inside out - into the folkloric and semi-folkloric literary forms characteristic of the Second Line.

There were several related aspects to this development. In these genres, and as well on the "itinerant stage, in the public squares on market day, in street songs and jokes," the devices of parodic discourse were being "worked out for constructing images of a language, devices for coupling discourse with the image of a particular kind of speaker," a character with his unique and characteristic socially typical language; for example, "the language of a priest, a knight, a merchant, a peasant," and so forth: thus a new understanding of the relativity of the word and a rejection of the abstract depersonalized language given to characters and "understood by all in the same way" of the classical high genres. Bakhtin writes that "the 'philosophy of discourse' inherent" in these low parodic genres is that "there are no words with meanings shared by all, no words 'belonging to no-one'." The meaning of the word is determined "by the concrete situation": "*Who* speaks and under what conditions." Here too can be found the emergence of a "radical scepticism toward any unmediated discourse and any straightforward seriousness, a scepticism bordering on a rejection of the very possibility of having a straightforward discourse," of any one truth.⁵⁶

Following from this is the emergence of new dialogical categories. The images of the rogue, the fool and the clown emerge in the literature and speak in a language deliberately opposed to that of the bearers of the one, straightforward and serious language of "truth," of what Bakhtin calls, the "*lie of pathos*." The merry rogue opposes the language of pathos with a language of "gay and intelligent" deception - a mocking, smiling,

parodically reprocessing of pathos, robbed of its power to harm and "justified because it is directed precisely to *liars*."⁵⁷

The image of the fool - often fused with that of the rogue - whose naive simpleness is coupled with gay deception, is counterpoised to false pathos, thus "'making strange' any pretensions to lofty reality a discourse of pathos might have": a device which is of great significance in the history of the novel. The category of stupidity, that is, incomprehension and "deliberate stupidity," Bakhtin writes, is "almost always, in one degree or another, a determining factor for novelistic prose of the Second Stylistic Line." He cites, for example, the radical utilization of the failure to understand as the basic style-shaping factor in Voltaire's *Candide*, in Stendhal, and in Tolstoy.⁵⁸ He goes on to say:

By representing stupidity, the novel teaches prose intelligence, prose wisdom. Regarding fools or regarding the world through the eyes of a fool, the novelist's eye is taught a sort of prose vision, the vision of a world confused by conventions of pathos and by falsity.⁵⁹

The image of the clown, one of the most ancient in literature, emerges as a coupling of the gay deception of the rogue and of the stupidity of the fool, and "has the right to speak in otherwise unacceptable languages and the right to maliciously distort languages that *are* acceptable."⁶⁰

Although the images of the rogue, the clown and the fool become symbolic embodiments of their original images in the continuing development of the novel, these dialogical categories retain their basic organizing role and "are of primary importance in

understanding novel style," because the distinctive nature of the dialogues in the novel is created by these categories.⁶¹

for the roots of such dialogues always reach deep down into the internal dialogic essence of language itself, that is, into the failure on the part of those speaking different languages to understand each other.⁶²

The picaresque novel, which prepared the way for the great exemplars of the Second Line, is determined by the image of the rogue. Although "the picaresque novel does not yet orchestrate its own intentions," in that the picaro's character is essentially static, it nevertheless, is the first powerful novel form of the Second Line. Bakhtin writes that the picaresque "novel's hero and his discourse can be understood in all its uniqueness only against the background of the high chivalric novel of trial, extraliterary rhetorical genres (biographical, confessional, sermon genres and others), and against the later background of the Baroque novel." In the picaresque novel the rhetorical unity of personality, act and event of the hero of the high genres is destroyed: a man can no longer be defined as a public personality, that is to say, by rank, public worth and social class. The picaresque novel mocks and parodies all the high authority and its symbols, its hypocritical falsity, and transforms them, in the presence of the rogue, "into masks . . . into costumes for a masquerade, into buffoonery." A new concept of personality emerges in the image of the picaro, the "agent of gay deception" with his "contra-pathetic" nature, one that is neither rhetorical nor confessional, that is to say, one "still groping for a discourse of its own and preparing the ground for it."⁶³

The hero of the high genres presupposes the rhetorical unity of personality, act and event, and "can be evaluated only as *exclusively* positive or *exclusively* negative." The picaresque, by way of contrast, frees discourse from its heavy pathos, he "is faithful to nothing, he betrays everything," and is true only to himself. He can be judged as neither good nor evil, neither criminal nor honest, neither cowardly nor brave, and so forth. The "rhetorical unity of personality, act and event" of the hero of the novel of the First Line is destroyed in the picaresque, the hero is free from all the entanglements of the conventional unities of personality. In fact, writes Bakhtin, he "can even laugh at them."⁶⁴

The picaresque novel, together with parodic novels of the same type, the parodic epic and the cycles of novels created around the images of the clown and the fool owe their significance to the fact that they free discourse from its oppressive pathos and prepare the ground for the great novels of the Second Line. In the great novels of the Second Line, the novels of Rabelais, Cervantes, Fielding, Sterne and Jean Paul, the authentic double-voiced novelistic images mature. The languages of heteroglossia end their isolated and independent "purely polemical or autotelic parodying" and begin to engage fully with each other. The heteroglossia fully penetrates into the composition, that is to say, the "hero's discourse about himself and about his world fuses organically, from the outside, with the author's discourse about him and his world." However, this fusion does not create a single and unitary vision or point of view, which would be the consequence of a working over and elimination of "brute heteroglossia" as in the novels of the First Line. Neither is it a collision of ideas which results in a higher truth, as in Hegel's dialectical synthesis. Rather these two points of view, these two intentions and two expressions maintain a living dialogic resistance to each other and, to quote Bakhtin, "an unresolved conversation begins

to sound in the image itself; the image becomes an open, living, mutual interaction between worlds, points of view, accents."⁶⁵

This interaction constitutes an ongoing critique, a constant questioning and evaluation of the self-aware, parodied word by the equally self-aware, parodying word, thus of the diverse concrete socially embedded viewpoints of the discourse in the novel. This opened discussion, this continuous critique is the crux and the essence of the novel of the Second Stylistic Line and, subsequently, of any novel of significance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Bakhtin writes that this "*autocriticism of discourse* is one of the primary distinguishing features of the novel as a genre. Discourse is criticized in its relationship to reality: its attempt to faithfully reflect reality, to manage reality and to transpose it (the utopian pretensions of discourse), even to replace reality as a surrogate for it (the dream and the fantasy that replace life)." Both *Don Quixote* and *Madame Bovary*, for example, as Bakhtin says, put literary discourse to the test: the protagonists "look at life through the eyes of literature" and endeavour to live life in conformance with the literature.⁶⁶

The sharp opposition between the two stylistic lines of the novel comes to an end in the early nineteenth century. Bakhtin writes that "any novel of any significance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is of a mixed character, although of course the Second Line dominates." An imperative for the Second Line of the novel, and one that Bakhtin says was "often hailed as constitutive for the novel as a genre" is that it "must represent all the social and ideological voices of its era . . . the novel must be a microcosm of heteroglossia." This imperative, Bakhtin writes, "takes on new importance in the

Bildungsroman," a novel of man's becoming and developing, the novel in which time enters into the image of man.⁶⁷

***The Process of Assimilating Real Historical Time
and Space in Literature: The Problem of the Chronotope***

Time, inseparable from space, in Bakhtin's view, is of crucial importance as a generative force in the artistic creation of the novel. Time and space are not static abstract concepts for Bakhtin. Rather, time and space are understood as living, generative in their simultaneity, as chronotopic "and organizing centres for the fundamental narrative events of the novel." The chronotope, he writes, functions "as the primary means for materializing time in space [which] emerges as a centre for concretizing representation, as a force giving body to the entire novel":

Time becomes, in effect, palpable and visible; the chronotope makes narrative events concrete, makes them take on flesh, causes blood to flow in their veins.⁶⁸

Bakhtin writes that it is possible to "*see time, to read time*, in the spatial whole of the world" and to comprehend it "not as immobile background . . . but as an emerging whole, an event." Time, he says, "reveals itself above all in nature." And further, in the "complex visible signs of historical time in the strict sense of the word . . . visible

vestiges of man's creativity, traces of his hands and his mind: cities, streets, buildings, artworks, technology, social organizations, and so on." Finally, he writes that time is revealed in the "socio-economic contradictions - those motive forces of development," which in his view, "must necessarily push visible time into the future." He has in mind "elementary immediate visual contrasts (the social diversity of the homeland on the high road) to their more profound and refined manifestations in human relations and ideas."⁶⁹

Bakhtin finds Goethe to be the epitome of his own understanding of the chronotopic nature of time and space in its continuity. According to Bakhtin, Goethe sees time in everything, time as a creative regenerative force localized in concrete space. He sees the inseparability of past and present looking to the future, that is to say, the merging of time. Bakhtin says that Goethe wants "to see *necessary connections* between [the] past and the living present, to understand the *necessary place* of this past in the *unbroken line of historical development* ": the past "must have its *effect* in the present." Goethe visualizes time as a productive creative power. Everything "bears the stamp of time, is saturated with time, and assumes its form and meaning in time." Everything is intensive, dynamic. Nothing is "inanimate, immobile, petrified." There is no "immutable background that does not participate in action and emergence (in events)," and moreover, action and emergence "localized in concrete space." In other words, there are "no events, plots or temporal motifs that are not related in an essential way to the particular spatial place of their occurrence."⁷⁰

Bakhtin finds many examples of this visualization of historical time in Goethe's works. For example, he writes that Goethe, while driving through the town of Einbeck,

saw in a plantation of trees "*a vestige of a single human will acting in a planned way.*" He determined from the age and the obviously planned planting of the trees that approximately thirty years ago, the town had "an excellent Bürgermeister." In Bakhtin's words, "Goethe searches for and finds primarily the visible movement of *historical time*, which is inseparable from the natural setting (*Localität*) and the entire totality of objects created by man, which are essentially connected to this natural setting."⁷¹ It is important to recognize that Bakhtin and Goethe share a common mode for visualizing time, a mode which Bakhtin attributes to Goethe and sums up in the following passage:

The main features of this visualization are the merging of time (past with present), the fullness and clarity of the visibility of the time in space, the inseparability of the time of an event from the specific place of its occurrence (*Localität and Geschichte*), the visible *essential* connection of time (present and past), the creative and active nature of time (of the past in the present and of the present itself), the necessity that penetrates time and links time with space and different times with one another, and, finally, on the basis of the necessity that pervades localized time, the inclusion of the future, crowning the fullness of time in Goethe's images.⁷²

Bakhtin attributes Goethe's understanding of time to a newly awakened "*feeling for time*" in the eighteenth century. The geographical and astronomical discoveries which, in the Renaissance began to change the understanding of the world were, by Goethe's time, complete. A new, rounded-out, concrete and condensed conception of the world had taken the place of the vision of the world as "a small and detached patch of terrestrial space and an equally small and severed segment of real time," mistily interwoven with other "separate, ideal, fantastic and utopian worlds," an otherworldliness which "bled this present reality." The "abstract negative criticism of Enlightenment thinkers" dispensed with all that was otherworldly, its mythical supernatural and fantastic otherness; the consequence of which

was that "the world, as it were, became qualitatively poorer," much less real than was actually thought. However, on the affirmative side Enlightenment critique and destruction of the otherworldliness "helped reality to gather itself together and condense into the visible whole of the new world." Bakhtin writes that "the eighteenth century, the most abstract and antihistorical century was in fact a time of concretization and visual clarification of the new real world and its history. From a world of the sage and the scholar, it became the world of the everyday working consciousness of the vanguard."⁷³

Goethe's understanding of time, in its aspects of fullness and necessity is more comprehensive than the "abstract morality, rationality, and utopianism" of Enlightenment thinkers, whose understanding of history was, to quote Frederick Copleston, limited to proving "a thesis or [deriving] moral lessons or conclusions unfavourable to religion, at least to-supernatural religion." As well, Goethe rejects the mechanical materialism of those *philosophes* such as Paul Heinrich d'Holbach whose work, in Goethe's view, deprives "nature and life of all that is precious." Moreover, writes Bakhtin, Goethe's understanding of time is separate from the "subsequent romantic historicity." What Bakhtin means here is that although Goethe shares with Johann Gottfried Herder (of an enormous influence on the Romantic movement) an understanding of the relative autonomy of epochs and, as well, an appreciation of historical continuity, he departs from Herder's idea of history as divine revelation and from Herder in his defence of Spinoza's pantheism. He is critical of, to use Copleston's words, the Romantics' "repugnance to definite limits and clear-cut form."⁷⁴

In Bakhtin's view, Goethe's understanding of time is chronotopic, literally time-space, the simultaneity of time in space, thus providing Bakhtin with an important example

of an author who faces the problem of assimilating real time, historical reality into the poetic image, into the novel. Time is reflected in language and every literary image, he asserts, is chronotopic: an assimilation of time by language. The internal form of every word, and thus "language as a treasure-house of images, is fundamentally chronotopic" - it is this simultaneity of time in space which gives the image its life. Bakhtin writes that the work of art resonates in "real-life time-space." The text itself, the material of the work is never a dead thing, "it is speaking, signifying . . . we not only see and perceive it but in it we can always hear voices (even while reading silently to ourselves) . . . we always arrive, in the final analysis, at the human voice, which is to say, we come up against the human being."⁷⁵

Bakhtin writes that it was Gotthold Lessing who "first made clearly apparent the principle of chronotopicity in the literary image, [who] established the temporal character of the literary image." He describes Lessing's example of the beauty of Helen-(which in itself is static and can only be described) presented by Homer in a dynamic fashion, that is to say, "demonstrated in the reactions of the Trojan elders Beauty is drawn in to a chain of represented events and yet at the same time is not the subject of static description, but rather the subject of a dynamic story." One knows of, and believes in her beauty, not from a description, but rather from all the events which take place because of her beauty. According to Bakhtin, Lessing, however, did not pose the problem of the assimilation of historical time in all its essentials into the poetic image, which is, in Bakhtin's view, the problem for the novel.⁷⁶

The novel, he writes, "should provide an integrated picture of the world and life, it should reflect the *entire* world and *all* of life," it should be the microcosm of heteroglossia. "The events depicted in the novel should somehow *substitute for* the total life of the epoch." Thus the problem for the novel, for the speaking man and his discourse, is the "assimilation of real historical time and the assimilation of historical man that takes place in that time," the problem of the "image of *man in the process of becoming*": an image which is first realized in Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, von Grimmelshausen's *Simplicissimus* and Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*. In these realistic novels of emergence, the human "emerges *along with the world* and he reflects the historical emergence of the world itself."⁷⁷

In his exploration into the history of the development of chronotopes, of the relation of time and space, and the problem of the portrayal of the individual within them Bakhtin finds that not only do the "vast majority of novels . . . know only the image of the *ready-made* hero," but as well, the world of the hero is to a great extent - and particularly in the early novels - a static representation revealing only moments of time. Furthermore, the image of the hero and his external world rarely coincide in time and space. For example, in the early novels of Petronius and Apuleius and in the European picaresque novels, *Gil Blas*, *Lazarillo de Tormes*, the "hero is a point moving in space." In the early Greek romance and later novels of ordeal, the "hero is always presented as complete and unchanging" in a changing world. And in the early biographical novel, the "events shape not the man, but his destiny." Bakhtin views the development of the chronotope, the development of time in space, in the literary artistic image as its life-giving essence, to paraphrase him, a thickening, a fleshing-out of time during which it becomes "artistically

visible." In the same manner, "space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history."⁷⁸

Bakhtin's exploration of chronotopes in the history of the novel, in essence follows a path similar to that of his study of the development of language consciousness and its interanimation, and the consequent development of stylistics in the creation of the novel. For this reason, rather than to appear repetitive, I will merely discuss a few of the more pertinent examples in Bakhtin's historical study in order to illuminate and emphasize the significance, the essentiality of the human and the social reality in his philosophy for a history of the novel.

For Bakhtin, the identification of specific chronotopes provides a basis for distinguishing generic types which lie at the heart of specific varieties of novel genres, which were formed and developed over many centuries. These chronotopes are the distillation of the essence of the particular culture, the motif which encapsulates the essence of a particular culture of an epoch. The chronotope is *the animating and vital principle*, that is to say, the radical spirit of the culture, which is powerful enough to pass through the boundaries of its own time into what Bakhtin calls *great time*, that is to say, the history of *mankind*. The essence of the motif is retained in the history of culture. It recurs yet undergoes a variety of transitions, disunions and distortions within particular epochs, under particular cultural and historical conditions. The germinating life-force at the root of these chronotopes, these cultural motifs, originates in, and owes its universality to folk culture, to folklore.

The chronotopes retain as their base three folkloric elements which appear in varying degrees in the motifs in culture and literature. These are the folkloric image of man, the path of life and metamorphosis. The first of these, the folkloric image of man, is a man, invincible and heroic in every human aspect of his immediate concrete reality, in his struggle with nature and all inhuman forces, in "his sober-minded and pragmatic intelligence" and in "his healthy appetite and his thirst." All his power, potency, greatness, heroic strength and character is vested in him in his own right. "Folkloric man," writes Bakhtin, "is the great folk, great in his own right."⁷⁹

Folkloric man is the collective whole, as one with it in time and space. He differs from epic man in that epic man is an *individual* who merely *represents* the whole. His individual life sequences coincide with events of the social whole and he is, in Bakhtin's words, "mere *bas-reliefs* on the all-embracing, powerful foundation of collective life." To put it another way, epic man lives in the time of his individual life-sequences and that time an absolute and closed past: "He has already become everything that he could become, and he could become only that which he has already become." Folkloric man, on the other hand, lives in the immediate present and "demands space and time for his full realization." The image of folkloric man can only be fully realized in time and space, can only be measured in forms of the immediate reality. Folkloric man realized in time and space, is "a direct and straight-forward growth of a man in his own right in the real world of the here-and-now." Bakhtin writes that "symbolic size, strength and a man's symbolic significance were never separated from spatial dimensions and temporal duration. A great man was physically a big man as well, with a huge stride, requiring an enormity of space and living a long time over the course of a real physical lifespan."⁸⁰

Bakhtin defines the fantastic in folklore as realistic fantastic because, he says, it does not exceed the limits of the immediate material reality. It experiences and makes use of the ordinary expanses of time and space in order to create the image in all its great breadth and depth. Though, like epic, it locates in a distanced past, it differs in that time undergoes an "*historical inversion*" - the future is transformed into the past. Bakhtin writes that the folkloric realistic fantastic "relies on the real-life possibilities of human development . . . in the sense of the needs and possibilities of men." According to Bakhtin, the ancients experienced time in a special way. Reality, that is to say, real life belongs to the past and the present which are therefore "enriched at the expense of the future." The reality of the future is perceived as transitory, temporary and "denied a basic concreteness . . . somehow empty and fragmented." In Bakhtin's terms, the future undergoes an "*historical inversion*" and the possibilities for human development, the categories "of purpose, ideal, justice, perfection, the harmonious condition of man and society," and so forth, are located in a past time, a Golden Age, a Heroic Age, the "Land of Cockaigne," a legendary country where finest food and drink are to be had for the taking, and so forth - away from the harsh reality of the present. Bakhtin points out that "later concepts of a 'state of nature', of natural, innate rights and so on, are all expressions of this historical inversion."⁸¹

Bakhtin writes that authentic folklore does "not know a system of ideals separate from embodiment of that system in time and space . . . everything that carries significance can and must also be significant in terms of time and space." This inversion of time does not separate or isolate the past as in epic. Rather it enriches the present, deepens and intensifies the material immediate reality of the images and "above all the image of the

living, corporeal human being." The utopian longings for the fullness of life and its possibilities are realized in the present in the image of a great and heroic man in the utopian present in *great time*.⁸²

This perception of time, its integral union with the creative, generative forces of collective man and his battle against nature, Bakhtin explains, can be traced back to a "preclass, agricultural stage in the development of human society . . . a collective, work-oriented agricultural base." At this time, there exists neither a sense of individuality nor a sense of man as different or separate from other developing and growing forms in nature. Rather, man is a participant, as are too, the sun, moon, earth, stars and sea, in "the collective process of labour and the battle against nature." Everything is collectivized: "food, drink, copulation, birth and death are not aspects of a personal life but are a common affair; they are 'historicized', they are indissolubly linked with communal labour, with the battle against nature, with war."⁸³

Time, according to Bakhtin, "is *profoundly spatial and concrete*," perceived only as collective time. Individual lives, or life spans, have little meaning, for time is differentiated and measured only by the events of collective life. Seasons, ages, periods of the day, "copulation (marriage), pregnancy, ripening, old age and death" serve as images both for an individual life, and for the agricultural aspects of the life of nature. These images, Bakhtin writes, are "profoundly chronotopic":

Time here is sunk deeply in the earth, implanted in it and ripening in it. Time in its course binds together the earth and the labouring hand of man; man creates this course, perceives it, smells it (the changing

odours of growth and ripening), sees it. Such time is fleshed-out, irreversible (within the limits of the cycle), realistic.⁸⁴

This collective time is a generative time, the passage of time enriched in terms of quantity ("where there was but one seed sown, many stalks of grain appear") and quality (blossoming and ripening). Death is "perceived as a *sowing*," merely the "necessary ingredients of generative growth Generative time is a pregnant time, a fruit-bearing time, a birthing time and a time that conceives again." Time is not strictly demarcated into a present, past and future, but is "characterized by a general striving ahead." Collective time is "maximally tensed toward the future"; collective labour addresses itself to the future, sowing for the harvest, mating for offspring and so forth.⁸⁵

Bakhtin points out that this time has its negative feature: Though the historical inversion of the future enriches and enlivens the chronotopic images, the cyclicity of folkloric time limits the forward impulse, "the ideological productivity of this time." Thus, Bakhtin says, "even growth does not achieve an authentic 'becoming'".⁸⁶

A further point with regard to folkloric time is Bakhtin's insistence that perception of this unified form of time is only possible in retrospect, following the emergence of an individualized, personal sense, of and scale for measuring time separate from another for measuring collective historical events. Primitive man experiences the immanent unity and fullness of time, the holistic matrix of life's events, "not as a function of his abstract thought-processes or consciousness, but as an aspect of life itself."⁸⁷

The immanent unity and fullness of folkloric time begins to disintegrate, and time separates into "individual life-sequences" and into a parallel historical time sequence, "the life of the nation, the state, mankind," its values and events different from the individual life-sequence. As well, man's living connection with nature is destroyed and nature becomes, in effect, a landscape, a horizon, environment. A gradual separation of all the elements of the ancient matrix of the sequential growth-fertility cycle occurs. Bakhtin writes that "the concrete time of a human life is broken down. Out of the common time of collective life emerge separate individual life-sequences, individual fates." Society divides into "class and intra-class groups." Elements of the collective matrix - "copulation and death (the seeding of the earth, conception), the grave and the fertile female mons, food and drink (the fruits of the earth) together with death and copulation and so forth" (with which laughter is always linked) - separate from each other and from their connection with the labour of the collective, and emerge in a degenerate form in individual life sequences which take on a private character. Bakhtin writes that they also enter into ritual, gain cultic, magical and symbolic significance. And with this separation "there come into being such phenomena as *ritualistic violations* and, later, *ritualistic laughter*, *ritualistic parody* and *clownishness*," forms which retain their ancient connection with death, sexuality, food and drink.⁸⁸

In everyday life, in the continuing development of class or hierarchical society, the growth-fertility sequence severed from its ancient labouring life of the social whole, becomes a petty, private affair. Copulation, food and drink are trivialized and "become the petty and humdrum 'coarse' realities of life." Birth becomes an isolated event; and death, separated from fertility, comes to be the ultimate end. Hand in hand with this development

is the extreme sublimation in the religious cult of these elements which are abstracted and encoded to such a degree that they become unrecognizable, "as if," to quote Bakhtin, "they reject any contact at all with crude, everyday reality,"⁸⁹

This separation, fragmentation and disunification is reflected in the literature and the ideologies. The literature itself is stratified and the disassociated elements of the ancient matrix appear in varying degrees of degeneration or sublimation in the different literary stratas and genres. The motifs of food and drink are relegated to the petty details of everyday life in the middle and lower genres. Death loses its connection with the sexual act and birth, with the cultic acts of "ritual laughter, with parody and the clown," and appears in one of its various components in the high genres and in another in the everyday middle genres. Copulation, sexuality, in its sublimated form of *love*, in the individual life sequences, retains a central place because of its connections with "marriage, the family and childbirth." Only laughter escapes sublimation of any kind for it remains outside of official life and the high genres. Bakhtin writes it is only "in the treasure-house of language and in certain kinds of folklore [that] this immanent unity of time is preserved, insofar as language and folklore continue to insist on a relation to the world and its phenomena based on collective labour. It is in these that the real basis of the ancient matrix is preserved, the authentic logic of a primitive enchainment of images and motifs."⁹⁰

It is not until Rabelais that an attempt is made to re-establish the folkloric heroic image of man in his fully-exteriorized spatial and temporal unity, an image which represents the real-life possibilities for human development. And later, Goethe too attempts, in a different world, to "resurrect" the ancient wholeness and exteriority in the

Bildungsroman. "In such novels," writes Bakhtin, "human emergence . . . is no longer man's own private affair. He emerges *along with the world* and he reflects the historical emergence of the world itself."⁹¹

In his study of ancient novel types Bakhtin identifies three fundamental motifs which owe their origins to primitive folkloric time. These are the folkloric image of man in his struggle against nature, the path of life, and metamorphosis. Although in these early forms of the novel, time has lost its unity and fullness, is essentially static, and space is abstract, fragmented and distanced from time, the motifs themselves, the chronotopes rooted in the unity and simultaneity of folkloric time and space are of great importance and of enormous influence in the subsequent development of the novel.

In his exploration Bakhtin divides the ancient novel into three basic types which with their corresponding chronotopes have continued to influence the novel in its historical development to the present day. The first type he "provisionally" designates the "adventure novel of ordeal" and includes all the second to sixth century, A.D. "so-called 'Greek' or 'Sophist' novels," for example, Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*. The second is the "adventure novel of everyday life" and, in his view, only two novels, Apuleius' *Golden Ass* and Petronius' *Satyricon*, strictly speaking, can be considered as members of this type. The third type is the ancient Platonic and ancient rhetorical biographical and autobiographical forms. Each of these three basic types has its corresponding novelistic chronotope, its own method "for artistically fixing time and space in these novels."⁹²

Bakhtin finds no traces of historical time in the first type of novel. The chronotope of the ancient Greek or Sophist novel, the "adventure novel of ordeal," he writes, is that of "an abstract alien world" in an equally abstract adventure time of chance encounters in a time realm of "*suddenly*," or "*accidentally*." The only connection between time and space is a technical abstract one with moments in a temporal space reversible, and space itself interchangeable. The hero of this novel type is an individual, but a static, completed product, an isolated private person (private in that he has no inner life), in an abstract alien world with which he has no organic connection. The Greek romance attempted, but unsuccessfully, to resolve the problem of the developing contradiction between the public nature of literary form and private life by having the hero deliver a "public accounting," an external rhetorical form which was however stiff and dead. The hero of the Greek romance is a completely passive, completely unchanging being, his personality and his life untouched by time, his actions reduced "to enforced movement through space." "The chronotope of the Greek romance," writes Bakhtin, "is the most abstract of all novelistic chronotopes. This most abstract of all chronotopes is also the most static . . . the world and the individual are finished items, absolutely immobile. In it there is no potential for evolution for growth, for change. As a result of the action described in the novel, nothing in its world is destroyed, remade, changed or created anew Adventure time leaves no trace." Yet despite its static and abstract nature, "the adventure novel of ordeal" has been influential and long-lived in the history of the novel. The idea of trial which has at its core an ancient folkloric "faith in the indestructible power of man in his struggle with nature and with all inhuman forces," was a continuing influence in the medieval chivalric romance and in the Baroque novel, after which it becomes merely *one* of the organizing ideas in the

novel. For example, minor fortuitous moments of Greek adventure time are still to be found in Walter Scott's novels.⁹³

The medieval chivalric romance, too, functions in an adventure time similar to Greek adventure time, shares with it the same abstract and technical connection of time to space, and the common feature of the abstract "otherness" of its world. However, the fortuitous moments of the Greek romance, the "*suddenly*," becomes the norm. Bakhtin writes that "the unexpected, and only the unexpected, is what is expected." The world of the chivalric hero is the "chronotope of the miraculous world," and though normalized, it retains its miraculous otherworld nature. Unlike the Greek hero who is propelled by fate into undesired adventures which keep him from a normal life, the world of adventure is the native element of the chivalric hero, the only element in which he can preserve his identity. The chivalric novel is similar in several aspects to epic in that, first of all, the chivalric hero, like the epic hero (and unlike the hero of the Greek romance) performs heroic deeds in search of glory and, in the case of the chivalric hero, of glorification of his lady. As well, the heroes of both epic and chivalric romance - in contrast to the Greek hero who is merely individualized - are both "*individualized*, yet at the same time *symbolic*." Both epic and chivalric heroes "belong to a common storehouse of images," epic to a national storehouse, and chivalric to an international one. In the subsequent development of the chivalric romance, the "almost epic wholeness and unity characterizing the chronotope of the miraculous world disintegrates . . . never again to be resurrected in their epic fullness."⁹⁴

A new time sequence emerges in the second basic type of ancient novel, one which has continued to influence the novel in its historical development to the present day. This

type is the adventure novel of everyday life and finds as its only members Apuleius' *Golden Ass* and Petronius' *Satyricon*, both of which reflect and reveal in their parodic, embryonic (not yet authentic) double-voicedness, the Hellenic world at the end of an era, "ripe for change and renewal" - the multi-linguaged, multi-cultural socially varied world of contemporary life with its "Hellenistic-oriental mysteries." In these novel types a completely new chronotope is created, a new type of adventure time which is defined by two folkloric images of man: one of metamorphosis and the other, the folkloric image of "the path of life," man's journey through life, the chronotope of the road. These two chronotopes which fuse together are of great significance to, and play an enormous role in the history of the novel. Metamorphosis, as the process of man's development, Bakhtin writes, "has become a vehicle for conceptualizing and portraying personal, individual fate" which comprehends "the *entire life-long destiny of a man*, at all its critical *turning points*." However, though time shapes the image of man undergoing metamorphosis and leaves deep traces on him and on his entire life, in this second type, time here is not biographical time but merely short moments. Unlike the adventure time of the Greek romance, where everything is controlled by chance, here the hero's metamorphosis is based in individual responsibility. It is the individual's guilt which delivers "him over to the power of chance." Moreover, and most important, the metamorphosis is purely a private affair, a closed circuit of individual "guilt-punishment-redemption-blessedness." The individual changes and develops in an unchanging world.⁹⁵

The individual's metamorphosis is fused in Apuleius with his travels, the chronotope of the road, which becomes more substantial in time and space, for Lucius' journey through life is no exotic wandering through alien lands, but one in "familiar native

territory." Thus his "movement through space" loses its "abstract and technical character" and "space becomes more concrete and saturated with a time that is more substantial: space is filled with real living meaning, and forms a crucial relationship with the hero and his fate." The concreteness of the chronotope of the road allows everyday life to be realized within it, but an everyday life understood in *The Golden Ass* as the seamy underside of life. The hero, too, is a rogue whose fate is generated by negative forces. Although he is never fused with this life, he, nevertheless, attempts to extricate himself from it.⁹⁶

What is important here is that the hero does not participate in this life nor is his life determined by it. As Bakhtin points out, the road is merely a side-road because the crucial turning points of the hero's life are found outside everyday life. He merely observes, meddles occasionally but only as an "alien force." In this novel, a form was found to resolve the problem of revealing private life which had previously remained closed, a problem resolved unsatisfactorily in the Greek romance. Lucius, as a lowly ass, who passes through life but is not of it - a "third person" - could spy and eavesdrop on all "the everyday secrets of private life that lay bare human nature - that is, everything that can be only spied and eavesdropped upon." Bakhtin points out that there are a "multitude of variations" of Lucius the ass in the subsequent history of the novel: for example, the servant in *Lazarillo de Tormes*, *Gil Blas*, Diderot's *Jacques le Fataliste*; the prostitute and the courtesan in Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and *Roxanne*; the procuress in Sorel's *Francion*; adventurers and *parvenus* in Sorel, Scarron, Defoe, Marivaux, Smollett, Stendhal and Balzac; and embodied and distilled in one, the attributes of an ass, rogue, tramp, servant, adventurer, *parvenu* and actor, in Diderot's *Rameau's Nephew*.⁹⁷

The position of the hero "vis-à-vis everyday life" - the one who passes through life but does not participate internally in it - is a distinctive feature of this second type. However, Apuleius' *Golden Ass* differs from Petronius' *Satyricon* in that in Apuleius the spasmodic cyclic time of individual metamorphosis does not coincide with the time of the everyday world. Everyday time and the everyday world are neither parallel nor interwoven. The everyday world is static and knows no single temporal sequence, no "becoming," it is "scattered, fragmented, deprived of essential connections." Though social heterogeneity is apparent, there are no social contradictions. *Satyricon*, on the other hand, has "no clearly defined metamorphosis." Adventure time is closely knit with everyday time which brings it closer to the European picaresque novel. "Socially heterogeneous elements come close to being contradictory," and thus reveal traces of historical time.⁹⁸

In his investigation into the third ancient novel type, the Platonic and the rhetorical, biographical and autobiographical forms, Bakhtin defines three chronotopes which are of crucial importance and influence in the subsequent development of the novel. The first is "the seeker's path" in which is found a "new type of *biographical time* and a human image constructed to new specifications, that of an individual who passes through the course of a whole life." In the Platonic - the *Apology* of Socrates and the *Phaedo* - public and rhetorical expressions - "the individual's autobiographical self-consciousness" is related to mythological metamorphosis and in time is an idealized biographical metamorphosis, the chronotope of "the life course of one seeking true knowledge." The seeker's journey which includes a "moment of crisis and rebirth," is a progression from self-confident ignorance to self-critical scepticism to self-knowledge and finally to authentic knowing.

Bakhtin writes that this passage becomes more complex in the Hellenic and Roman era (in the works of Cicero, Galen, in St. Augustine's *Retractions*, a catalogue of one's works as a means for seeing the "passage of time in one's life.") "by the addition of variously highly important motifs: the seeker's passage through a series of philosophical schools with their various tests, and the marking of this path by temporal divisions determined by their own biographical projects."⁹⁹

The second real-life chronotope, the *agora*, the public square and one of enormous importance to the novel, is found in the rhetorical autobiographical forms. This type is founded in "'the encomium' - the civic funeral and memorial speech," its form, either that of "verbal praise of civil and political acts, or real human beings giving a public account of themselves." Bakhtin writes that "in ancient times the autobiographical and biographical self-consciousness of an individual and his life was first laid bare and shaped in the public square." The *agora* or public square embodied the state: Bakhtin writes that "(. . . it constituted the entire apparatus, with all its official organs), it was the highest court, the whole of science, the whole of art, the entire people participated in it."¹⁰⁰ However, there was nothing of an intimate, private or secret nature to be revealed; there were no distinctions between autobiography and biography, for the Greek man did not distinguish between an internal and external self. He was entirely exteriorized:

To be exterior meant to be for others, for the collective, for one's own people. A man was utterly exteriorized, but within a human element, in the human medium of his own people. Therefore the *unity* of a man's externalized wholeness was of a *public* nature.¹⁰¹

The image of the man in the "encomium," Bakhtin finds, is a preformed one and one which undergoes no change and development. It is based on idealized virtues and qualities of a particular life-type or profession which are then found and enumerated in the eulogized man. Isocrates' formal, rhetorical, abstract *apologia* which had "enormous influence on all world literature," is the first autobiography developed from these forms.¹⁰²

The chronotope of the patrician Roman family is the third real-life chronotope identified by Bakhtin. Though the family is a symbol for all that can be private and intimate "it retains a deeply public character" for the reason that the Roman family and the state are fused. As well, the autobiographical writings of the clan are handed down from father to son and retained in family archives which, in Bakhtin's view, gives the autobiographical consciousness a "public, historical, national" character. Auguries ("*prodigia*") serve to motivate and shape the autobiographical material and are interwoven with the category of fortune, that is to say, good fortune. The "individualized and personal elements indissolubly fuse" with the fate and fortunes of the state. In later centuries fortune loses the "creative, public and state attributes - and came to represent a principle that was private, personal, and one that was ultimately unproductive."¹⁰³

Bakhtin briefly touches upon the mature autobiographical forms of the Hellenic and Roman era. In these the subject of autobiography remains a static superficial representation. Bakhtin writes that these forms were influenced by the Aristotelian concept of entelechy, a "unique 'inversion in a character's development' that excludes any authentic 'becoming' in character." The two models for structuring ancient biography were based on the Aristotelian concept of *energia*, and *analytic*. The first, established by Plutarch in his

Lives, portrays the man, no longer by an enumeration of his qualities, but "by means of his deeds, his speeches and other extensions and expressions of the man." The character is predetermined, it does not grow or change - character is merely filled in. Biographical time merely discloses character. Historical reality merely manifests character, "an arena for the disclosing and unfolding of human characters."¹⁰⁴

A similar disregard for biographical time and historical time and place is a characteristic of the *analytic* type of biography and autobiography. Here, according to Bakhtin, the biographical material is distributed in a scheme of well-defined rubrics. The temporal progression of the biographical sequence is disregarded, for particular traits are selected from the various events and "arranged according to the prescribed rubrics." Time is unimportant because "what governs from the outset is the *whole* of the [already predetermined] character." All that comes later is distributed within the "already existing contours" of the whole. It was Suetonius, author of *De viris illustribus*, writes Bakhtin, who influenced this narrowly rubric-structured biographical genre which exists today in biographies of "'a human being', 'a writer', 'a family man', 'an intellectual', and so forth."¹⁰⁵

In all of these autobiographical forms, Bakhtin writes, the image "lacks any true process of becoming or development"; the hero is unchanged, the idea of life is essentially based in deeds, feats, external manifestations of man. These forms share a public character for there is no distinction between biography and autobiography. There is no biographical becoming, no development in biographical time. Historical time plays no essential part, but merely provides a backdrop for manifesting the character.¹⁰⁶

At this time, however, there emerge forms which reveal the initial stages in the breakdown of the public exteriority of man, the "Greek public wholeness of the human image." The popular chronotope of the public square begins to disintegrate and the "detached and singular individual's private self-consciousness begins to force itself through and bring to the surface the private spheres of his life." Bakhtin notes three basic modifications of the public and rhetorical forms relating to this breakdown. The first modification is found, for example, in Horace, Ovid and Propertius, in a "satirico-ironic or humorous treatment . . . of one's self and one's life." In these works, Bakhtin writes, "personal and private topics, unable to find a positive form for their expression, are clothed in *irony* and *humour*." The second modification is to be found in the "*familiar letter*" which reveals a "new private sense of self, suited to the drawing room," exemplified in "Cicero's letters to Atticus." Bakhtin writes that "a whole series of categories involving self-consciousness and the shaping of a life into a biography - success, happiness, merit - began to lose their public and state significance and passed over to the private and personal plane." A shift in space occurs: the private individual is no longer at one with the public realm, he does not interact with his environment, the concept of landscape is born. Nature is conceived as something he sees, environment, background setting. The human thus "loses its monumental formedness and exclusively public exteriority."¹⁰⁷

Bakhtin calls the third modification the "*stoic* type of autobiography" which includes Cicero's *Consolatio* and *Hortensius*, Seneca's letters, Marcus Aurelius' autobiographical work and St. Augustine's *Confessions* and others of his autobiographical works. Bakhtin finds here "a new form for relating to one's self . . . 'solitary

conversations with oneself." Although events in the personal private life of the individual are the subject of the work, and, as well, a seemingly private working out takes place with no mediation from the outside, Bakhtin states that the solitude "is still a very relative and naive thing. The *"stoic type of autobiography"* remains to a significant degree "public and rhetorical," for the "sense of self is still rooted firmly in the public sphere."¹⁰⁸

Though the motifs and chronotopes of these ancient novel types continue to influence the novel in its development, the folkloric roots, the generating force behind and revealed in them are merely fragments of the ancient whole. Bakhtin writes of the other ancient literary forms, the plays of Aristophanes and Lucian's dialogues (and includes Petronius's *Satyricon* as well) which retain close links with folklore. By invoking the power of laughter they transform what has become the "private everyday character" of the ancient matrix - food, drink, copulation and death - and recreate its ancient folkloric or mythic wholeness. The elements of the ancient complex in Aristophanes determine "the very foundation of the comedy." Bakhtin writes that the cultic acts - "the ritual of food, drink, ritual (cultic) indecency, ritual parody and laughter as an approach to death and new life" - are "reinterpreted on the literary plane" through the power of laughter.¹⁰⁹

Lucian's approach differs from Aristophanes in that he perpetrates a "comic death of the gods." Bakhtin writes that the "ridiculous inadequacy of the old myths to the everyday reality of Lucian's present had become patently clear." Lucian deliberately makes use of the ancient matrix in its contemporary degraded, reduced form in order to undercut the lifeless sterility of the high ideology in which the ancient myths continued to exist "in moribund form."¹¹⁰

In Petronius' *Satyricon*, though the ancient matrix in the inserted tale, "The Widow of Ephesus," is degraded to everyday life, Bakhtin points out, that "one can still catch a whiff of those rituals of fertility now in the process of decay." All the basic elements of the ancient matrix ("the tomb-youth-food and drink-death-copulation-the conceiving of new life-laughter") are "united into one splendid and economical real-life narrative." These elements which appear in a sublimated, mystical form in the Christian cult, are here completely concrete and credible, and "are brought together by means of an actual event in the life and everyday experience of a Roman province." Bakhtin finds the image profoundly significant, however, not because of its social realism but rather because of its folkloric base: it takes hold of the objective reality and contains the future, it transcends the boundaries of its "spatial, temporal and socio-historical limits . . . without, however, severing itself from the concrete sociohistorical base from which it sprang." He writes that "an enormous event" is "portrayed on a small scale, an event that is enormous by virtue of the elements brought into the narrative, which are linked to an origin lying far beyond the boundaries of that small scrap of real life in which they are reflected."¹¹¹

In the works of Aristophanes, Lucian and Petronius, Bakhtin finds the fullest attempt, in the ancient literary forms to restore the ancient matrices in their original "crude" reality, and to achieve - particularly in Aristophanes and Lucian - through the utilization of laughter in its connection with the ancient matrix, the wholeness of folkloric time. However, although Aristophanes shares a kinship with Rabelais and with Shakespeare in the comic scenes, the Aristophanean form becomes insignificant as a generating force in the novel for the reason that Aristophanes is unable to outstrip socio-historical limits and

creates a closed epic form, a "comic myth" in which the links with the everyday and the ancient complex are severed. Petronius, on the other hand, outstrips the socio-historical limits yet retains his connection with the ancient folkloric complex, and thus both influences and shares an affinity with the realism and the folkloric series in the works of Renaissance writers.

Bakhtin, in his study of the chronotopes in the continuing developing history of the novel, a history integral with cultural history, remarks on a unique historical episode in the twilight of the Middle Ages, on the development of a unique chronotope. At this time several works appear which reveal "an acute feeling for the epoch's contradictions, long overripe; this is, in essence a feeling for the end of an epoch," from which springs a "striving toward as full as possible an exposition of all the contradictory multiplicity of the epoch." The works of Guillaume de Lorris (completed by Jean de Meung), Langland and Dante are "encyclopedia (and synthetic)" and structured as a vision in which time is "utterly excluded from action." These writings reveal the critical turning point of the Middle Ages, the break with the past, the disintegration of the epic static timelessness and the attempt at entrance into the modern world. The works, poised on the brink of the future, contain the seeds to the future, and present a world view which recognizes history, that is to say, real man in the present. As Bakhtin says, the medieval world picture as it appears in Dante is already in a state of crisis and stands at the breaking point. This crisis point is revealed but not resolved as Dante clings to an epic wholeness and unity in *Divina Commedia's* static, hierarchical and vertical, structural fullness. However, only in its structure and in its scope can it be designated as epic. Although it contains the past in its entrance to the netherworld, an underworld initiated into literature by Dante, the past engages in a struggle with the

future, albeit a religious and metaphorical, visionary future ("because Dante believed his faith gave him access to God's intention "). Yet, at the same time, *Divina Commedia* is a secular work, engaged with real, individual, historical people. As well, and most importantly, it is engaged with the present, and takes place in the *immediate* present, for Dante creates himself as the hero of the work.¹¹²

Time in Dante stands still: "that which was, and which is and which shall be," are seen in a single moment, "within a *single time*," in a hierarchical, vertical Medieval structure. A struggle between an extra-temporal, otherworldly ideal and living historical time is revealed for "the human beings who fill (populate) this vertical world are profoundly historical, they bear the distinctive marks of time; on all of them, the traces of the epoch are imprinted." Bakhtin emphasizes that "each image is full of historical potential, and therefore strains with the whole of its being toward participation in historical events - toward participation in a temporal-historical chronotope. But the artist's powerful will," he continues, "condemns it to an eternal and immobile place on the extratemporal vertical axis." This "Dantesque vertical chronotope" does not appear again "with such rigor and internal consistency" until a "most profound and consistent attempt to erect such a verticality was made by Dostoevsky" in the re-creation in his novels of the chronotope of the carnival, the zone of immediate contact.¹¹³

The process of secularization which is revealed in Dante is also evident in the works of Petrarch and Boccaccio and owes its expression to a "growing thirst for regeneration and renewal in the purely earthly sphere" which grew out of a religious revival and beginning in the twelfth century. This religious revival is most notably associated with Joachim de

Floris and with St. Francis of Assisi who "called himself and his companions 'God's jugglers'" and who created an atmosphere which Bakhtin suggests "with some exaggeration" can be defined as "a carnivalized Catholicism." The growing desire for renewal and rebirth pervaded the carnival spirit of the Middle Ages and paved the way for the Renaissance. In Bakhtin's words, "the Renaissance was prepared for by the Middle Ages, and especially by the twelfth century." He points out that the word *renaissance* "did not mean a revival of the ancient arts and sciences." Rather it was "an immensely important and significant word, rooted in the very depths of the ritualistic, ideological and visual imagery of mankind." This movement towards revival and renewal found its "multiform expression in concrete sensual elements of folk culture, both in ritual and spectacle," the carnival forms. Bakhtin writes that "during the Renaissance, one could say that the primordial elements of carnival swept away many barriers and invaded many realms of official life and worldview. Most importantly, they took possession of all the genres of high literature and transformed them fundamentally. There occurred a deep and almost total carnivalization of all artistic literature. The carnival sense of the world . . . penetrated deeply into almost" all artistic literary genres.¹¹⁴

The essence of carnival, ("in the sense of the sum total of all diverse festivities, rituals and forms of a carnival type") finds its "roots in the primordial order and the primordial thinking in man," in the culture of the folk. Carnival, "*syncretic pageantry* of a ritualistic sort," knows no division between performers and spectators, all of whom "live a carnivalistic life," which is, writes Bakhtin, "to some extent 'life turned inside out'." The chronotope of the carnival is the public square, an arena which "belongs to the whole people," the zone of the immediate present, of "free and familiar contact" in which

everyone can participate. It is "the place for working out, in a concretely sensuous, half-real and half-play-acted form, *a new mode of interrelationship between individuals*, counterposed to the all-powerful socio-hierarchical relationships of noncarnival life." Bakhtin writes that "carnival brings together, unifies, weds and combines the sacred with the profane, the lofty with the low, the great with the insignificant, the wise with the stupid." Connected to this fundamental aspect is carnival profanation: "debasings and bringings down to earth [through] carnivalistic obscenities, linked with the reproductive power of the earth and the body, carnivalistic parodies on sacred texts and sayings," and so forth.¹¹⁵

The central figures of the carnival are the clown and the fool, and their theatrical performances in the public square create still another form for restoring folkloric time and its matrices to literature and other ideologies, and were introduced, together with the rogue in the Middle Ages into the low folkloric and semifolkloric literary forms. According to Bakhtin these figures owe their origins to preclass culture, "are rooted deep in the folk" and are later, in ancient times, transformed into cultic masks. The images of the clown and the fool play an incomparable role in folk consciousness, and are integrally connected with the public square and with metamorphosis, metaphorically representing the entire human image in an allegorical state, the transformed figures of "tsar and god" situated in "the netherworld, in death," a state of immense "form-generating significance for the novel."¹¹⁶

The role of the clown, the fool (and later the rogue) is to reveal all that is hidden and internalized, and to restore the literary image of man to the fully exteriorized image of folkloric man in all his wholeness - to "re-establish the public nature of the human figure."

Bakhtin writes that these figures "create around themselves their own special little world, their own chronotope." As life's maskers, they stand opposed to all that is conventional, hypocritical and false; their function to reflect and reveal "the underside and falseness of every situation," to externalize human beings and things through parodic laughter. Bakhtin writes that as real-life people, they do not create problems but when they move into the novel they "themselves undergo a series of transformations, and they transform certain critical aspects of the novel as well."¹¹⁷

A development in the history of the novel which was to be significant much later for the modern novel, was the introduction, in the Middle Ages, of these figures into the literary forms because they bring with them the immediacy of the public square and all the rites and rituals of "the mask of the public spectacle." A form was found to expose the conventionality, and "all that is vulgar and falsely stereotyped in human relationships." Bakhtin writes that not only was "literature's sundered tie with the public square" re-established, but as well, new forms emerged for "making public all unofficial and forbidden spheres of human life, in particular the sphere of the sexual and of vital body functions (copulation, food and wine), as well as a decoding of all the symbols that had covered up these processes." And finally, there is the introduction into literature through the images of the clown, the fool and the rogue, the "allegorized being of the whole man, up to and including his world view."¹¹⁸

Throughout the ages other attempts are made in several ways to restore folkloric time and its matrices in the literature and the ideologies, attempts which were of great significance in the development, later, of the eighteenth century novel and the

Bildungsroman. One of these is revealed in the emergence of the idyllic chronotope: the attempt in the literary idyll to restore folkloric time, an attempt which in Bakhtin's opinion, is of immense significance to the development of the novel. The various and differing forms of the idyll share several common features which are "all determined by their general relationship to the immanent unity of folkloric time." In Bakhtin's view, the importance of this cultural and historical unity of folkloric time as the underlying image in the novel has not been understood nor appreciated.¹¹⁹

Here it is important to emphasize and to reiterate that Bakhtin is not seeking out images in the novel as static representations (as in New Criticism). Rather, he is talking about *forms of time* and not "images" per se. These folkloric images or *forms of time* are dynamic, creative forces at work, forces which the artist, whether or not he is aware of it, utilizes in his artistic work to give it life and energy; it is the *essential vitality* of his artistic expression. The idyllic chronotope, for example, in the Rousseauvian novel type becomes a lost ideal of human life and therefore an image for a future, and a criticism of contemporary culture and society.

Three essential features constitute this isolated idyllic world. One is the unity of time and place, the continuity of past and future generations inhabiting it which blur the temporal boundaries and bring about its cyclical, rhythmical nature, thus linking it in an abstract form to the communal laboring cycle of the ancient complex. Secondly, the life events are limited to the basic realities of the ancient complex but are present only "in a softened and to a certain extent sublimated form." For example, in the family-agricultural idyll, sexuality and fertility is represented by love, marriage, family and children. The final

feature of the idyll is that the common language used for both the agricultural labouring relationship with nature and for human events becomes, for the most part, metaphorical.¹²⁰

Bakhtin writes that the influence of the idyll on the development of the novel has taken five different basic directions. In the provincial novel the events of common everyday life, "family-labour, agricultural or craft-work," assume importance and "acquire thematic significance." However, the folkloric, cyclic time is not productive and it remains static, closed, epoch-bound; to quote Bakhtin, life becomes "a senseless running-in-place at one historical point, at one level of historical development." The influence of the idyll on the Rousseauvian novel-type (the second direction) is of great significance for the development of the novel. The sublimation of "nature, love, the family and childbearing, death," that is to say, "the ancient sense of the whole" in philosophical terms, Bakhtin writes, "makes of it an ideal for the future and sees in it above all the basis, a norm, for criticizing the current state of society."¹²¹

The family novel and the novel of generations, of which Bakhtin asserts Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle* and Dickens' novels are the highest achievement, are the third direction of the idyll. In these novels the idyllic world is narrowed and reduced to an "idyllic little world" of the stable family which upholds the values of a much reworked and sublimated ancient matrix (that is, love, marriage, childbirth, old age, shared meals) and material goods. The hero, often homeless, wends his way out of the "great but alien world of random occurrence into the small but secure and stable little world of the family."¹²²

The destruction of the idyll in the works of Goethe, Goldsmith, Jean Paul, and in a different form in Stendhal, Balzac and Flaubert, constitute another direction in the influence of the idyll. These novelists contrast a small, idyllic, yet narrow and limited world of a profoundly humane idyllic man, the wholeness of idyllic life organically linked with nature, with a primarily negative and critical image of the contemporary bourgeois capitalist world. The novels of the former, of Goethe, Goldsmith and Jean Paul, are novels of education wherein a man "must educate or re-educate himself for life in a world that is, from his point of view, enormous and foreign; he must make it his own, domesticate it." His "re-education," writes Bakhtin, "is interwoven with the process of society's breakdown and reconstruction, that is, with historical process." The latter novelists' works, those of Stendhal, Balzac and Flaubert, make ridiculous the "positive hero of the idyllic world" and primarily overturn and destroy the "world view and psychology of the idyll, which proved increasingly inadequate to the new capitalist world."¹²³

The most recent influence of the idyll is one that singles out elements of the idyllic complex. Bakhtin writes of a type he describes as "a 'man of the people'," an ideal man who encapsulates the "wisdom of the common folk and of their idyllic locale," or one "who holds the correct attitude toward life and death," or one who has a special relationship to "food, drink, love, childbirth" - the ancient complex, and so forth. Bakhtin names "the servant in Walter Scott (Savelich in Pushkin)" as examples. Shakespeare's Falstaff, Cervantes' Sancho Panza and Dickens' Sam Weller also exemplify this type. Bakhtin also makes special note of the "Rabelaisian-idyllic line of development" in Sterne, Hippel and Jean Paul where he finds "an obvious kinship" between Rabelais and these authors which he says, "can be traced back to folklore."¹²⁴

Bakhtin's historical exploration of chronotopes, of the integral relation of time in space, its gradual assimilation in literature in its relation to the history of culture and cultural transformations, culminates in his study of the work of François Rabelais who is, in his opinion, the greatest creator of European literature in its history. Bakhtin writes that Rabelais' "novel is the greatest attempt at constructing an image of *man growing in national-historical time*." The human "emerges *along with the world* and he reflects the historical emergence of the world itself." Rabelais' novel "unfolds before us, as it were, the completely unrestricted, universal chronotope of human life," and one which "was fully in accord with the approaching era of geographical and astronomical discoveries."¹²⁵

Bakhtin defines Rabelais' task as two-fold, one polemical and the other affirmative; both "indissolubly interwoven with each other." Rabelais attempts simultaneously to destroy the old picture of the world, all that is transcendent and false, its disintegrating hierarchical structure, its negation of all that is human, its devaluation of man and his life in the present, its apocalyptic vision for the future, and at the same time, to create a new picture which would be adequate, or appropriate, in space and time for a "new, whole and harmonious man, and for new forms of communication." Rabelais' task, according to Bakhtin, is to purge and restore "the authentic world and the authentic man." To achieve this, it is "necessary to destroy and rebuild the entire false picture of the world, to sunder the false hierarchical links between objects and ideas, to abolish the divisive ideational strata."¹²⁶

Bakhtin claims that it was necessary for Rabelais to find a new form of space and time to replace the disintegrating medieval static conception of the world (its static wholeness and roundness "still alive in Dante's synthesizing work"), and to furnish a new corporeal base, "to 'embody' the world," in accord with a new geographically fleshing-out world. What was needed was a new sense of time, a "creative and generative time" to replace the medieval understanding of time as a "force that only destroys and annihilates." It was essential to find concrete, historical temporal categories to replace the medieval transcendent conception of history as "the Creation of the World, the Fall from Grace, the First Expulsion, Redemption, the Second Exile, the Final Judgement." It was essential, Bakhtin writes, "to find a new form of time and a new relationship of time to space, to earthly space."¹²⁷

It is through the power of laughter that Rabelais achieves his purpose. Rabelaisian "world-embracing" laughter, its "extraordinary force . . . its radicalism," is linked with the ancient folkloric images and motifs; is rooted in ancient folklore and linked with the elements of the ancient complex, with "death, the birth of new life, fertility and growth." But unlike these other elements of the ancient complex which suffer from internal disintegration and are, on the one hand, reduced to the petty, the narrow, the coarse details of everyday life; and on the other, sublimated into religion, laughter has never been absorbed and repressed. Laughter as a language of its own, has existed in time as a powerful force alongside, and at the same time - although "consecrated by tradition" - opposed to the official truth, the official language of the culture.¹²⁸

Laughter, which found its way into the medieval novel forms in the images of the clown, the fool and the rogue, resounds most fully and completely - "real world-embracing laughter" - in the Rabelaisian world. Another of these carnivalesque forms, and one integrally connected with the language of laughter is the "unofficial side of speech," the language of profanation, its "rich store of curses" and its "various indecencies." Bakhtin writes that Rabelais "perceived in this speech a complete absence of any sublimation, as well a special system of matrices opposed to the official sides of speech, and to literature." Rabelais broadly incorporated into his novel "this 'crude frankness of folk passions', this 'licence that is granted statements on the public square'." These carnivalesque forms found in the *embryo* novels and other ancient works (the Socratic dialogues, though laughter here is reduced; Menippean satire; the works of Aristophanes; Lucian and Petronius, for example) provide the creative, generative force, on the one hand, in the destruction of the old, worn out world view with its ideal of aesthetic man and its reality, his licence and debauchery; and on the other, the restructuring of a newly materializing and fleshed-out world appropriate for an authentic "whole" man.¹²⁹

In his creation of an authentic, whole man in an authentic, materially, fleshed-out world, Rabelais finds what for Bakhtin is a new chronotope, the chronotope of the body, "a new place for human corporeality in the real spatial-temporal world," the "human body and its life" in all its "whole remarkable complexity and depth." He creates a new ideal of the human, of the creative, generative human, a new ideology of the body, one which is opposed to the medieval concept of the body "perceived solely under the sign of decay and strife." In Bakhtin's view, Rabelais returns the body to "the idealized quality it had in ancient times." He restores the ancient matrices - death-birth-food-drink-copulation-growth

of new life-laughter - to their former wholeness and returns "both a language and a meaning to the body."¹³⁰

However, this new "whole" body is not "the bourgeois conception of the completely atomized human being," nor the smooth, rounded-out, closed body of Renaissance Classicism, "a strictly completed, finished product . . . isolated, alone, fenced off from all other bodies." Rather, it is the "grotesque body," it is the "concept of grotesque realism," the "ever unfinished, ever creating body, the link in the chain of genetic development, or," as Bakhtin says: "more correctly speaking, two links shown at the point where they enter into each other." Bakhtin writes that the grotesque body, its "images of the human body with its food, drink, defecation and sexual life . . . discloses its essence as a principle of growth which exceeds its own limits only in copulation, pregnancy, childbirth, the throes of death, eating, drinking, or defecation." The emphasis of the grotesque body is on its "apertures or the convexities, or on various ramifications and offshoots: the open mouth, the genital organs, the breasts, the phallus, the potbelly, the nose." The grotesque body is linked with the rest of the world through the parts of the body "through which the world enters the body or emerges from it, or through which the body itself goes out to meet the world."¹³¹

The chronotope of the body is a dynamic portrayal of "the impersonal body" engaged in "all the processes of its life." It is "the body of the human race as a whole." Bakhtin writes that the development of the human "as an individual is not distinguished in Rabelais from historical growth and cultural progress." It is understood "as part of the all-embracing common life of the whole human race." The chronotope of the body, with its

"extraordinary *spatial and temporal expanses*," its special relationship between man and all the actions and events of his life, is a manifestation of the human body as a "concrete measuring rod for the world, the measurer of the world's weight and of its value for the individual." It is an attempt on Rabelais' part "to structure the entire picture of the world around the human conceived as a body - which is to say, in a zone of physical contact with such a body."¹³²

Rabelais accomplishes his task through the resurrection of the ancient folkloric series relating to the body - the food-drink-copulation-growth-defecation-death series. He connects and intertwines them and integrates them with the languages of profanation and of laughter in order to reintegrate these internally fragmented aspects and to reconnect them with each other in their ancient wholeness. He restructures the image of man and the picture of his world. He attempts to destroy "every nook and cranny of the habitual picture of the world," and at the same time, "to 'embody' the world, to materialize it, to tie everything in to spatial and temporal series, to measure everything on the scale of the human body, to construct - on that space where the destroyed picture of the world had been - a new picture."¹³³

Through the languages of laughter and profanation, Rabelais destroys the established hierarchy, brings down all that was traditionally elevated and raises up all that was conventionally denigrated and debased. He tightly intertwines conventionally opposed and contrasting ideologies; for example, he organically intertwines the folkloric eating and drinking series with "religious concepts and symbols" (a not uncommon practice in the literature of the Middle Ages). He makes use of monstrously inappropriate images to

portray real-life events: the struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism depicted as a struggle between King Lent and the Sausages who inhabit Savage Island is one of the many instances which Bakhtin notes. Through grotesque, parodied, clownish new word and object linkages, Rabelais destroys the established hierarchy of values and understanding and creates characteristically "new and monstrous matri[ces] of objects and phenomena - elements that within quite ordinary contexts are completely incompatible." Bakhtin writes that "the process of digestion, curative machinations, everyday household objects, phenomena of nature, farm life and the hunt are," in one instance, "united in one dynamic, living grotesque image."¹³⁴

The death series which for the most part appears on a "grotesque and clownish plane...intersects with the eating and drinking series, with the defecation series, with the anatomical series." Death and laughter, death and food, death and drink, death and birth of new life, death as a regenerative power (revealed in one instance, in a grotesque depiction of a horse's leg brought into contact with a bloated corpse because of the purported healing powers of a putrid corpse, an idea connected to the agricultural use of compost) are all linked in gay hilarity and affirmation. These are but a few of the many examples to which Bakhtin refers in his study of the Rabelaisian chronotope - examples of the affirmation of the "lofty importance of eating and drinking" and of all the bodily functions in human life which oppose and replace the "transcendental aesthetic world view" of the "sad necessity of the sinful flesh." As well, the old picture of death as something which "robbed life on earth of its value," is destroyed by Rabelais through its connection in grotesque, generative forms to all the fundamental and joy-filled activities of life. And death is resurrected and portrayed "as an unavoidable aspect of life itself."¹³⁵

Grotesque realism - the grotesque body - does not serve solely, or even primarily as a debasing and destructive force. Rather, its essence is a dual one and its affirmative force is ultimately victorious. Bakhtin writes that "the very material bodily lower stratum of the grotesque image (food, wine, the genital force, the organs of the body) bears a deeply positive character." The "traditional image of the human being in literature is . . . restructured in a radical way. . . . The whole man is brought out on the surface and into the light, by means of the word . . . throughout all this the human being is not deheroicized or debased at all, nor does he in any sense become a man of 'low life'." Rather, all the functions of the human body which were debased and denigrated over time are, in Rabelais, returned to the heroic as in ancient folklore. Eating, drinking, copulation and defecation "lose their commonplace quality, their everyday and naturalistic coloration" to which they were relegated in ancient times with the rise of class and religion.¹³⁶

Bakhtin writes that "the essence of the grotesque is precisely to present a contradictory and double-faced fullness of life. Negation and destruction (death of the old) are included as an essential phase, inseparable from affirmation, from the birth of something new and better." It is Bakhtin's view that "Rabelais, - a humanist physician and pedagogue - was concerned with direct propaganda on behalf of the culture of the body and its harmonious development." The aim of his radical undertaking is to create an image of "a whole man, both body and soul," a human in the "harmony of the universe and the harmony of human society." He opposes *both* the ideal of aesthetic man who denigrated sexuality and all bodily needs and activity and the real-life counterpart, the "medieval body

- coarse, hawking, farting, yawning, spitting, hiccupping, noisily nose-blowing, endlessly chewing and drinking."¹³⁷

The work of Rabelais is most often understood as the destruction of the medieval aesthetic ideal of man and his picture of the world and the subsequent elevation of the "coarse debauchery of medieval man" and a corresponding crude image of a new world. But this is wrong. What is often misunderstood about the work of Rabelais and of Bakhtin too, is that there is no notion of opposition in its usually divisory, separate sense. As Bakhtin says of the grotesque (and which I repeat), and moreover, which also *applies to his own thought*, "the essence of the grotesque is to present a contradictory and double-faced fullness of life." Rabelais' purpose, according to Bakhtin, is two-fold yet it is strongly and ultimately affirmative. His radical endeavour to create an ideology of the human body and all its functions - the grotesque body - is not only rooted in the ancient matrices of folklore, is not only antithetical to the aesthetic ideal of medieval man, but as well is grounded in cultured, humanist values of harmony, themselves antithetical to the "coarse debauchery of medieval man." The humanist education of Gargantua under Ponocrates imparts the values of humanism and rejects the old values. For example, the ideal body is "the elegant cultured body of the humanist, harmoniously developed through sports."¹³⁸

Rabelais' endeavour to create a culture, an ideology of eating and drinking, is rooted in, and has as its "essential feature . . . the new human image, a man who is harmonious and whole." The "ability to feast cheerfully and wisely" only in "the evening leisure hours at the completion of the working day," a time of feasting and wise

conversations "filled with laughter and banter," is an essential component of Gargantua's upbringing, the "very essence of Pantagruelism" and is contrasted with "crude gluttony."¹³⁹

In his heroicization of human life and its bodily functions, of human life lived wholly in the present (death as a necessary part of life, for every seed sown "many stalks of grain appear"), Rabelais destroys the official medieval world picture, the transitory nature and irrelevance of man's life in the present, and simultaneously creates, or fleshes-out a new ideal, an image of a humanist-king in a world where "all historical limits are, as it were, destroyed and swept away by laughter," in a world connected with the old world, yet open to a future. Though Rabelais re-establishes the ancient matrices, he does so on a new elevated base and in a new form of time and space, a new chronotope.¹⁴⁰

Although Gargantua and Pantagruel are, in their essence, "modelled on kings of folklore," that is to say, on folkloric giants, they are combined in their essence with the new ideals of Renaissance humanism. Like the giants of folklore, they are not great because of their differences in relation to others, but rather, they are great in their humanity, "great in the fullness of [their] development and in [their] realization of all human potentialities." Bakhtin writes that "the great man in Rabelais is profoundly democratic. In no sense is he opposed to the mass, as something out of the ordinary, as a man of another species. On the contrary, he is made of the same generally human stuff as are all other men. He eats, drinks, defecates, passes wind - but he does all this on a grand scale." Gargantua and Pantagruel are essentially folkloric kings and great men in the Rabelaisian ideal because they "can freely realize all the possibilities and demands made on a man

without recourse to ethical or religious consolation." Rabelais' humanist-kings, Bakhtin writes, like folkloric giants, are able to develop to their fullest human capability and potential and are, in addition, embellished "with certain realistic historical gestures" which are essential to Rabelais' "idea of a monarch and a humanist." They are kings, great men, adequate to their time, to the "newly opened cosmos of the Renaissance."¹⁴¹

Bakhtin points out that, in the same way Rabelais re-establishes the ancient matrices in a new form suitable for the new openness of the age, he, as well, defines a new chronotope attuned to the newly fleshed-out world in the making. A new form of the productive and generative time was necessary because the cyclic nature of ancient collective folkloric time was not appropriate for a world view in the process of dissolution and disintegration and a newly materialized world in the making. Furthermore, the historical inversion of the ancient chronotope which enriched the present and the past at the expense of the future was not adequate to the "newly opened cosmos of the Renaissance." A new chronotope was needed for a world poised on the threshold of the future. Rabelais creates a chronotope which does not distinguish the growth of individual man from historical growth and cultural progress, one understood "as part of the all-embracing common life of the whole human race." Bakhtin writes that "Rabelais connects the growth of generations with the growth of culture, and with the growth of the historical development of mankind as well. The son will continue the father, the grandson the son. . . . Death begins nothing decisive, and ends nothing decisive, in the collective and historical world of human life." Thus the Rabelaisian chronotope encompasses the human and his immediate world in gigantic spatial and temporal expanses. It spans the past, the present and is open to the future: the "growth of a new man combined with the growth of a new historical era, in a

world that knows a new history but that is also connected with death of the old man and the old world."¹⁴²

Bakhtin's understanding of Rabelais' task, the unification (or more correctly stated, the re-unification) of all that was isolated, fragmented in history, the re-creation of the whole, but an openended whole linked to the past and poised for a future, illustrates and illuminates Bakhtin's own purpose. The whole of his work, his writings in linguistics, literary theory, his exploration and investigation into the origins, the creative forces in the novel, culminating in his work on Rabelais, his radical understanding of the holistic and humanistic nature of Rabelais' attempt to restructure a world view around the image of man, is the essence of Bakhtin's own aim - an aim improperly understood or appreciated by contemporary theorists and critics of Bakhtin's work.

The problem of the understanding of this humanistic and holistic philosophy, of understanding this chronotope, its integral connection with the past, its utopian immediacy in the present, that is to say, utopian in the sense of its affirmation of the human, its openness to the future, the problem of *great time*, is the subject of the next and final chapter.

Chapter V

Towards a Philosophy of Man in Culture: The Problem of Reception of Man in *Great Time* in the English-Speaking World

Life by its very nature is dialogic. To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth. In this dialogue a person participates wholly and throughout his whole life: with his eyes, lips, hands, soul, spirit, with his whole body and deeds. He invests his entire self in discourse, and this discourse enters into the dialogic fabric of human life, into the world symposium.

Mikhail Bakhtin, "Toward a Reworking of the Dostoevsky Book."

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.

Mikhail Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics.

Mikhail Bakhtin's radical humanistic and holistic philosophy of man, the creation of man in *great time*, is to a great extent misunderstood in the English-speaking world, and his work is, therefore, subjected to considerable misinterpretation and distortion.¹ The most significant problem, is the abstraction, the fragmentation, the absorption into the simplistic, nihilistic theory of deconstruction of Bakhtin's complex and multi-faceted,

fundamentally concrete meta-sociological aesthetics, his radical reorientation and reorganization of understanding in linguistic and literary theory.

The thought and work of Mikhail Bakhtin is but one link in a long and continuous chain in intellectual history, a chain which extends to the distant past, to Heraclitus and his "idea of the concrete universal," for whom "Reality is One" and, at the same time, "One-in-many" . . . that is to say, "unity in diversity," for whom the essence of all things is Fire, which "lives by feeding, by consuming and transforming itself," and for whom opposites are inseparable, engaged in an ever-living "constant state of flux." The very nature of Bakhtin's thought links him to Socrates and the "birth of scientific thinking" and to Democritus and his philosophical "treatise on cheerfulness." His philosophy of man is but one link in the chain of radical humanism, of philosophical anthropology which seeks the essence of man and his creations within man himself. The nature of his thought links him to Heraclitus who is "convinced that it is impossible to penetrate into the secret of nature without having studied the secret of man." He is linked to Socrates who transformed philosophy from an intellectual monologue to a dialogue, who says, "the men who dwell in the city are my teachers, and not the trees, or the country," and for whom there was only one question: "What is Man?" - a question echoed by Immanuel Kant to his students in philosophical anthropology.²

The very nature of Bakhtin's thought links him with those renaissance humanists who bring the world closer to man, close enough to touch, to martyred Giordano Bruno and to tortured Galileo. The nature of his thought links him to those radical humanists who relate more to forms of culture than to forms of thought, and whose thought is, in essence,

subversive: to Niccolò Machiavelli who lays bare the human basis of political power; to Michel de Montaigne for whom values are based in *human* foundations; to Blaise Pascal for whom "the philosopher is not permitted to construct an artificial man: he must describe a real one"; to François Rabelais, Miguel de Cervantes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Denis Diderot, Laurence Sterne, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Charles Darwin, Charles Dickens, Karl Marx, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Sigmund Freud and D.H. Lawrence to name a few.³

Bakhtin's thought and work develops in a continuous dialogue with these humanists and philosophers, and as well with the German philosophical tradition of Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, Lessing, Herder, Hegel, Dilthey, and others also named in his work. Moreover, his thought and work develops in dialogue with his great adversaries Aristotle and the Cartesian Abstract Enlightenment thinkers. Bakhtin is a link in a chain which cannot be severed and destroyed through absorption into the nihilistic and apocalyptic Nietzschean-based theory of deconstruction, a theory of meaninglessness with which there can be no dialogue, a theory which severs man from his creations, a theory of authorless texts, of ghost authorship, of indefinite and endlessly deferred meaning. Radical humanism, philosophical anthropology, is integrally engaged with man, deconstruction is disengaged.

Bakhtin's crucial, critical and essentially philosophical concepts - polyphony, loophole word, sideways glance, carnivalesque, dialogue, unfinalizability - are widely misunderstood in contemporary criticism, a misunderstanding which leads to the current misperception and misrepresentation of his work. In this chapter, I discuss these crucial

concepts and their reception in the English-speaking world. This discussion is undertaken through a consideration of Bakhtin's study of the work of Dostoevsky in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, Bakhtin's radical reorientation and reorganization of approaches to the novel, and the reception of this work. It is in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* that all of these critical concepts, all the essential elements of Bakhtin's thought come together: his understanding of the relatively autonomous speaking subject and his discourse; his word; his understanding of the novel as a radical, socio-ideo-historical cultural literary event participating in, and representing the concrete real-life experience in all its full, complex, multi-faceted reality; its openendedness - the chronotope of the novel.

In Bakhtin's view, Dostoevsky's polyphonic novel is an epochal event of immense significance and importance in the "becoming" of the novel. In novels before Dostoevsky, and in the vast majority of novels since, the author tends to speak for and through the characters in order to present a single, uniform, and unitary view which requires of the reader merely a passive stance. Dostoevsky, as the creator of the polyphonic novel, undertakes a Copernican revolution and creates a "fundamentally new novelistic genre" in which the reader is not only forced to participate, to take sides, but also to rise above the dialogue and to view the novel as a created, artistic event, a work of art. The essential characteristic of the polyphonic novel is its artistic presentation of a "plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses," a world in which the characters are autonomous subjects who speak about themselves and their worlds, and whose words about themselves and their worlds are "just as fully weighted as the author's is."⁴ Bakhtin writes:

Dostoevsky, like Goethe's Prometheus, creates not voiceless slaves (as does Zeus), but free people, capable of standing *alongside* their creator, capable of not agreeing with him and even rebelling against him.

*A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices is in fact the chief characteristic of Dostoevsky's novels.*⁵

Every thought, every idea, is "the position of a personality...a concrete consciousness, embodied *in the living voice of an integral person* " engaged in a living event in an "interrelationship of consciousnesses." Bakhtin writes that although Dostoevsky's world may appear chaotic, and "the construction of his novels some sort of conglomerate of disparate materials and incompatible principles for shaping them," Dostoevsky's creation is a new and profoundly original way to artistically construct the reality of a polyglot world, a new multi-voiced world, "an event of interaction between fully valid consciousnesses." This central characterization of Dostoevsky's novels, his assertion of the poly- or heteroglot nature of real-life experience and its representation in the novel, is widely misunderstood by contemporary critics in most, if not all, of its essential elements: that is to say, the nature of polyphony itself, the relation of the author to his characters, the nature of the relation of self to other, and to the carnivalesque character of Dostoevsky's novels.⁶

Wayne Booth, for example, understands polyphony as some sort of peculiarly East European version of individualism which depends on a "vision of the world as essentially a collectivity of subjects who are themselves social in essence, not individuals in any usual sense of the word." In Booth's view, Bakhtin's vision of the autonomous individual in a polyphonic world is "never a private or autonomous individuality in the *western* sense."

The individual is, according to Booth, "a 'we' not an 'I.'" Polyphony, writes Booth, is "the miracle of our 'dialogical' lives together [which] is thus both a fact of life, and, in its higher reaches, a value to be pursued endlessly."⁷

René Wellek, too, profoundly misunderstands the nature of polyphony. He incorrectly attributes to Bakhtin "the dogma 'exit author'" and he multiplies his error by assuming that Bakhtin attributes this position to Dostoevsky, thereby denying Dostoevsky "an authorial voice and personal angle of vision." Furthermore, he incorrectly argues that Bakhtin transforms Dostoevsky into a relativist. Moreover, Wellek adopts a moral position and argues against the carnivalesque in Dostoevsky's works: "Dostoevsky seems to me to represent the opposite of the carnival spirit. He was a man of deep commitment, profound seriousness, spirituality, and strict ethics, whatever his lapses were in his life." Wellek, as well, is *disconcerted* "to think that Bakhtin propounded a theory which renders Dostoevsky somehow harmless, neutralizes his teaching, makes him a relativist."⁸

Joseph Frank, too, misunderstands the nature of polyphony and also criticizes Bakhtin from a moral perspective. He writes that "Bakhtin's ambiguities are such that he opens the way to an erroneous view of Dostoevsky as a moral relativist, and scants the tragic dimension of his struggle to uphold the moral values of Christian conscience in an increasingly secularized world." Moreover, Frank misreads Bakhtin's text and thus distorts the following statement by Bakhtin in which Bakhtin says that *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* "cannot pretend to a complete analysis of the questions it raises, especially questions as complex as that of *the whole* in a polyphonic novel." Bakhtin's modest disclaimer is totally misrepresented: Frank writes, "Bakhtin honestly admits that

his book does not contain *any* treatment of 'questions as complex as that of the whole in the polyphonic novel'."⁹ Having thus misrepresented Bakhtin's purpose, Frank goes on to state that this "failure leaves a gaping breach in Bakhtin's theory and nullifies his ambition to show the unity of form and content in Dostoevsky." Frank questions Bakhtin's idea of a polyphonic novel because, he says, Bakhtin is "unable to explain how the absolute independence of fictional character can combine with the unity of a work of art."¹⁰

The most common misunderstanding of polyphony is with regard to the author's position in relation to his characters, a misunderstanding shared by a vast majority of the critics including the latter two mentioned. This problem is closely connected with Bakhtin's position on the autonomy of the characters in relation to the author, the autonomy of speaking subjects, the relation of the self to another.

Before discussing these problems, it is important to state that although Bakhtin modestly (yet intentionally, because he argues against all completeness, all finality) disclaims completeness in his discussion of the whole in the polyphonic novel, his position in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* is quite clear. He does clarify the position of the author, the author's creative design or structure of the polyphonic novel. In one instance, for example, he describes "the relative independence of characters within the limits of Dostoevsky's creative design." He observes that the "characters' freedom we speak of here exists within the limits of the artistic design."¹¹ And in another place,

the freedom of the character is an aspect of the author's design. A character's discourse is created by the author, but created in such a

way that it can develop to the full its inner logic and independence as *someone else's discourse*, the word of the *character himself*. As a result it does not fall out of the author's design, but only out of a monological authorial field of vision. And the destruction of this field of vision is precisely a part of Dostoevsky's design.¹²

And in yet another place, Bakhtin writes that a novel "without an authorial position" is "in general impossible," that Dostoevsky's novel reveals "not an absence of, but a *radical change in, the author's position*." He goes on to say, as though he can hear his North American critics:

It would be absurd to think that the author's consciousness is nowhere expressed in Dostoevsky's novels. The consciousness of the creator of a polyphonic novel is constantly and everywhere present in the novel, and is active in it to the highest degree. But the function of this consciousness and the forms of its activity are different than in the monologic novel: the author's consciousness does not transform others' consciousnesses (that is, the consciousnesses of the characters) into objects, and does not give them secondhand and finalizing definitions. Alongside and in front of itself it senses others' equally valid consciousnesses, just as infinite and open-ended as itself. It reflects and re-creates not a world of objects, but precisely these other consciousnesses with their worlds, recreates them in their authentic *unfinalizability* (which is, after all, their essence).¹³

Bakhtin writes elsewhere that "a work's author is present only in the whole of the work, not in one separate aspect of this whole, and least of all in content that is severed from the whole."¹⁴ This concept of polyphony and the polyphonic novel has been distorted to the extent that Bakhtin is charged with relativism, and also with positing death or at least the absence of meaning, insignificance of meaning, a charge which would lead him into deconstructionist theory. Edward J. Brown, however, does understand Bakhtin's position:

Bakhtin's book was a fantastic breakthrough. It rescued Dostoevsky from dogmatists both religious and atheistic, and . . . "restored his word as an object of art criticism." That book also tended to free all writers from bondage to the blind forces of social conditioning; it announced the polyphonic novel, one which features and values the voice of the "other" - "thou dost exist," as Ivanov said of Dostoevsky's attitude toward another soul, of whatever class. And what is most important, the reader might view the novel of many voices as a symphony of ideas, without attaching the author to any particular ideological note.¹⁵

According to Bakhtin it is only readers caught in the usual monologic vision of the novel who are unable to appreciate or understand Dostoevsky's ability to visualize and portray "in an objective and artistic way . . . personality as another, as someone else's personality," to create an "artistic image of someone else's personality." Bakhtin writes that Dostoevsky was neither a philosopher nor a publicist, he was an artist who utilized all the voices, all the ideological positions of his world to create a new form, "a new artistic model of the world": a model which Booth suggests is a peculiarly East European phenomenon (an implication that it is a Marxist or socialist conception). Yet, according to Bakhtin, the realization of the polyphonic novel is only possible under the conditions of capitalism which "set in almost catastrophically" in Russia "where it came upon an untouched multitude of diverse worlds and social groups which had not been weakened in their individual isolation, as in the West, by the gradual encroachment of capitalism." Dostoevsky was in a unique position to understand the contradictory and multi-leveled concrete nature of his epoch - a position which determined his creative work - and to participate in the objective social world "*subjectively*." ¹⁶ Dostoevsky

changed camps, moved from one to another, and in this respect the planes existing in objective social life were for him stages along the path of his own life, stages of his own spiritual evolution. This personal experience was profound, but Dostoevsky did not give it a

direct monologic expression in his work. This experience only helped him to understand more deeply the extensive and well-developed contradictions which coexisted among people - among people, not among ideas in a single consciousness.¹⁷

In the polyphonic world of Dostoevsky's novels, the characters come together in a dialogic relationship expressing his or her own unique and independent point of view. They come together and form the unity of the work as voices which remain independent "in a unity of higher order than in homophony." Another way to understand the polyphonic novel is (at the risk of narrowing a most profound and valuable concept) to use Bakhtin's concept of *great time* and *small time* as an analogy: the ideological voices, the specific points of view interact in *small time* and create "the unity of higher order" in *great time*. The traditional and monologic study of the novel is conducted in *small time* so that Dostoevsky is viewed as a psychologist, a sociologist, an ethico-religious idealist and so forth. To quote Bakhtin: "Critics are apt to forget that Dostoevsky is first and foremost an artist . . . and not a philosopher or a publicist." The misconception about Bakhtin's understanding of the author's position as merely another point of view equal to that of the characters comes from a reading in *small time*. One could say that for Bakhtin, the author, as artist, creates in *great time*, and artistically structures the novel in an objective presentation. He writes that literary scholarship traditionally looks for the author "in *content* excised from the whole. This makes it easy to identify him with that author who is a person of a particular time, with a particular biography and a particular world view." From this point of view "the image of the author almost merges with the image of a real person." But this is incorrect: "The true author," Bakhtin writes, "cannot become an image, for he is the creator of every image, of everything imagistic in the work."¹⁸

It is important to keep in mind that Bakhtin is always talking about a living whole, not a Lukacsian closed totality, but a whole consisting of relatively autonomous parts which come together in an unfinalizable unity. The whole is not like the whole body of Renaissance Classicism, smooth, rounded-out and closed, but rather as in the whole of the grotesque body, "ever unfinished, ever creating." Essentially, the misinterpretation, the misunderstanding and the distortion of Bakhtin's view of Dostoevsky's polyphonic novels can be attributed to a failure to fully understand Bakhtin's philosophy of the whole and of the relatively autonomous nature of the speaking subjects. This misunderstanding leads to charges of relativism, which leads in turn to deconstruction's interpretations of absence, or negation of meaning. It leads to interpretation of separateness as opposition, as irreconcilable difference which is then distorted to become divided by a "gap," to concepts of isolation. It leads to misinterpretation as "feigned authorship," ventriloquism and the concept of "absent author" which I discussed above. It leads to Bakhtin's understanding of the unfinalizable nature of experience and his discussion of the "loophole," to its misinterpretation and distortion as "erasure," to meaninglessness. The understanding of dialogue in its concrete nature is turned into a metaphor. Furthermore, dialogue becomes interchangeable or synonymous with another abstraction: Bakhtin's understanding of the self and other is turned into the abstract concept of "otherness," of "alterity." And worse still, this abstraction of the originally concrete understanding of the nature of relationships is connected to Derrida's *différance* "a version of absolute absence." These various deconstructionist positions are taken up by Holquist, Emerson and Morson, three of the most important Bakhtin critics. All of these are distortions of Bakhtin's thought and derive

from a profound misunderstanding of his philosophy of the *I and thou* as the nature, the essence of the self, of dialogue, of concrete human existence.¹⁹

Although I have discussed Bakhtin's understanding of relationships, the self and the other, the *I and thou*, elsewhere, it seems important to further clarify his position and discuss its origins here in relation to the polyphonic novel, the meeting place, the public square, the threshold, of all his thought. It is Bakhtin's view that our consciousness develops out of *other*, that is to say, out of the social realm. And contrary to Booth's understanding of a merely polyglot consciousness, that an *I* is actually for Bakhtin a *we*, a reflection of the social in the individual, (the crude sociological Marxist concept of direct correlation of the social to the psyche asserted by Booth), Bakhtin makes clear that we bring our particular, individual point of view to bear, and what emerges is our individual perspective, an autonomous, or I should say, a relatively autonomous *I* :

The psyche does possess a special unity distinguishable from the unity of ideological systems, and to ignore that unity is inadmissible My thought . . . from the very start belongs to an ideological system and is governed by its set of laws. But, at the same time, it belongs to another system that is just as much a unity and just as much in possession of its own set of laws - the system of my psyche. The unity of this second system is determined not only by the unity of my biological organism but also by the whole aggregate of conditions of life and society in which that organism has been set.²⁰

This position is one with which Western psychoanalysts and psychologists would not disagree. The possible exceptions are those modern "psychoanalytic" Object Relations theorists who dispense with the concept of the unconscious and earlier Behaviourist theorists of whom Bakhtin is critical.²¹ Bakhtin understands the self to be a dynamic and

always differentiating unity of both *I and thou*, a position quite different from Booth's sociological conception of "Bakhtin's individual" as a "*we*." In Freud's terms, the development of the *ego*, in its struggle with the *id* and *superego*, is correlative with Bakhtin's understanding of *I and thou*. The individual both defines himself in terms of the other, a *thou*, and struggles to separate himself from the other, a *thou*. The individual and the other, are of the same essence. The other and the *thou* are meta-sociological concepts as well as sociological ones.

The importance of the *I and thou* cannot be overestimated in understanding Bakhtin's thought. It respects not only the autonomy of the other, but more importantly, it asserts a relationship, a common essence. Because the English language rarely makes use of *thou*, the second person pronoun singular, the *familiar* other, the pronoun *thou* is either misunderstood and translated as the distanced *you*, the second person plural form, the unfamiliar, the generalized, the alien other (or if not actually mistranslated the essential meaning is not comprehended); or, because it takes its English form primarily within a religious context, I speculate that it is taken at face value (recognition rather than understanding),²² and is used to validate attributions of Christian religiosity to Bakhtin (which may or may not be true but in any case is of little relevance). Michael Holquist, for example, claims that Bakhtin's religious views and activities, which are argued by both I.R. Titunik and Keith Tribe to be unsupported by evidence, were grounds not only for a purported need to code and camouflage his true intentions, "his idiosyncratic religious ideas" secreted in his writings, but as well, for his banishment by the Soviet authorities.²³

Ironically, it is more than likely that Bakhtin's early work, "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity,"²⁴ argued by Holquist to contain the working out of Bakhtin's essential and peculiar position - and in fact his total work - is not an expression of Bakhtin's "idiosyncratic religious ideas," but rather is grounded in Marx's basic thought, a position most clearly expressed in Marx's early philosophical writings, the "Critique of Hegel's Doctrine of the State," "On the Jewish Question," "The German Ideology," "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts," and "Theses on Feuerbach."²⁵

Bakhtin's understanding of *I and thou* in all probability comes from the basic thought of Marx, from his "notion of 'species-being'" first developed by Ludwig Feuerbach, who argued that "man is not only 'conscious of himself as an individual . . . but also aware of himself as a member of a species, i.e. a species-being. 'Man is in fact at once I and Thou; he can put himself in the place of another, for this reason, that to him his species, his essential nature, and not merely his individuality, is an object of thought'."²⁶

It is clear that Bakhtin's early discourse on the relation of self to another is a reflection of Marx's discussion on man's relation to the objective realm in the "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts."²⁷ For example, Marx writes that "the relationship to man himself becomes *objective* and *real* for him only through his relationship to other men."²⁸ And,

Man is the immediate object of natural science; for immediate *sensuous nature* for man is, immediately, human sense perception (an identical expression) in the form of the *other* man who is present in his sensuous immediacy for him. His own sense perception only

exists as human sense perception for himself through the *other* man.²⁹

Bakhtin, in a similar vein, writes that at every moment in life, "we appraise ourselves from the point of view of others . . . ; in a word, constantly and intensely, we oversee and apprehend the reflections of our life in the plane of consciousness of other men."³⁰ And in another place, Bakhtin writes:

I cannot perceive myself in my external aspect, feel that it encompasses me and it gives me expression. . . . In this sense, one can speak of the absolute aesthetic need of man for the other, for the other's activity of seeing, holding, putting together and unifying, which alone can bring into being the externally finished personality; if someone else does not do it, this personality will have no existence.³¹

In 1961, Bakhtin is still engaged in the same train of thought and writes

I am conscious of myself and become myself only while revealing myself for another, through another, and with the help of another. The most important acts constituting self-consciousness are determined by a relationship toward another consciousness (toward a *thou*). . . . [Dostoevsky] asserts the impossibility of solitude, the illusory nature of solitude. The very being of man (both external and internal) is the *deepest communion*. *To be* means *to communicate*. . . . To be means to be for another, and through the other, for oneself. A person has no internal sovereign territory, he is wholly and always on the boundary; looking inside himself, he looks *into the eyes of another* or *with the eyes of another*.³²

For Bakhtin, the other is always a known other. However, rather than George H. Mead's and C. Wright Mills socio-behaviourist concept of a "generalized other," one, a particular person, on whom the individual models himself (which Holquist argues Bakhtin

anticipates), Bakhtin understands the other as a *meta*-sociological concept, as not necessarily a real-life person, but rather a representative of a particular point of view, or social group. One would look "inside himself . . . look *into the eyes of another* or with *the eyes of another* ," for example, as, or with, the eyes of a member of the *academe* , as, or as a representative of, the idea of sexuality, and so forth. One defines oneself or takes a measure of oneself through the eyes of a representative of some social truth. For Bakhtin, the speaker always has a particular other in mind and creates his expression, his speech, taking into account the possible response of the other. In his view, even though the other may not be physically present to the speaker, he is always particular: "in the absence of a real addressee, an addressee is presupposed in the person, so to speak, of a normal representative of the social group to which the speaker belongs. The *word is oriented toward an addressee*, toward *who* that addressee might be." For example, Bakhtin explains that one would express one's hunger in a different tone and manner which would be dependent upon one's position, one's class and one's audience, that is to say, to one's servant, as a member of an equally hungry group, and so forth.³³

For both Bakhtin and Marx, the "*individual is the social being*," that is, one's individual life and one's social life, in Marx's terms "*species-life*," are not separate. However, they are distinct in that one is a *particular* individual with a *particular* life history, or as Marx would say, "a real *individual* communal being." Bakhtin, quoting Marx, writes, "After all, 'the essence of man is not an abstraction inherent in each separate individual. In its reality it is the aggregate of social relationships'." Marx's position here is clearly derived from Rousseau, Kant and Hegel by whom he was influenced.³⁴

The misunderstanding of the integral essence of self and other, of *I and thou*, of the individual and the social, gives rise to the criticism of Bakhtin as, not only a relativist, but as well for characterizing Dostoevsky as one also. But this is wrong, for in describing Dostoevsky's novels as polyphonic, Bakhtin has deliberately chosen a definition which is appropriate for poetic aesthetics, an artistic, creative counterpart to Marx's understanding of the nature of the individual's integral relation with the other, the social, the *I and thou*. The musical term, polyphony, describes and defines the simultaneous combination of a number of parts, each forming an individual melody and harmonizing with the others. Bakhtin's characterization of Dostoevsky's novels is not a meaningless event of isolated voices, each unheard by the other. But rather, a number of motifs, so to speak, are composed and arranged for several voices which are combined and orchestrated by the author. Each character is aware of the equally valid consciousnesses of the other: they "are not self-enclosed and deaf to one another; they intersect and are interwoven in a multitude of ways."³⁵ The characters speak with a "sideways glance," each conscious of, aware of, possible agreement or disagreement, aware of the other's possible position. Bakhtin writes that:

Whenever someone else's "truth" is presented in a given novel, it is introduced without fail into the *dialogic field of vision* of all the other major heroes of the novel. Ivan Karamazov, for example, knows and understands Zosima's truth, as well as Dmitry's truth, and Alyosha's truth, and the "truth" of that old sensualist, his father Fyodor Pavlovich. Dmitry understands all these truths as well; Alyosha, too, understands them perfectly. In *The Possessed*, there is not a single idea that fails to find a dialogic response in Stavrogin's consciousness.³⁶

Although these truths differ from one another in, so to speak, *small time*, their "truth value" is understood by the individual characters, that is they have meaning. These truths meet and receive their timeless validity in the "great dialogue" of the novel, in *great time*. Bakhtin writes that "the polyphonic approach has nothing in common with relativism (or with dogmatism)." He goes on to say that "both relativism and dogmatism equally exclude all argumentation, all authentic dialogue, by making it either unnecessary (relativism) or impossible (dogmatism)."³⁷

In another context Bakhtin writes that "meaning in essence means nothing; it only possesses potentiality. . . . Meaning does not reside in the word or in the soul of the speaker or in the soul of the listener. Meaning is the *effect of interaction between speaker and listener produced via the material of a particular sound complex*." Because the meaning is subject to change with every changing context, this would appear perhaps to be a relativist position. However, it is Bakhtin's view that language is a generative and a regenerative process, a new meaning "emanates from an old one, and does so with its help." He writes elsewhere that "the life of the word is contained in its transfer from one mouth to another, from one context to another context, from one social collective to another, from one generation to another generation. In this process the word does not forget its own path and cannot completely free itself from the power of these concrete contexts into which it has entered."³⁸

In his essay, "Response to a Question from *Novy Mir*" (1970), Bakhtin explains that to seek the significance of the work as merely a reflection of the epoch, a relativist position, is to deny it life. He writes that:

if the significance of any work is reduced, for example, to its role in the struggle against serfdom . . . this work will lose all of its significance when serfdom and its remnants no longer exist in life. It is frequently the case, however, that a work gains in significance, that is, it enters *great time*. But the work cannot live in future centuries without having somehow absorbed past centuries as well. If it has belonged *entirely* to today (that is, if it were a product only of its own time) and not a continuation of the past or essentially related to the past, it could not live in the future. Everything that belongs only to the present dies along with the present.³⁹

Elsewhere he writes:

The mutual understanding of centuries and millenia, of peoples, nations, and cultures, provides a complex unity of all humanity, all human cultures (a complex unity of human culture), and a complex unity of human literature. All this is revealed only on the level of great time. Each image must be understood and evaluated on the level of great time. Analysis usually fusses about in the narrow space of small time, that is, in the space of the present day and the recent past and the imaginable - desired or frightening - future.⁴⁰

Another way to look at Bakhtin's understanding of the continuity of meaning in its particularized struggle and change which it undergoes in instants, moments or epochs, is to relate it to two linked comprehensions of time. Bakhtin's understands the chronotope in Dostoevsky as a moment, so to speak, of unfinalizable transition, the immediacy of the present. He understands Goethe's conception of time as evolutionary, evidenced by his description of the epochal event, referred to elsewhere, in the work of the "excellent Bürgermeister" in his orderly planting of trees, a continuing, living monument there for all to observe forty years later in its evolutionary historical continuity. By linking these two concepts it is possible to explain Bakhtin's understanding as a combination of the two

unfinalizable moments of time or epochs, which are linked to other unfinalizable moments or other epochs in a continuing chain in history.⁴¹

Bakhtin's account of the gay or joyful relativity of the carnival is not only a relativity of freedom within the context of the carnival, it does not degenerate into meaninglessness. It is the sensuous (as opposed to abstract) enactment of the problem of equality of freedom, the relativity of autonomy. Carnival is integrally connected to a larger whole, and within this larger whole to the official sphere whose prevailing truths and authority are realized in a new way. The carnival is a concrete reminder, a re-calling to awareness, to consciousness, of the immortality of the people, a realization of the relativity of established authority and truth, of its *small time* nature.

The most significant problem which arises in the understanding of Bakhtin's conception of the separate nature of interrelated parts, and their relative autonomy, the problem of *I and thou*, is the problem of opposition. Although Bakhtin refers to opposition, to opposing poles, it is never in terms of negation, destruction, of gaps, voids, isolation, irreducible dualities, or even to use Michael Holquist's structuralist rhetoric, "simultaneous difference." Rather, Bakhtin follows the position which Marx takes in his "Critique of Hegel's Doctrine of the State" in arguing against Hegel's "fundamental dualism":

both the North and South Poles are *poles*; they are identical in *essence*. Similarly, both the *male* and *female* sex belong to one *species* and have one *essence*, the essence of man. North and South are opposite determinations of a *single* essence; the distinct sides of one *essence* at the *highest point of its development*. They are the essence in a state of *differentiation*. They are *only* as a *distinct*

determination, and moreover as *this* distinct determination of an essence. The true, real extremes would be a pole as opposed to a non-pole, a human as opposed to a *non-human* sex.⁴²

For Bakhtin opposing poles are of one essence, they are "linked," "conjoined," "juxtaposed," "interrelated," they simultaneously co-exist. His words are translated into structuralist terms as binary opposition and bifurcation, the former characterized by, or compounded of two; the latter a forking, a dividing into branches: they remain parts of a whole. Although Bakhtin writes of the centripetal and the centrifugal forces at work in language and culture as "a contradiction-ridden, tension-filled unity of two embattled tendencies in the life of language," they are not described as "opposition" in the sense that one will negate the other as in dogmatism, or that they have no meeting-place, thus cancelling each other as in relativism; nor do they merge in a Hegelian dialectic. Rather, they are "embattled" but conjoined in unity, they simultaneously *co-exist*: "Alongside the centripetal forces, the centrifugal forces of language carry on their uninterrupted work; alongside verbal-ideological centralization and unification, the uninterrupted processes of decentralization and disunification go forward."⁴³

Although the carnival is *opposed* to "the official and serious tone of medieval, ecclesiastical and feudal culture," is "*hostile* to all that was immortalized and completed," it is *part of the world* of medieval man. The carnival is one world of a "*two-world condition*," half of the "*double aspect* of the world and of human life [which] existed even at the earliest stages of cultural development." Bakhtin writes that "carnival is the people's second life." Because of the indestructibility of its festive nature it was "tolerated and even legalized outside of the official sphere," and also "linked externally to the feasts of the

Church," and as well, genetically linked with "ancient pagan festivities, agrarian in nature": "its essence, its deep roots in the primordial order and the primordial thinking of man."⁴⁴

It is important to keep in mind that carnival was not a superficial opposition to the ruling orders, but rather a "continual[ly] shifting" ambivalent counter-position to the socio-hierarchical relations and forms in which the people participated in their everyday life. This second life, this "second world of folk culture is," according to Bakhtin, "to a certain extent a parody of the extracarnival life, a 'world inside out'." Although the carnival, in Bakhtin's view, is opposed to the falseness and stereotypical nature of official culture and official forms, the people who participate in carnival are also integrally connected to this world. The understanding of the wholeness, the integral connection, the single essence of this two-world condition emphasized by Bakhtin is revealed in the grotesque artistic creations of Medieval man. "The essence of the grotesque," writes Bakhtin, "is precisely to present a contradictory and double-faced fullness of life."⁴⁵

I do not wish to diminish the subversive nature of the carnival, and most importantly, I do not wish to relate it to deconstruction's meaningless subversion of texts, of turning them upside down in a trivial positing, negating and re-establishment of the original text in, so to speak, *small time*.⁴⁶ Carnival reveals what is always there, recalls the lost and repressed memories. It is a "working out, in a concretely sensuous, half-real, half-play-acted form, a *new mode of interrelationship between individuals*, counterposed to the all-powerful, socio-hierarchical relationships of noncarnival life." It brings the authorities and "official truth" close enough to handle, to touch, it turns them upside down and reveals their hidden human sides through mocking laughter. "All that is false and

stereotyped," all that is one-sided, official "dogmatic and hostile to evolution and change," is laughed away to reveal the "double-faced fullness of life." The carnival is a celebration of the triumph over the ambivalence of the human condition, of the relative autonomy of the *I*, the speaking subject, an ambivalence so well expressed by Sigmund Freud in *Civilization and its Discontents*. In Freudian terms it is a repudiation of the super-ego through the power of laughter, through humour which, according to Freud, "has something liberating about it . . . has something of a grandeur and elevation." The grandeur, Freud goes on to say, "clearly lies in the triumph of narcissism, the victorious assertion of the ego's invulnerability. The ego refuses to be distressed by the provocations of reality, to let itself be compelled to suffer." The carnival revives and renews, puts all in perspective of the indestructible humanity of the people, the dynamic nature of the history of the people, the dynamic nature of life, and exposes the relativity of the static, stultifying laws and all authority. Its laughter is subversive. Yet laughter, writes Bakhtin, "only unites; it cannot divide. . . . Laughter lifts the barrier and clears the path." Carnival is revolutionary in the sense that it brings about an essential, a fundamental reorientation and reorganization of the prevailing world view in the mind of man.⁴⁷

Carnival accomplishes its task in a life affirmative way, that is to say, through the power of laughter which revives and renews. This laughter is not merely directed at the official, the authoritarian, but rather, the laughter is ambivalent, "it is also directed at those who laugh." The world is reclaimed in its unfinalizable wholeness:

The people do not exclude themselves from the wholeness of the world. They, too, are incomplete, they also die and are revived and renewed. This is one of the essential differences of the people's festive laughter from the pure satire of modern times. The satirist

whose laughter is negative places himself above the object of his mockery, he is opposed to it. The wholeness of the world's comic aspect is destroyed, and that which appears comic becomes a private reaction. The people's ambivalent laughter, on the other hand, expresses the point of view of the whole world; he who is laughing also belongs to it.⁴⁸

The understanding of common essence, of connection and relationship is further developed by Bakhtin in his discussion of Rabelais' fundamental goal which he says was "to destroy the official picture of events" and which he accomplished by interpreting them "from the point of view of the laughing chorus of the marketplace." "All the acts of the drama of world history," writes Bakhtin, "were performed before a chorus of the laughing people. Without hearing this chorus we cannot understand the drama as a whole."⁴⁹

The carnivalesque nature attributed to Dostoevsky's work by Bakhtin has been called into question by Wellek (as I noted earlier), who profoundly misunderstands both Bakhtin's meaning and, as well, the nature of the carnival. For Wellek, carnival appears to be an evil and immoral force, and Bakhtin is accused of defaming Dostoevsky's serious, ethical and spiritual character. Such a narrow, moral reading on Wellek's part scarcely warrants response. However, in order to clarify the problem of carnival, and to redeem both Dostoevsky's and Bakhtin's characters, it is perhaps necessary to attempt to explain Bakhtin's use of carnival as an artistically embodied element in Dostoevsky's work.

The carnivalesque in Dostoevsky's works has nothing to do with notions of morality or evil, but rather is a particular mode of literary creation, "an extraordinarily flexible form of artistic visualization" which makes it possible "to penetrate into the deepest layers of man and human relationships." Dostoevsky and his works belong to a literary

tradition which reaches back to the Socratic dialogues and Menippean satire and includes in its history such writers as Boccaccio, Rabelais, Dickens, George Sand, Poe, Gogol and Pushkin, to name a few. Bakhtin writes that "over the long course of centuries carnival, its forms and symbols, and above all a carnival sense of the world, seeped into many literary genres, merged with their features, shaped them, became somehow inseparable from them. Carnival was, as it were, *reincarnated in literature*."⁵⁰

Rather than an abomination of a lewd and lascivious nature one finds, in the carnivalization of Dostoevsky's novels, an open structure in the immediate and unfinalizable present in which - as Caryl Emerson points out - the characters create themselves, and furthermore, create themselves before our very eyes and ears, and interact in an intellectual and spiritual way with other characters, the author and reader in the "great dialogue" of the novel. One finds the ambivalence of the carnival, the opposing poles coming together and looking at one another, "reflected in one another, know[ing] and understand[ing] one another" in the wise fools (Prince Myshkin, for example), in the doubles, in the pairing, in the ironic glorification and self-glorification (the praise-abuse of the carnival) and in the laughter, reduced though it is, its decisive expression "to be found in the ultimate position of the author." Bakhtin writes that "in Dostoevsky's world all people and all things must know one another and know about one another, must enter into contact, come together face to face and *begin to talk* with one another. Everything must be reflected in everything else, all things must illuminate one another dialogically."⁵¹

This understanding of poles as "opposite determinations of a single essence," of "distinct sides of one essence," of the interanimation and struggle which takes place within

this one essence is not understood fully by Bakhtin's North American experts, critics and disseminators, Caryl Emerson, Michael Holquist and Gary Saul Morson. Ken Hirschkop points out that these critics are tied to the "conventional liberal opposition of individual and society," a "self/society opposition," a charge which Morson denies as a position different, a "phantom position" from the one they hold. However, I too am haunted by the spectre of isolation, of separation and abstraction which emanates from the interpretation of Bakhtin's thought in the work of Emerson, Morson and particularly in the work of Holquist.⁵²

The notion of opposition which leads to ideas of a gap, or void, and from there to isolation and even absence is (perhaps unwittingly) perpetrated by his translators and explicators, Holquist and Emerson who, if they are not solely responsible for it, have played an enormous role in the dissemination of Bakhtin's work in the English-language world: Holquist, the acknowledged "American Baxtin [sic] expert," sets up the idea of simple opposition, first of all, because his intention is to view Bakhtin engaged in polemic with Soviet authority and utilizing Aesopian language to do so, which leads Holquist to the interpretation of Bakhtin's thought and work as "feigned authorship" and ventriloquism, a subject to which I shall return.⁵³

Secondly, Holquist grounds Bakhtin's position in Kantian and Neo-Kantian theory, specifically in the individualist aspects, in Kant's subjective ego and determinate mind/world dualities which Kant seeks to overcome through his ethical imperatives in order to create a harmonious whole. According to Holquist, Bakhtin assumes, like Kant, "a split between mind and world," and writes of Kant's and the neo-Kantian Hermann Cohen's struggles "to overcome the gap between reason and belief, metaphysics and theology."

Holquist argues that the three thinkers, Kant, Cohen and Bakhtin "were obsessed with the need to overcome the split between faith and knowledge." In Holquist's view Bakhtin seeks to close the space, the gap, between God and men, by concentrating on "the forces enabling connections in society, and in language, between men." Bakhtin, he says, establishes "the cut-off between the mind and world" and seeks a "way to mediate between the two."⁵⁴

Holquist perceives Bakhtin's understanding of "co-being," the integral relation between self and other, as that of an individual who embarks (and who has the responsibility to do so, who "must") on a project of self-creation by stepping out, so to speak, into an alien world, albeit a "friendly" one, in order to create himself. He interprets Bakhtin's understanding of life as a performance, as "selves as performers," of human existence as "the building of a self," an activity "generated by the constant slippage between self and other." Bakhtin's "self," in Holquist's view, is "a project." This is a misinterpretation of Bakhtin's word "*zadanie*" which, ironically, Holquist correctly translates as a "turn on the basic distinction between 'given' (*dan*) and 'conceived' (*zadan*)," but which he distorts to become a subjective stance: it "helps to define the nature of consciousness as the necessity to create, to author, to posit (*zadat*) a self." The misinterpretation comes about because of a misunderstanding of Bakhtin's word '*otvetstvennost*' which is translated in an essay title either as "Answerability" or "Responsibility" and which Ann Shukman translates and defines to mean the "capacity to respond, responsiveness." In his short essay, "Art and Answerability" (1919), Bakhtin argues against the *idea* of *l'art pour l'art*, the *idea* of a separation of life from art and science, and its converse, a separation of art and science from life. In his view their unity

is found "in the individual, who brings them into his own unity." Rather than a sense of duty, or a project of self-creation, Bakhtin argues for *recognition* of the unity. It is in the sense of "capacity to respond, responsiveness," that Bakhtin uses the word "*otvetstvennost*": the developing consciousness is responsive, it is both given, that is, creating out of other (the social), and conceived, creating out of inner (the psyche), simultaneously and inevitably. For Bakhtin, it is not what we ought to do, or do of necessity, but rather, it is *what we do*.⁵⁵

I am not suggesting that Bakhtin was not influenced by Kant. Rather, I am suggesting that Holquist is wrong to attribute to Bakhtin a dependence on Kant's individualistic imperatives grounded in ethics. Moreover, Holquist is incorrect in his view of Bakhtin's connection with the religiosity of Cohen. The *I and thou* concept does not presuppose religiosity;⁵⁶ as Todorov points out, it is "wholly traditional" in classical philosophy since 1785 and is a social concept. I speculate that for Bakhtin it is the antithesis of religious thought and, as I stated elsewhere, is grounded in Feuerbach's anthropology, in his critique of Christianity which, if Bakhtin did not discover directly, he found in Marx.

It is more than likely that Bakhtin's interest in Cohen was due, first of all, to Cohen's attempt to overcome the seeming Kantian dichotomy between thought and being,⁵⁷ and secondly, his idea of history and continuity, and most importantly, to his understanding of the complexity of the nature of man, of the "two principal aspects of man, namely as an individual and as a member of society," aspects which are seen by Cohen to interpenetrate one another. This problematic concept of man was posed by Kant, the first

philosopher (with the exception of Spinoza) to focus on other, as opposed to individual. Kant attempted to unite the individualist concepts of Leibniz's monads and Descartes' "I think" with the pantheism of Spinoza. Kant was thus the first to pose the problem of the individual and the other *in relation*. Although he enunciated the problem of the "asocial sociability of man," the freedom or autonomy of the individual of Leibniz and Descartes on the one hand, and the "human community, the universe, the totality" of Spinoza on the other, he was unable to maintain the middle ground between positivism and idealism and resorted to an ethical, idealist position of the necessity of the individual, of "the endeavours of man" to fulfil the hidden plan of nature, to create a harmonious community, a whole which, analagous to *I and thou*, would be *I* merging into *we*. It is this subjectivist idealist position which Holquist wrongly attributes to Bakhtin.⁵⁸

-However, I speculate that what is Kantian in Bakhtin's thought is the idea of "the unity of apperception as a fundamental condition of human experience," and following Hegel and Marx, the conception of the whole in part, the freedom or autonomy of the individual and his "asocial sociability." Bakhtin rejects the idealist solution of Kant, the transcendent solution of Cohen, the tragic idealism of Hegel and, inspired perhaps by Marx, seeks to formulate an aesthetics grounded in the concrete real-life, everyday experience, one which acknowledges the struggle, the ambivalence of everyday experience, one which recognizes the common essence of the self and other, *I and thou*, not as separate entities, as opposing and isolated dualities, but rather simultaneously co-existing and positing the inevitable ambivalence of the human.⁵⁹

Holquist incorrectly argues that Bakhtin's concepts "behavioural ideology" and "social ideology" are oppositional, and are words "carefully camouflaged in Marxist terminology" for the "master opposition" of individual and the other.⁶⁰ For Bakhtin, there is no opposition between the individual and the social, the psyche exists on the boundary between the self and other, the inner and outer. He writes that:

behavioural ideology is in certain respects more sensitive, more responsive, more excitable and livelier than an ideology that has undergone formulation and become "official." In the depths of behavioural ideology accumulate those contradictions which, once having reached a certain threshold, ultimately burst asunder the system of the official ideology. But, on the whole, we may say that behavioural ideology relates just as much to the socioeconomic basis and is subject to the same laws of development as ideological superstructures in the proper sense of the term.⁶¹

A breach between inner and outer speech, that is behavioural and official or social ideology, would lead to the asocial, the strictly physiological, to an animal cry. Or, on the other hand, inner speech, Bakhtin says, "might well engage in a struggle with . . . official ideology . . . depart into . . . the salutary political underground [which] is exactly how a *revolutionary ideology* in all spheres of culture comes about," that is to say, it would "ultimately burst asunder the system of the official ideology."⁶²

Bakhtin never thinks in terms of gaps or absences and is critical of the position of individual subjectivism, of those "tragedarians of culture," relics of Enlightenment-Romanticism - he names as an example, Georg Simmel - who mourn the irreconcilable difference between the psyche and ideology. Another, though Bakhtin does not name him in this instance (but, it is said, to whom he is always responding), is the early Georg

Lukács of *The Theory of the Novel*, who mourns the abyss, the "unbridgeable chasm between cognition and action, between soul and created structure, between self and world," who longs for a return to the totality of epic.⁶³ Bakhtin's response to this position is to argue that the reality of the psyche and the reality of ideology are "a refraction of the one and the same socio-economic existence." He writes:

In the verbal medium, in each utterance, however trivial it may be, [a] living dialectical synthesis is constantly taking place again and again between the psyche and ideology, between the inner and the outer. In each speech act, subjective experience perishes in the objective fact of the enunciated word-utterance, and the enunciated word is subjectified in the act of responsive understanding in order to generate, sooner or later, a counter statement. Each word, as we know, is a little arena for the clash and criss-crossing of differently oriented social accents. A word in the mouth of a particular individual person is a product of the living interaction of social forces.

Thus, the psyche and ideology dialectically interpenetrate in the unitary and objective process of social intercourse.⁶⁴

Even though Bakhtin writes of "living dialectical synthesis," of "living interaction of social forces," of the "psyche and ideology" dialectically *interpenetrating*, and so forth, Holquist and Emerson, his major translators and exponents, interpret his position as enunciating a gap. Holquist bases his conception of a gap between self and other, between psyche and ideology on what he defines as the "master opposition at the heart of" Bakhtin's early writings, that is to say, "the conflict between a set of values grounded in the self, and a set of values grounded in the other." He claims that Bakhtin explains the gap in these early writings as the self and other constituting "two different realities, which could never fuse on a single plane." In my view, his misinterpretation is again based on a profound lack of understanding of Bakhtin's fundamental principle of co-being, of the dialogue, of

the *I and thou*, of the self and other. As I said earlier and I repeat, Bakhtin's position is that dialogue is always creating and recreating itself anew; there is no gap but rather "the clash and criss-crossing of differently oriented social accents," a dialectical interpretation as the "subjective experience perishes in the objective fact of the enunciated word-utterance" which is itself subjectified in the "act of responsive understanding."⁶⁵

Caryl Emerson, too, misconstrues Bakhtin's thought and work so that it becomes a project which deals with the problem of alienation. She wrongly attributes to Bakhtin the notion of a "healthy individual *in life* [as] one who can surmount - not deny - the gap, who can break down the barriers between inner and outer." As well, she distorts Bakhtin's understanding of the psyche so that it becomes "a space to be filled with ideological signs," a position antithetical to Bakhtin and better suited to his own description of the Aristotelian creation of character by Plutarch in his *Lives*.⁶⁶

My intention is not to undertake a detailed critique and discussion of Emerson's essay which is concerned with the subject of language as the instrument of man's freedom, and has as an epigraph a statement from Michel Foucault, "Language is no longer linked to the knowing of things, but to men's freedom." But rather, I wish to point out, as an example, the subtle way in which Bakhtin's thought is distorted in order that it may be absorbed by current linguistic and literary criticism. Contemporary criticism, in its nihilistic philosophizing, talks in terms of absence, gaps, meaninglessness which becomes a way to freedom. And, as in this instance, the freedom, comes about by positing the word as having lost its power to mean, to name.⁶⁷ Bakhtin's position is antithetical to this point of view. He writes of language as whole, full and constantly enriching itself with meaning;

of the individual, even in his inner speech, interacting with the social. For Bakhtin, there is no void, no absence. Language is not a "prison-house" from which one escapes to some meaningless freedom, but rather it is a "treasure-house of images."⁶⁸

Emerson begins her essay with an excellent summary and discussion of the Bakhtin circle's position on the nature and relationship of the individual to the social and to the word. "Instead of opposition," she writes, the Bakhtin circle "spoke of interaction. . . . The members of the Bakhtin circle posited four *social* factors that make the understanding of speech and writing possible." In sum, these are, first of all, the individual and the social as integrally connected, an unbroken "'chain of ideological creativity and understanding"; second, signs "'arise only on *interindividual territory*"; third, "ideology always exists as a relation between (or among) speakers and listeners and, by extension, between or among social groups"; and fourth, "For Bakhtin, words cannot be conceived apart from voices who speak them." Following a discussion of Bakhtin's position in relation to those of L.S. Vygotsky, Sigmund Freud, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan and Paul de Man, Emerson concludes her essay with a misleading statement, a distortion and contradiction of Bakhtin's position, a position which she has outlined in the early portion of her essay.⁶⁹ She writes in a clear statement of the deconstructionist position, a position which is antithetical to Bakhtin's, that:

The eternal and inevitable inadequacy of all names permits new meanings to happen and new messages to be created. This permission - or intermission - is Bakhtin's novelistic gap, which not even the author can (nor should wish to) bridge. And it is the lack, the absence at the center, that keeps the outer word and our inner speech in permanent dialogue, out of that danger Bakhtin saw of a collapse into

single consciousness, which would be non-existence. Inside that gap, it is always worthwhile to try naming it again.⁷⁰

Bakhtin would disagree with Emerson because, in his view, new meanings are created not from the "eternal and inevitable inadequacy of all names," of words, but rather because new meanings emerge, are created and recreated, to use his phrase, "the ever-developing idea," in the dialogue, in "the clash and criss-crossing" of autonomous voices, each expressing a point of view and each accommodating in this utterance the position of the other speaking subjects. There is no gap, no "absence at the centre" but rather, *presence, context, ceaseless activity*. It is this everchanging social context which leaves the word open to possibility, to freedom to create and recreate new and richer meaning. It is, perhaps a minor point upon which to insist, but I believe that it is essential to address these misconstructions, these revisions, which take away from the essential elements, the essential premises of Bakhtin's thought and which ultimately profoundly distorts the meaning.

Another problem which arises from the misunderstanding of the autonomy of the speaking subjects and the polyphonic novel is the problem of authorship. I discussed above the charge of "absent authorship" or the concept of "exit author" posed by Wellek. A variation of the same problem arises in Holquist's misconception and misinterpretation of the authorship of one's own words, of Bakhtin's authorship, and of Dostoevsky's authorship of his polyphonic novels. Holquist raises Derrida's question, "Can one feign speaking a language?" and responds that Bakhtin can provide the answer, because, he asserts, it is Bakhtin's premise that feigning "is what authorship is all about." Not only do

a "cunning" Bakhtin and Dostoevsky too, "in the polyphonic mastery...in his novels," feign authorship, but as well, "feigning as authorship is at work in our own everyday lives, every time we speak." Elsewhere, Holquist asserts that in Bakhtin's view "*all* utterance is ventriloquism," that "*all* representation must be indirect"; that "dialogism argues that what in the English comic novel is often written off as mere irony, actually constitutes a paradigm for all utterance: I can appropriate meaning to my own purposes only by ventriloquizing others." Moreover, Holquist argues that Bakhtin ventriloquizes, speaks through Vološinov⁷¹ as through a hollow vessel, utilizing his name as a *persona* in order to bypass the Soviet censors: Bakhtin "manipulates the *persona* of Vološinov, using his Marxist voice, to ventriloquize a meaning not specific to Marxism."⁷²

This interpretation is a disturbing consequence of a profound and fundamental misunderstanding of Bakhtin's view of the relation of the self and other, of the dialogue, of polyphony, and as well of Bakhtin's discussion of artistic creation in the English comic novel. It is difficult to know where to begin in response to the acknowledged American expert on Bakhtin. First of all, the charge of ventriloquism with regard to Volosinov as author of two of the disputed texts can be regarded as part and parcel of Holquist's assertion that Bakhtin is engaged in a polemic with Soviet authority. The problem of authorship of these texts remains a mystery, a subject of much speculation, and as yet no evidence has emerged giving reasons for Bakhtin's disownership. However, it stretches credibility to accept that it was done out of a principle of self-negation.

Holquist brings into question Bakhtin's position on the authenticity of one's own speech, one's own truth, one's own point of view, the nature of the speaking subjects in

the utterance and in the dialogue, that is, the authenticity of authorship. In his opinion, Bakhtin maintains that we deceive ourselves and others by pretending that the truth we speak, that the point of view we author is our own; that in fact, there is no autonomous I, no autonomous speaking subject, that the I, the speaking subject is merely a passive creature who mouths the meanings of others; that the self is an empty vessel and has no truth which he or she can call his or her own. By implication, the other is all there is, the self has no self, no truth, no meaning.

Holquist uses as his evidence, not only the Bakhtin-Vološinov supposition, but as well, Dostoevsky's democratic polyphonic approach and Bakhtin's discussion of the English comic novel, which in Bakhtin's view is "a comic-parodic *reprocessing* of almost all the levels of literary language": the artist makes use of all the multiple, varied and socially stratified voices of the era as the integral form-generating style-creating content in order to reveal all that is false and stereotyped in the social realm. Holquist profoundly misunderstands Bakhtin's position that the artist takes for his own purposes these multitudinous styles and varied voices and makes them work for him in order to create a point, or points, of view. The artist's voice reverberates throughout the work, through these multiple voices and accents.⁷³

Dostoevsky, too, is equally and actively engaged in the creation of his polyphonic novels. The difference between the homophonic novel and the polyphonic novel is not that the author of a polyphonic novel feigns authorship. Rather, he is as fully and actively engaged as the author of a homophonic novel. Instead of controlling the thematic content towards a single truth, or point of view, and thus guiding the reader, he organizes and

orchestrates. The object of Dostoevsky's authorial intentions "is precisely the *passing of a theme through many and various voices*, its rigorous and, so to speak, irrevocable *multi-voicedness* and *vari-voicedness*. The very distribution of voices and their interaction is what matters to Dostoevsky." In the homophonic novel, on the other hand, the multiple voices are channelled into one single voice. Bakhtin points out in his discussion of Dostoevsky that the author does not merely assemble others' points of view, others' truths, that is to say, deny his own point of view, his own truth. Rather, he frequently interrupts: he questions, provokes, answers, agrees, objects, that is to say, he engages in a dialogic activity.⁷⁴

Bakhtin writes, as I have said elsewhere, that the individual can only be a social concept, that we develop out of *other* and define ourselves in relation to *other*, that we "live in a world of others' words." However, he is not saying that we do not develop our own voices, our own *I*, our own point of view. Although "a person's consciousness awakens wrapped in another's consciousness," later one begins "to be subsumed by neutral words and categories, that is, one is defined as a person irrespective of *I* and *other*."⁷⁵ He writes that a continuous, regenerative process takes place, a "gradual obliteration of authors as bearers of others' words" and the development of one's own words:

Others' words become anonymous and are assimilated (in re-worked form, of course); consciousness is *monologized*. Primary dialogic relations to others' words are also obliterated - they are, as it were, taken in, absorbed into assimilated others' words (passing through the stage of "one's own/others' words). Creative consciousness, when monologized, is supplemented by anonymous authors. This process of monologization is very important. Then this monologized consciousness enters as one single whole into a new dialogue (with the new external voices of others).⁷⁶

What Bakhtin explains here is not a feigning of authorship, but rather a dynamic process of the development of one's authorship, one's *authority*. We take in other's words which become anonymous as we reprocess them, that is to say, we integrate them by understanding them in relation to what we already conceive to be true, with what we have assimilated previously; a process which also takes into account our perspective formed by our particular biological, biographical and social conditions (earlier assimilations). This dynamic process results in the formation of a "monologic consciousness," a viewpoint, a truth, which enters, or, more properly speaking, re-enters into dialogue in a constant and continuously recurring process. In other words, the *I* is constantly redefining itself in relation to the *thou*, constantly, reassessing, rediscovering and reasserting its *I*.

The concept of feigned authorship can only be understood as a rejection of the *I*, a perverse resolution to the problem posed by Enlightenment-Romanticism thinkers who create the opposition of the individual to the social and the consequent void or gap. This position can be directly attributed to Derrida's deconstructionist stance that texts are authorless, that, to paraphrase Howard Felperin, in his critique of deconstruction, "sources and origins can never be fixed in the flux of discursive formations or the freeplay of infinite textuality": "the author himself is only an intersection of texts and discourses," a position, according to Felperin, which has its precedent in "structuralist approaches to such authorless constructs as language and myth, where a socially generative or productive power seems to operate above or beyond or through the individual author."⁷⁷

This misinterpretation and distortion of Bakhtin's thought into Derridean deconstruction leads Holquist into other misinterpretations in his continuing explication of Bakhtin's work. The problem continues to arise from a lack of understanding of the *I and thou*, the self and other, the autonomous relations-with-connection between speaking subjects, the concrete real-life experience of interaction, of relation between people, and as well, between literary texts, between people and literary texts, that is to say in the dialogue. Dialogue becomes for Holquist an abstract concept, a metaphor, which he defines as a "self/other opposition" interchangeable, synonymous with, an abstract concept, that is "otherness" or "alterity." In two muddling and mystifying essays (to which I have already made reference) which attempt to connect Bakhtin to Derrida (and, as well, but not convincingly attempt to assert the superiority of Bakhtin), Bakhtin's "dialogue" now transformed to "alterity" is related to Derrida's "*différance*," which Holquist defines as "a version of absolute absence."⁷⁸

There are essentially two problems here: one that Holquist correlates Bakhtin's concrete aesthetics with its antithesis, abstract thought, abstract concepts. If Bakhtin can be said to be against anything, it is the abstract, theorizing aspects of linguistic and literary theory. The fundamental purpose of his work is the formation of a concrete aesthetics, one grounded in the reality of everyday experience. The dialogue, the necessary relation between self and other, the two speaking subjects, in my view, can never be interpreted in abstract terminology as "otherness," "alterity." The two words Bakhtin uses to signify "other" are "*drugost*" (*drugosti*) and "*čužoj*." These terms are explained by Holquist and Emerson, his translators and editors, in terms of a familiar other. Emerson writes, of a specific instance, that the intonations of alienation and opposition of the "English pair

'I/other'" are specifically avoided by Bakhtin; that the "*another* Bakhtin has in mind is not hostile to *I* but a necessary component of it, a friendly other, a living factor in the attempts of the *I* toward self-definition." Holquist comments that "*drugost*" is a "condition of non-simultaneity friendly to man." They both explain that the word "*čuzoj*" is to be understood as the "opposite of '*svoj*' (one's own)" and "does not (as does 'alien' in English) imply any necessary estrangement or exoticism."⁷⁹ They go on to say:

In Bakhtin's system, we are all *čuzoj*, to one another by definition: each of us has his or her own (*svoj*) language, point of view, conceptual system that to all others is *čuzoj*. Being *čuzoj* makes dialogue possible.⁸⁰

Elsewhere, Holquist describes the relation between "the 'I' and 'the other' as Bakhtin's central obsession" and discusses it as the "irreducible duality conceived in terms of the need to share being," translating Bakhtin's term, "*sobytiye bytiya*" as "the primacy of shared being" which he explains as a pun "implying that such existence is both a coexisting (*sobytie*) and an event (*sobytie*)." The point I want to make here - and this is the second problem - is that the I and the other, are autonomous yet integrally connected and concrete, a connection which both Emerson and Holquist make, but do not actually understand. Emerson, by making a connection with Foucault's contextualism, recognizes its concrete nature, but not the inseparable relation, the *I and thou*. Holquist, on the other hand, gives lip service to its integral nature, but abstracts it, denudes it of its concrete nature in his essays, "The Carnival of Discourse: Baxtin [sic] and Simultaneity," and "The Surd Heard: Bakhtin and Derrida," and denies the *I and thou*, in its inseparable relation, the ability to mean.⁸¹

It seems to me that Holquist and Emerson are unable to reorient their perception from an individualistic conception of a separate *I* and a separate *thou*, of isolated entities, in order to conceive of *mankind*, of man in *great time*, of a whole, a world consisting of relatively autonomous individual men and women whose necessary existence is through, and only through, the connection with other men and women (and in the modern era, the market economy). Bakhtin's essential point in positing the integral relationship of the ancient complex - birth, fertility, copulation, growth to maturity and death - to the aesthetic socio-historical cultural realm is, as I said elsewhere, not a theoretical application of static concepts. This ancient complex, these linked activities are the deep currents of socio-historical forces which give life, not only to the literature, but as well, give life to life.

Individual men's and women's *necessary existence* is grounded in the essential ancient folkloric matrix. One's sexual, intellectual, emotional interaction, one's need for food and drink are needs in which the individual, in some sense, has no say. As Freud discovered, "the ego [the I] is not master in its own house." Emerson and Holquist need to make a like perceptual Copernican revolution. The individual imagines that he or she *chooses* to act in accordance with these "species-life" forces, forces essential for "species-life." However, if one chooses not to interact in these ways, one is considered outside life, insane, or one dies. *Civilization and its Discontents* is concerned with the absolute need for and absolute relation to the whole and with the unsatisfying relative autonomy of the individual. Kant recognizes the "asocial sociability" of man, but he transcends the problem by asserting an ethical position that *I* must merge into *we*. Bakhtin, too, takes the

Copernican leap into *great time*, but grounds it in the real-life concrete forces of folkloric time in his meta-sociological conception of the self as both *I and thou*, of the *thou* both as another speaking subject and as well, man in *great time*.⁸²

This brings me to the final problem in my discussion of the reception of Bakhtin's work, and one which is connected to the problem of the dialogue and meaning. This is Bakhtin's understanding of the unfinalizability of human experience, an understanding manifested in one instance in his study of Dostoevsky's novels in his concept of the "loophole word." To Morson the "loophole word" is synonymous with "erasure," which would mean that Bakhtin's "loophole word" is a nihilistic concept of negation, of meaninglessness. Morson compounds his error through his interpretation of Bakhtin's discussion of quasi-direct discourse as a lengthy "discussion of perpetually elusive utterances," an interpretation of the endless deferral of meaning.⁸³

Bakhtin's concept of the "word with a loophole" is another example of a complex description of a problem of language, and in a literary work, of a complex artistic creation or event which becomes absorbed into contemporary literary theory's nihilistic practice. To Morson, the "loophole word" is a word "under erasure," thus a word subject to obliteration, to annihilation, to meaninglessness. Morson's interpretation distorts and simplifies a complex expression of ambivalence, a double-voiced expression, reflected and revealed in the word, of an unresolved relation between the self (or the self's word) and the other (or the other's word), between the *I and thou*, the simultaneous expression in one word, in discourse, of, in Freudian terms, the *id*, *ego* and *super-ego*.⁸⁴

Bakhtin points out that Dostoevsky's characters, the Underground Man and Natasya Filippovna, for example, voice two positions simultaneously: the Underground Man expresses his lack of certainty of the point of view of his responding listener (his internalized other), yet, while retaining for himself the final word, invites him to take sides. Natasya Filippovna, to paraphrase Bakhtin, considers herself guilty, and simultaneously assumes that the other, the internalized responding listener must vindicate her, that is cannot consider her guilty. Bakhtin writes that "her entire inner life (and, as we shall see, her outward life as well) is reduced to a search for herself and for her own undivided voice beneath the two voices that have made their home in her." Bakhtin is in no way suggesting that one point of view will negate the other, or to use Morson's term, will erase the other. On the contrary, two "truths," two points of view, that of the self and that of the self's other are revealed in their ambivalent wholeness. The event and its meaning are enriched by the characters' unwillingness or inability to say the final word about themselves. Bakhtin writes that "A loophole is the retention for oneself of the possibility for altering the ultimate, final meaning of one's own words. . . . This potential other meaning, that is, the loophole left open, accompanies the word like a shadow." The word with a loophole is "the penultimate word," the last but one, an internally open-ended word open to the possibility of further meaning, to a future, unfinalizable by its very nature.⁸⁵

In interpreting Bakhtin's discussion of quasi-direct discourse as a discussion of "perpetually elusive utterances," Morson again distorts Bakhtin's thought and makes it simplistic, monologic and deconstructionist in its nihilism. Although Bakhtin writes of the word as the "eternally mobile, eternally fickle medium of dialogic interaction," he maintains that "the word does not forget its own path and cannot completely free itself from the

power of these concrete contexts into which it has entered." In other words, the meaning of the utterance is contained in the utterance within its context, and to a great extent the word always retains some of the meaning of past particular contexts. The meaning of the utterance is never elusive. But the point here is that Morson profoundly misinterprets Bakhtin's understanding of, his conception of quasi-direct discourse. Quasi-direct discourse is a complex artistic literary creation, a means by which the artist reflects and reveals in an artistic way in literary discourse, the real-life speech with all its expression, intonation, with all its nuances. Quasi-direct discourse, like the "word with a loophole," is double-faced. However it differs in that the other face of the loophole word is shadow-like. The loophole word reflects and reveals the inner life, the ambivalence of the character. Quasi-direct discourse, on the other hand reflects and reveals the relationship between the author and his character who engage in a democratic and dialogic relationship. They speak at the same time in a "single linguistic construction within which the accents of two differently oriented voices are maintained." Bakhtin asks the reader to imagine

two rejoinders of the most intense dialogue - a discourse and a counter-discourse - which, instead of following one after the other and being uttered by two different mouths, are superimposed one on to the other and merge into a *single* utterance issuing from a *single* mouth. These two rejoinders move in opposite directions and clash with one another; therefore their overlapping and merging into a single utterance results in a most intense mutual interruption. This collision of two rejoinders - each integral in itself and single-accented - is now transformed, in the new utterance resulting from their fusion, into the most acute interruption of voices, contradictory in every detail, in every atom of the utterance. The dialogic collision has gone within, into the subtlest structural elements of speech (and correspondingly, of consciousness).⁸⁶

As Bakhtin shows in this example of dialogic interaction between two voices, one voice does not cancel the other in order to create a single overriding vision; nor does it mean that because two points of view are expressed, and expressed simultaneously, that there is no truth, no meaning, that meaning is erased. Rather, it is a creative event in which another dimension of the character is revealed, a multi-dimensional image in which the character and the author create the character and his truth in the openness of the immediate present.

Part of the problem of the reception of Bakhtin's work in the English-speaking world arises from the translation which makes use of the special language and concepts of deconstruction which, according to Felperin, are, themselves, a "conceptual and terminological inheritance of structuralism." Moreover, Bakhtin's thought is interpreted within a deconstructionist framework, or ideology, as a deconstruction of texts. Or, on the other hand, it is accepted as a deconstruction by critics such as Wellek who treats Bakhtin's work as though it were a conventional deconstructionist position which rejects an authorial point of view, an authorial position. As well, he views Bakhtin's understanding of genre as a deconstructionist position, an attack on institutions.⁸⁷

Bakhtin's work, his concrete and affirmative position, is rather a radical reorientation and reorganization of perspective, a holistic philosophy for linguistic and literary theory. It is an exploration and investigation, a search for knowledge into the dynamics of the *construction*, of the creation of meaning (into what makes it mean) in everyday speech and, as well into the aesthetic process of the *construction* of texts and the dynamics of their ability to mean. His is a holistic philosophical study of the integral relation of the author, the text, the active responsive reader and the socio-historical-cultural

realm. The problem which arises from the utilization of structuralist and deconstructionist concepts and terminology is the ease with which the subject matter can be distorted and absorbed into the deconstructionist, abstract, conservative and nihilistic position. For example, Holquist in his essay "The Surd Heard" confirms the absorption of Bakhtin's thought into deconstruction which, he writes, "is the *nom de guerre* by which people recently come to know the unsettling phenomenon Bakhtin otherwise . . . addresses as double-voicedness, quasi-reported speech, polyphony, and heteroglossia." Holquist himself proceeds in a confusing and contradictory manner to absorb Bakhtin into Derridean deconstruction. Or, on the other hand, his intention is, perhaps, to state that Bakhtin's is a superior deconstruction.⁸⁸ In this essay, Holquist transforms Bakhtin's "other" into "otherness," and "alterity," into an abstract concept which he uses interchangeably with "dialogue" and then connects this transformed concept to Derrida's "*différance*," which is a metaphor for the precedence of writing as opposed to speech and which, according to Holquist, is Derrida's "playful demonstration of how the traditional privileging of voice, the all too easily assumed superiority of presence over absence in Western philosophy . . . has, from at least Plato to Husserl, blinded us to the freedom of writing." "*Différance*," writes Holquist, "is a version of absolute absence." In his view, Bakhtin's "utterance articulates itself in a conceptual space somewhere between the specter of an absolute absence that animates grammatology and the dream of an absolute presence that is the hallmark of ontotheology." For Holquist, "*différance*" as "neither a word nor a concept" is an ideal example of what Bakhtin calls a 'loophole word'." In other words, for Holquist, the loophole word, rather than being rich in meaning, becomes in its distorted, abstract and reified meaninglessness, a version of absolute absence. Finally, Bakhtin's understanding of carnival, too, becomes appropriated by Holquist for Derridean

deconstruction. Carnival, he writes, "is a way cultural systems come to know themselves by playing at being different We live in language and language is play: it is nothing but play. And insofar as it is play with difference, it is not only nothing, but play with nothing."⁸⁹

Bakhtin's concrete concepts, the loophole word, quasi-direct discourse, double-voiced discourse, the polyphonic novel, the crowning/decrowning, the two-leveled ambivalence of the carnival, grotesque realism, that is to say, his understanding of the double-faced fullness and generative nature of life, misunderstood and absorbed into deconstruction, become nihilistic elements in the Derridean view of ghost authorship, the elusiveness of meaning, the indefinite deferral of meaning. What takes place is the antithesis of Hegelian dialectic, that is the merging into synthesis, into a single meaning-filled voice (which it is important to reiterate is not Bakhtin's position): the thesis and antithesis negate each other. The dual but complex nature of the loophole word and of quasi-direct discourse, the ambivalence of the carnival become a version of absolute absence, of meaninglessness.

In Bakhtin's view, the loophole word, quasi-direct discourse, the polyphonic novel, the carnivalesque, the double-voiced nature of discourse and experience, are filled and imbued with meaning. The totality of the expression in its immediacy, the fullness of meaning leave open the possibility for new meaning. Dostoevsky's *Natasya Filippovna* and the *Underground Man* can always have another hearing: no-one can close them down, no-one can finalize them, dogmatize them, no-one has the ultimate authority. Bakhtin's understanding of the unfinalizability of human experience, his study of the fullness, the

richness of meaning immanent in and emanating from the word, of the artistic re-creation of this experience in the novel, has been appropriated by the deconstructionist movement and is identified with Derrida's view of the "endless deferral of definitive meaning."⁹⁰ When Bakhtin writes that

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 . . . ⁹¹

he is not philosophizing about the endless deferral of meaning. His is the philosophy of the penultimate word, the last but one. Meaning is contained within a moment, within an epoch, within an utterance, where action and events take place. His borders and junctures are not Derrida's blank margins. Rather they are frontiers, places of action, the *chronotopes*, living action in space, meeting places, the *agora* of the ancient Greeks, the public square of Socrates, the encounter on the road, the market square of the carnival of the Middle Ages. Bakhtin's borders and junctures are communal places where events take place: in the word with its "clash and criss-crossing" of accents, in the dialogue and in the novel. Each meaning-filled event is reaccentuated, finds new meaning in a continuing chain of communion.⁹²

There can be no "contextual meaning in and of itself" - it exists only for another contextual meaning, that is, it exists only in conjunction with it. There cannot be a unified (single) contextual meaning. Therefore there can be neither a first nor a last meaning; it always exists among other meanings as a link in the chain of meaning, which in its totality is the only thing that can be real. In historical life, this chain continues infinitely, and therefore each individual link in it is renewed again and again, as though it were being reborn.⁹³

The final point I want to make, and one which is an appropriately opened conclusion to an exploration and explication of Bakhtin's thought and work, is the problem of the misunderstanding and misinterpretation by contemporary critics and theorists of Bakhtin's term "unfinalizable." This concept is crucial to an understanding of Bakhtin's philosophy of the concrete and opened, *meaning*-filled wholeness of the human experience and its expression in the creation of images in the artistic realm. Bakhtin, in his extremely precise choice of the word "*nezaversennost*" ("unfinalizable") is separating it from the connotations of infinity, that is to say, "the endless deferral of definitive meaning," which contemporary critics and theorists attach to it. In its imagery, it suggests a known concrete world which cannot be closed down, rather than an infinite and ultimately unknowable universe. It suggests a *meaning*-filled moment, an epoch which remains open to another meaning rather than the limitlessness, the boundlessness of infinity. In its very preciseness, it cannot and does not mean infinity, that is to say, does not mean "endlessly deferred meaning." The word "unfinalizability" is a concrete image for the immediacy of a present which is open to a future, a contextual meaning which exists for another contextual meaning. The future for Bakhtin is always immanent in and emanating from the present, the present is always open to possibility, to the future; it is unfinalizable. This is Bakhtin's utopian vision, the concrete utopian present.

Notes

The references in the text are cited, for the most part, at the end of the paragraph. Because of the nature of my study, I rely heavily on Bakhtin's words and quote him often, the consequence of which is that there are many notations, which, if cited in the lines of the text, would interfere with the flow of the discussion. In order to help the reader distinguish between a mere citation and a comment, I have italicized the numbers in the text for the citations containing commentary.

A list of the works by Bakhtin and the works of the Bakhtin circle, now attributed to him, follows. The abbreviated form of citation which I use in the Notes for some of the works is indicated in front of each listing.

"Art and Answerability." 1919. Private translation by Donna Shanley, (1988).

"Toward the Aesthetics of the Word." trans. Kenneth N. Brostrom. *Disposito (Documents)* IV:11-12. 299-315.

"The Art of the Word and the Culture of Folk Humor (Rabelais and Gogol)." *Semiotics: Readings from the Soviet Union*. White Plains (1976).

"L'Auteur et le Héro," *Esthétique de la Création Verbale*. traduit du Russe par Alfreda Acouturier. Paris (1984).

DI *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. ed. Michael Holquist. Austin (1981).

DP *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. trans. and ed. Caryl Emerson. intro. Wayne C. Booth. Minneapolis (1984).

Rabelais *Rabelais and His World*. trans. Hélène Iswolsky. Bloomington (1984).

- SG* *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. trans. Vern W. McGee. ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin (1986).
- FMLS* (Medvedev, P.N.). *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship: A Critical Introduction to Sociological Poetics*. trans. Albert Wehrle. Cambridge, Mass. (1985).
- Freudianism* (Vološinov, V.N.). *Freudianism, A Critical Sketch*. trans. I.R. Titunik. ed. I.R. Titunik and Neal Bruss. Bloomington (1987).
- MPL* (Vološinov, V.N.). *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. trans. Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik. Cambridge, Mass. (1986).
- BSP* *Bakhtin School Papers*. ed. Ann Shukman. various trans. Oxford (1983). The following essays from this work have been attributed to Bakhtin.
- BSP* (Medvedev, P.N.). "The Immediate Tasks Facing Literary-Historical Science."
- BSP* (Vološinov, V.N.). "Discourse in Life and Discourse in Poetry."
- BSP* (Vološinov, V.N.). "The Latest Trends in Linguistic Thought in the West."
- BSP* (Vološinov, V.N.). "Literary Stylistics."

Chapter I

Towards an Understanding of Artistic Creation as a Whole

1. *SG*, 3.

2. See for example, Gary Saul Morson, "The Heresiarch of Meta," *PTL A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature*, (1978) 407-427; Giles Gunn, *The Culture of Criticism and the Criticism of Culture*, Oxford (1987) 140; Neal H. Bruss, "Vološinov and the Basic Assumptions of Freudianism and Structuralism," in V.N.

Vološinov, *Freudianism*, Appendix III, 133-143. See Kristina Pomorska, Foreword, *Rabelais*, vii-xi, ix; Wayne Booth, Introduction, *DP*, xiii-xxvii; *MPL*, x; David Forgacs, "6 Marxist Literary Theories," *Modern Literary Theory: A Comparative Introduction*, London: Batsford (1982); See also Joseph Natoli "Tracing a Beginning Through Past Theory Voices," *Tracing Literary Theory*, ed. Joseph Natoli, Chicago (1987), 3-26, 10, 23.

3. *BSP*, 1, *FMLS*, vii; Michael Holquist, "M.M. Bakhtin," *Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet Literature*, Vol. 2 (1978) 52-59, 52 Holquist names this entry as one of his sources in the bibliography and "Selected Secondary Literature" in his Introduction to *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. However, he partially disguises his identity by naming the author as James M. Holquist, see *DI*, xxxiv; Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, Cambridge, Mass. (1984), 42-43. My primary sources of biographical information are Tzvetan Todorov, *The Dialogical Principle*, trans. Wlad Godzich, Minnesota (1984) who obtained his information from a note prefacing a "Festschrift dedicated to Bakhtin," and from the Holquist and Clark biography, *Mikhail Bakhtin* mentioned above, a more detailed and anecdotal account. I accept for the most part, the social data contained in the biography. I am uneasy, however, with regard to the intellectual biographical data, particularly with regard to the omission of Marx, and to Bakhtin's purported religiosity stated here with no supporting data.

4. The only other works published in Bakhtin's name of this period, and in fact until 1963, were a short essay in 1919, "Art and Answerability," and in 1929, two Tolstoy prefaces for a collected works. However, there are a number of texts by P.M. Medvedev, the major one, *The Formal Method of Literary Scholarship* (1928), and by V.N. Vološinov, *Freudianism A Critical Sketch* (1927), *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1929), and several essays all of which are attributed to Bakhtin. His authorship is a subject of discussion which to date remains open and is outside the scope of this study. Although for the most part, the writing style differs from the named Bakhtin works, the ideas expressed are identical and, as well, the same images and analogies recur in both the disputed texts and in Bakhtin's named works. For reason that the same thought and philosophy is expressed throughout, I treat all the works as Bakhtin's and use his name only. For a discussion of this subject, see I.R. Titunik, "Bakhtin &/or Vološinov &/or Medvedev: Dialogue &/or Doubletalk?" *Language and Literary Theory*, ed. Benjamin A. Stolz et al, 1984, 535-64; I.R. Titunik, "The Baxtin Problem: Concerning Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist's *Mikhail Bakhtin*," *Slavic and East European Journal*, 30(1) Spring (1986) 81-90; *FMLS*, Foreword and Introduction vii-xxix; Clark and Holquist, *Mikhail Bakhtin* (1984); Todorov (1984); Keith Tribe, "Mikhail Bakhtin: word and object," *Economy and Society*, Vol. 15 No. 3, August (1986) 403-413; *BSP*, 1-5.

5. According to Todorov, the sentence was not ten years, but five. See Todorov (1984) 4.

6. Todorov (1984) gives the name of the village as Kimr. See page 5.

7. Clark and Holquist (1984) 321, 325.

8. Clark and Holquist (1984) 330, 327.

9. Clark and Holquist (1984) 332; Holquist, "M.M. Bakhtin," *Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet Literature*, "54.

10. See Titunik (1986); Tribe (1986); P.M. Medvedev, *FMLS*, ix; *Freudianism*, xvii.

11. See Clark and Holquist (1984) 340, where the authors claim that Bakhtin deleted religious passages; Michael Holquist, "The Carnival of Discourse: Baxtin and Simultaneity," *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature/Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée*, June (1985) 220-234, 227 hereafter referred to as "The Carnival . . ." See also Ken Hirschkop, "A Response to the Forum on Mikhail Bakhtin," *Bakhtin: Essays and Dialogues on His Work*, ed. Gary Saul Morson, Chicago (1986) 672-78. See also Gary Saul Morson's response, "Dialogue. Monologue, and the Social: A Reply to Ken Hirschkop" *Bakhtin* (1986) 81-90; see also Allon White, "The Struggle Over Bakhtin," *Cultural Critique*, 8 Winter (1987-8) 217-241; See also cryptic comment by Wlad Godzich in *FMLS*, Foreword, ix, paragraph 2.

12. Forgacs (1982), for example, discusses six diverse Marxist literary theories which have in common the "simple premise" that "Literature can only be properly understood within a larger framework of social reality." Forgacs writes that there are many and diverse Marxist "strategies" for "explaining literature in relation to society," and names them, as follows: 1) the "reflection model" of Lenin and Georg Lukács (1939); 2) the "production model" of Pierre Macherey (194); 3) the "genetic model" of Lucien Goldmann (151); 4) the "negative knowledge model" of Theodor W. Adorno who writes that "'Art is the negative knowledge of the actual world,'" 158, quoting Adorno (1977:160); 5) the language-centred model of Bakhtin (Vološinov and Medvedev) whose Marxism, in Forgacs view, though "appears consistently more diluted and utopian in these works. . . does not necessarily diminish" its importance of Marxist literary theory (165); and, lastly, Julia Kristeva's structuralist language-centred model adapted from the Bakhtinian model (1965). One could add further theories, for example Terry Eagleton's and Frederic Jameson's versions.

13. *DI*, 206.

14. *DP*, 62, 63.

15. Caryl Emerson, "The Tolstoy Connection in Bakhtin," *PMLA*, (1985) January, 100 (1) 68-80, 68.

16. *SG*, xiv; Ann Shukman, "Between Marxism and Formalism: The Stylistics of Mikhail Bakhtin," *Comparative Criticism: A Yearbook*, Cambridge (1980) 221-234, 225-6; Allon White on pp. 230-31 in the above-noted essay also refers to Bakhtin as a radical humanist. He defines the term "humanism" in a similar way: "The humanist belief in the constitutive, active role of individuals in the making of history." However, he continues in his explanation to state that Bakhtin is also a "cultural and historical relativist," a position antithetical to the above definition, and one with which I

cannot agree and argue against in this work. The definition I use is found in the Oxford English Dictionary.

17. Arnold Hauser, *The Philosophy of Art History*, Evanston (1985), 136, 134.

18. *DI*, 259; *SG*, xi, Sergei Averintsev, (untitled article), *Soviet Literature*, No. 1:336 (1977) trans. John Gordon, 145-151, 145, 146; *DI*, 259.

19. Averintsev, 148; *SG*, xi, 127, 138, 4, 14, 6, 135; *Rabelais*, 26.

20. Shukman (1980) 226; *FMLS*, vii; *MPL* 1.

21. *FMLS*, vii; *BSP*, 5-29, 8.

22. *DP*, 181; *BSP*, 153.

23. *MPL*, 60, 60; *SG*, 81.

24. *MPL*, 164.

25. *MPL*, 126, n. 1.

26. *SG*, 75, 88, 69, 143, 89.

27. *MPL*, 179; *FMLS*, x; *BSP*, 75-91, 77.

28. *FMLS*, 18-19.

29. *FMLS*, 19.

30. *BSP*, 80, 80; *FMLS*, 19; *BSP*, 81, 81, 81.

31. *FMLS*, 20.

32. *FMLS*, 3, xiii, xiii; *MPL*, xiii.

33. *MPL*, 9, 173-4; Shukman (1980) 223.

34. *SG*, 147.

35. *SG*, 135.

36. *FMLS*, 57, 58, 59; See also Victor Erlich, *Russian Formalism: History - Doctrine*, New Haven (1981) 41, 72, 61; Mikhail Bakhtin, "Towards the Aesthetics of the Word," *Disposito (Documents)*, IV, 11-12, trans. Kenneth N. Brostrom, 299-315, 301; *BSP*, 52.

37. Erlich (1981) 172, 190, 190, 190.
38. *FMLS*, 151, 62; *BSP*, 5-30, 9; Quoted in Erlich (1981) 189.
39. *FMLS*, 140, 141.
40. Erlich (1981) 254; *FMLS*, 160.
41. *FMLS*, 59, quoted by Bakhtin; "Toward the Aesthetics of the Word," 304.
42. Bakhtin, "Toward the Aesthetics of the Word," 305.
43. Morson, "The Heresiarch of Meta," 407, 408, 415, 424.
44. Morson, "The Heresiarch of Meta," See 418, 420; Erlich (1981) 10.
45. Medvedev, "The Formal (Morphological) Method or Scholarly Salieri-ism," *BSP*, 51-65, 58, 59. This essay has not been conclusively attributed to Bakhtin, the thought and analogy however are consistent with the other works by Medvedev which *have* been accepted as Bakhtin's.
46. Averintsev (1977) 148, 146, quoting Bakhtin.

Chapter II

Mikhail Bakhtin's Philosophy of the Word

1. *SG*, 3; Averintsev (1977) 148, 146, quoting Bakhtin; *SG*, 3.
2. Bakhtin, "Towards the Aesthetics of the Word," 308, 315, 315, 315.
3. *BSP*, 155.
4. *BSP*, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 11.
5. *BSP*, 11.
6. *SG*, 87.
7. *SG*, 88.

8. *MPL*, 34.
9. *Freudianism*, 12, 14.
10. *Freudianism*, 15; *SG*, 143, 76; *BSP*, 27; *MPL*, 93; *SG*, 138.
11. *MPL*, 93; *Freudianism*, 23; *MPL*, 35, 34, 35, 35.
12. *DI*, 279, *SG*, 69, 72; *MPL*, 4.
13. Todorov (1984) 94; Averintsev (1977) 148; *DP*, 252.
14. Mikhail Bakhtine, "*L'Auteur et le Héros*," *Esthétique de la Création Verbale*, traduit du Russe par Alfreda Aucouturier, Paris (1984) 52.
15. Todorov (1984) 95, quoting Bakhtin "*Avtor i geroj v esteticheskoj dejatel'nosti*," ["Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity"] 33-34.
16. *DP*, 287.
17. *MPL*, 38; *DP*, 220, 254; see *DP*, 236-7.
18. *SG*, 126, 126; *MPL*, 72.
19. *SG*, 125.
20. *SG*, 69, 94, 117, 94.
21. *DI*, 276.
22. *DI*, 280.
23. *DI*, 280.
24. *SG*, 170, 83, 69.
25. *SG*, 3, 4.
26. *BSP*, 18.

Chapter III

The Aesthetics of the Novel: The Problem of the Word in the Novel

1. See Erlich (1981) 191 with regard to Formalism's study in technology, "how it was made"; *DI*, 259; *BSP*, 19, 20.
2. *BSP*, 22.
3. *BSP*, 25.
4. *BSP*, 21, 19.
5. *BSP*, 19, *DI*, 263; *BSP*, 19.
6. *DI*, 260-1, n.1; 268, 261, 273, 263, 265.
7. *DI*, 264, 264, 266, 266.
8. *DI*, 259, 262.
9. *BSP*, 26; *DI*, 291-2.
10. *DI*, 263.
11. *DI*, 269.
12. *DI*, 269, 8, 269, 269, 269.
13. *DI*, 271, 270, 270, 270.
14. *DI*, 271.
15. *DI*, 65, 67.
16. *DI*, 271-272, 272.
17. *DI*, 272, 272-273.
18. *DI*, 273.
19. *DI*, 428, 274.

20. *DI*, 278, 294, my emphasis.
21. *DI*, 300.
22. *SG*, 165-6; *DI*, 12.
23. Bakhtin, "Toward the Aesthetics of the Word," 302; *DI*, 300.
24. *DI*, 297, 298, 299, 299, 300.
25. *DI*, 60, 324.
26. *DI*, 324.
27. *DI*, 330, 327, 330. Bakhtin is making reference to Galileo's heliocentric conception of the universe as opposed to Ptolemy's geocentric conception. One could speculate that Bakhtin chooses to refer to Galileo rather than Copernicus for two reasons. The first is that Galileo, in proving Copernicus' theory to be true, destroys the Church's claim to one - the Church's - language of truth and avenue to knowledge. Secondly, Galileo disproved most of Aristotelian theories of physics. According to Averintsev, Bakhtin's true opponent was Aristotle! Translators, by omitting the 'o' from Galileoan which is decidedly more awkward, unwittingly convey suggestions of a biblical image.
28. *DI*, 49.
29. *DI*, 262, 416, 262, 416. If the novel is predominantly direct authorial discourse, a secondary task for a stylistics of the novel, is to determine the "heteroglot background outside the work which dialogizes it," a task outside the scope of this study. (*DI*, 416).
30. *DI*, 323, 324.
31. *DI*, 323, 301.
32. *DI*, 301.
33. *DI*, 301, 302, 302.
34. *DI*, 304, 306.
35. *DI*, 309, 308, 310.
36. *DI*, 309.
37. *DI*, 309, 310; *DP*, 202.
38. *DP*, 202; *DI*, 309, 310, quoted from Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, Boston (1965) 20.

39. *DI*, 324.
40. *DI*, 308, 312, 311-2.
41. *DI*, 323.
42. *DI*, 313, 314.
43. *DI*, 316, 315.
44. *DI*, 316, 317.
45. *DI*, 317.
46. *DI*, 319, quoted from Ivan Turgenev, *Virgin Soil*, Ch. 18.
47. *DI*, 319, 320, 316.
48. *DI*, 321, 321-2, 321, 323.
49. *DI*, 323-4.
50. *DI*, 336.
51. *DI*, 331-2, 336.
52. *DI*, 332.
53. *DI*, 332, 333, 332.
54. *DI*, 333, 332, 336.
55. *DI*, 334, 335, 334.
56. *DI*, 336, 337, 337, 338, 337, 341.
57. *DI*, 354-5.

58. *DI*, 341, 342, 346. Bakhtin means by "reclaimed for contemporaneity" that the word "relates to its descendents as well as to its contemporaries as if *both* were contemporaries." See *DI*, 346.

59. *DI*, 345, 342.
60. *DI*, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348.
61. *DI*, 348, 347, 348.

62. *DI*, 349.
63. *DI*, 357, 352, 355.
64. *DI*, 345.
65. *DI*, 357, 358.
66. *DI*, 358, 358, 361, 358, 361-2, 360.
67. *DI*, 362, 363.
68. *DI*, 364, 364.
69. *DI*, 364-5.
70. *DI*, 365.

71. Erlich (1981) 190; Bakhtin, "The Art of the Word and the Culture of Folk Humor" (Rabelais and Gogol), *Semiotics and Structuralism*, White Plains (1976).

Chapter IV

Towards a Philosophy for a History of the Novel

1. *DI*, 330.
2. *DI*, 331.
3. *Rabelais*, 62; *DP*, 6.
4. *MPL*, 13-14; *BSP*, 154; *MPL*, 11, 14.

5. *DI*, 348; *SG*, 84; *MPL*, 13; *SG*, 143; *MPL*, 11.
6. *DI*, 7, 11.
7. *FMLS*, 159; See also 166-8; Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, Oxford (1973) 6, 7-8, 10-11, 14-16, 94; Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, Harmondsworth (1976) 223, 226; *SG*, 3, 2, 4; *DI*, 421.
8. *DI*, 7, 11.
9. *SG*, 152; J.W. von Goethe, *Faust* I, line 1237, trans. Bayard Taylor, N.Y. (1962), my emphasis; *DI*, 251, 356-7, 288, 293.
10. *DI*, 366, 370, 5, 370.
11. *DI*, 12.
12. *DI*, 22, 14, 25.
13. *DI*, 25, 24.
14. *DI*, 372.
15. *DI*, 84; *SG*, 10, 19, 25, 21, 22, 22, 22, 23.
16. *DI*, 85, n. 2.
17. Holquist, "Theory as Praxis" (1983); Aron Gurevich, *Medieval Popular Culture*, trans. János M. Bak and Paul A. Hollingsworth, Cambridge (1988) 178-182; *Rabelais*, 58, my emphasis. See *DI*, 342-6 for discussion of the "internally persuasive word."
18. *DI*, 375, 372, 375, 367, 400, 410.
19. *DI*, 366.
20. *DI*, 366, 375, 383, 414.
21. *DI*, 374, 377, 377, 377.
22. *DI*, 376, 376, 376, 376-7.
23. *DI*, 376, 376, 376, 376.
24. *DI*, 378.
25. *DI*, 379, 379, 379, 380.

26. *DI*, 378, 378, 380, 383.

27. *DI*, 381.

28. *DI*, 382, 382, 383, 384, 384.

29. *DI*, 385.

30. *DI*, 386, 387, n. 53, 387.

31. *DI*, 386, 387, 387, 388, 392, 394. See also Arnold Hauser, *Mannerism*, New York (1965) 23-43; Hauser *The Social History of Art*, New York (1951) II:180-1; Gerhart Hoffmeister, "The European Novel in Seventeenth Century Germany: A Decade of Research (1970-80)," *German Baroque Literature*, ed. Gerhart Hoffmeister, New York (1983) 295-315, 299.

32. *DI*, 388, 395.

33. *DI*, 387, 396, 388, 396, 396, 396.

34. *DI*, 397, 398, 397; Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, III, New York (1951), 177.

35. *DI*, 397, 398, 398, 398.

36. *DI*, 399.

37. *DI*, 410, 409, 409.

38. *DI*, 409-10.

39. *DI*, 410.

40. *DI*, 38, 38.

41. *DI*, 19, 20. The reference to the allowed-future in the modern novel in no way refers to prophetic works such as George Orwell's *1983* or *Animal Farm*. Nor does it refer to futuristic works of science fiction. Rather, what is meant here is a novel such as D.H. Lawrence's *Women in Love* which ends inconclusively, still participating in life: Gudrun departs for an unknown life in Dresden and Rupert and Ursula engage in what could be seen as an eternal light bickering. Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* which among things, plays with time, serves as another example of the openendedness of the modern novel. There are critics who consider it an unfinished work.

42. *DI*, 39.

43. *DI*, 59, 50, 61, 12. Bakhtin coins the term 'polyglossia' in order to signify and explain two or more national languages simultaneously present and interanimating each

other within a single culture. 'Heteroglossia', in distinction from polyglossia, is the social diversity of speech types, the multiple and varied voices within a culture, for example, social dialects, professional languages, languages of generations, etc.

44. *DI*, 22.

45. *DI*, 23.

46. *DI*, 53, 54, 55, 55.

47. *DI*, 53, 60, 60.

48. *DI*, 24, 25, 24.

49. *DI*, 26, 26.

50. *DI*, 63, 61-2, 63.

51. *DI*, 58, 58, 58, 59.

52. *DI*, 72, 72-3, 74.

53. Macaronic is a form of verse containing vernacular words in a Latin context with Latin terminations and Latin constructions.

54. *DI*, 80, 71.

55. *DI*, 74, 79.

56. *DI*, 400, 401.

57. *DI*, 401.

58. *DI*, 402, 403.

59. *DI*, 404.

60. *DI*, 405.

61. *DI*, 406.

62. *DI*, 405.

63. *DI*, 408, 406, 408, 406, 408.

64. *DI*, 407, 408, 408.

65. *DI*, 409, 409.

- 66. *DI*, 412, 413.
- 67. *DI*, 414, 411.
- 68. *DI*, 250.
- 69. *SG*, 25.
- 70. *SG*, 33, 34, 42.
- 71. *SG*, 32.
- 72. *SG*, 41-2.
- 73. *SG*, 42, 43, 45, 44, 45, 44.
- 74. *SG*, 42: Frederick Copleston, S.J., *A History of Philosophy*, London (1977); *IV*: 50, *VI*: 50; *SG*, 44; Copleston, *VIII*:18.
- 75. *DI*, 251, 253, 252-3.
- 76. *DI*, 251.
- 77. *SG*, 43, 43, 19, 23.
- 78. *SG*, 20, 10, 12, 19; *DI*, 84.
- 79. *DI*, 149, 150.
- 80. *DI*, 218, 34, 150, 149.
- 81. *DI*, 147, 150-1, 147, 147, 149, 147. Eschatology, according to Bakhtin, is another form which to paraphrase him, bleeds the future of its substance. The future is seen as "the end of everything . . . the end of all being." The time between the present and this end is considered to be "merely an unnecessary continuation of an indefinitely prolonged present." (*DI*, 148).
- 82. *DI*, 150, 149.
- 83. *DI*, 206, 209.
- 84. *DI*, 208.
- 85. *DI*, 207, 207, 207, 207.
- 86. *DI*, 209-210, 210.

87. *DI*, 211.
88. *DI*, 217, 214, 210, 212.
89. *DI*, 213.
90. *DI*, 216, 217.
91. *SG*, 23.
92. *DI*, 86, 111, 86.
93. *DI*, 109, 105, 110, 105.
94. *DI*, 152, 155, 153, 155.
95. *DI*, 60, 222, 114, 118.
96. *DI*, 120, 120.
97. *DI*, 123, 124.
98. *DI*, 121, 128, 129, 129, 129.
99. *DI*, 130, 130-1, 130, 139, 130.
100. *DI*, 131, 131, 131, 132.
101. *DI*, 135.
102. *DI*, 136.
103. *DI*, 137, 138, 139.
104. *DI*, 140, 141.
105. *DI*, 142.
106. *SG*, 17.
107. *DI*, 137, 143, 143, 143, 143, 144.
108. *DI*, 144, 145.
109. *DI*, 218-9.
110. *DI*, 220, 221, 220.

111. *DI*, 221, 222, 221, 223, 223, 223, 223.
112. *DI*, 156, 155, 156; John Ciardi, *The Divine Comedy*, New York (1977),
ix. Dante's *Commedia* was given its 'divine' status in posterity.
113. *DI*, 157, 157, 157, 158.
114. *Rabelais*, 56, 57, 57, 57, 57; *DP*, 130.
115. *DP*, 122, 122, 123, 123, 123, 123.
116. *DI*, 161, 161, 162.
117. *DI*, 160, 159, 159, 160.
118. *DI*, 159, 162, 165, 165-6, 166.
119. *DI*, 225.
120. *DI*, 226.
121. *DI*, 229, 230, 231.
122. *DI*, 232, 232.
123. *DI*, 234, 235, 234.
124. *DI*, 235, 236, 235.
125. *SG*, 25, 23; *DI*, 242.
126. *DI*, 169, 168, 169.
127. *DI*, 205, 177, 206, 205-6, 206.
128. *DI*, 237; *Rabelais*, 5.
129. *DI*, 237, 238, 238, 238, 238.
130. *DI*, 170, 171, 171, 171.
131. *Rabelais*, 24, 29, 18, 26, 18, 26, 26.
132. *DI*, 173, 173, 239, 239, 167, 170-1, 171.
133. *DI*, 177.
134. *DI*, 184, 179, 175.

- 135. *DI*, 194, 185, 193, 193.
- 136. *Rabelais*, 62; *DI*, 192, 192.
- 137. *Rabelais*, 62; *DI*, 177, 176, 177-8.
- 138. *DI*, 192 *Rabelais*, 62; *DI*, 192, 178.
- 139. *DI*, 187, 186, 186.
- 140. *DI*, 207, 240.
- 141. *DI*, 241, 242, 241, 241, 242, 242.
- 142. *DI*, 242, 239, 204, 240.

Chapter V

Towards a Philosophy of Man in Culture: The Problem of Reception of Man in *Great Time* in the English-Speaking World

1. This is true also in the works of Julia Kristeva and, to a lesser extent, Tzvetan Todorov, Bulgarians resident in France, whose works translated into English, subsume Bakhtin's thought and work into, especially in the case of Kristeva, an anti-humanist Semiotics; and in the case of Todorov, into a systematic Structuralism. Todorov, although he understands and highly values Bakhtin's philosophical anthropology, tends to make abstract what is concrete and material for Bakhtin. However, a sustained critique of their work is outside the scope of this study. I primarily concern myself with Bakhtin's work which is translated into English in North America and with the reception of these works, rather than works like Kristeva's and Todorov's which derive from their own translations.

- 2. Copleston, I:40, 45, 41; *DI*, 24; Copleston I:125; Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man*, New Haven (1972) 4, 4-5, 4.
- 3. Cassirer, 11; see *SG* xiv.
- 4. *DP*, 7, 6, 7.
- 5. *DP*, 6.

6. *DP*, 9-10, 10, 8, 9.
7. *DP*, xxi, my emphasis.
8. René Wellek, "Bakhtin's View of Dostoevsky: 'Polyphony' and 'Carnavalesque'," *Russian Formalism: A Retrospective Glance*, New Haven (1985) 231-241; 236, 234, 239, 236.
9. Joseph Frank, "The Voices of Mikhail Bakhtin," *The New York Review of Books*, Vol. 33, No. 16, October 23rd, 1986. 55-60, 59; *DP*, 4; Frank, 59; the emphasis on the word "any" is mine.
10. Frank, 59, 59.
11. *DP*, 64.
12. *DP*, 65.
13. *DP*, 67, 67-8.
14. *SG*, 160.
15. Edward J. Brown, "Soviet Structuralism, A Semiotic Approach," *Russian Formalism: A Retrospective Glance*, New Haven (1985) 114-129, 128.
16. *DP*, 12-13, 3, 20, 27.
17. *DP*, 27.
18. *DP*, 21, 4; *SG*, 160.
19. *Rabelais*, 26; Michael Holquist, "The Surd Heard: Bakhtin and Derrida," *Literature and History: Theoretical Problems and Russian Case Studies*, ed. Gary Saul Morson, Stanford (1986) 137-156, 147.
20. *MPL*, 35.
21. For Bakhtin's comments on American behaviorists see *Freudianism*, 23.
22. See *MPL*, 68. Here Bakhtin writes "The basic task of understanding does not at all amount to recognizing the linguistic form used by the speaker as the familiar, 'that very same' form, the way we distinctly recognize for instance, a signal that we have not quite become used to or a form in a language that we do not know well. No, the task of understanding does not basically amount to recognizing the form used, but rather to understanding it in a particular, concrete context, to understanding its meaning in a particular utterance, i.e., it amounts to understanding its novelty and not to recognizing its identity."

23. I.R. Titunik (1986) 91; Keith Tribe (1986); Michael Holquist, "The Politics of Representation," *Allegory and Representation: Selected Papers from the English Institute* 1979-80, Baltimore (1981) 163-183, 172, hereafter referred to as "POR".

24. A work still not published in English but translated into French and quoted extensively by Todorov.

25. Bakhtin's essay "Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel," reads as though it is a reflection on and an extension into the literary realm of Marx's "Critique of Hegel's Doctrine of the State" and the early pages of "The German Ideology."

26. Karl Marx, *Early Writings*, trans. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton, N.Y. (1975) 431-2.

27. See particularly 326, 349-357, 389-393.

28. Marx (1975) 331.

29. Marx (1975), 355.

30. Todorov (1984) 94, quoting Bakhtin, "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity." In the edition translated into French, this quote appears on p. 37.

31. Todorov (1984) 95, quoting Bakhtin "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity."

32. DP, 287. "Toward a Reworking of the Dostoevsky Book," included as an Appendix.

33. DP, 287; MPL, 85; See MPL, 88-89, BSP, 93-113, 106 for discussion of this point.

34. Marx (1975) 350, 351; *Freudianism*, 15; See Marx, 234, 41 for Marx's reference to Rousseau and Hegel.

35. DP, 72.

36. DP, 73.

37. DP, 69.

38. MPL, 101, 102-3, 106; DP, 202.

39. SG, 4.

40. SG, 167.

41. SG, 32.
42. Marx (1975) 155-6.
43. DI, 272.
44. *Rabelais*, 4, 10, 6, my emphasis, 8, 9, 8; DP, 122.
45. *Rabelais*, 11, 11, 62.
46. See John M. Ellis, "What Does Deconstruction Contribute to Theory of Criticism?" *New Literary History*, Vol. 19, No. 2, Winter (1988).
47. DP, 123, 160; *Rabelais*, 62; Sigmund Freud, "Humour," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey, London (1975) I-XXIV, XXI:162; SG, 135.
48. *Rabelais*, 12.
49. *Rabelais*, 439, 474.
50. DP, 166, 157.
51. DP, 176, 165, 177.
52. Marx (1975) 155; Ken Hirschkop, "A Response to the Forum on Mikhail Bakhtin," *Bakhtin* (1986) 73-78, 78; Gary Saul Morson, "Dialogue, Monologue, and the Social: A Reply to Ken Hirschkop," 81. *Bakhtin* (1986) 81-88, 81.
53. *Freudianism*, xvii. Holquist asserts this position in Clark and Holquist (1984) and in his essays, "Bakhtin and Rabelais: Theory as Praxis," *Boundary* 2, 11, 1-2 Fall-Winter (1983) 5-19, "POR," "The Surd Heard: Bakhtin and Derrida," *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature/Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée*, June (1985) 220-234, hereinafter referred to as "The Surd Heard."
54. Clark and Holquist (1984) 61, 60, 61, 62, 77.
55. Clark and Holquist (1984) 72, 72, 72; BSP, 155; Mikhail Bakhtin, "Art and Answerability," private translation by Donna Shanley.
56. Bakhtin does make reference to Martin Buber in a general sense with regard to chronotopes, to "the concept of contact" in religious, mythical and philosophical writings. See DI, 98-99.
57. However Bakhtin rejects the idealistic abstract transcendence of Cohen in favour of concrete aesthetics. See BSP, 83.

58. Copleston, VII:362; Lucien Goldmann, *Immanuel Kant*, trans. Robert Black, London (1971) 36.
59. Copleston, VI:434.
60. Holquist, "POR," 179.
61. *Freudianism*, 88.
62. *Freudianism*, 90, 88.
63. See *MPL*, 40; Georg Lukács, *The Theory of the Novel*, trans. Anna Bostock, Cambridge (1978), 34.
64. *MPL*, 40-1.
65. Holquist, "POR," 179, 179; *MPL*, 40.
66. Caryl Emerson, "Outer Word and Inner Speech," *Bakhtin* (1986) 21-40, 34, 25. See also page 137 of this study with regard to Plutarch's method of character creation.
67. See page 36 of Emerson's essay (1986).
68. Emerson (1986), 21; *DI*, 251.
69. Emerson (1986), 22, 23, 23-4, 24.
70. Emerson (1986), 36-7.
71. Holquist, "The Surd Heard," 142, 142, 142; "POR," 182; "The Surd Heard," 142, 143; "POR," 181, 169. The named author of *Freudianism, A Critical Sketch* and *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*.
72. Holquist, "The Surd Heard," 174.
73. *DI*, 301, my emphasis.
74. *DP*, 279.
75. *SG*, 143, 138.
76. *SG*, 163.
77. Howard Felperin, *Beyond Deconstruction: The Uses and Abuses of Literary Theory*, Oxford (1987) 29, 29-30.

78. Holquist, "The Surd Heard," 146; "The Carnival . . ." 242, 223; "The Surd Heard," 147.
79. *DP*, 302; Holquist, "The Carnival . . ." 227; *DI*, 423.
80. *DI*, 423.
81. Holquist, "POR," 172.
82. Sigmund Freud "A Difficulty in Psychoanalysis," *The Standard Edition* (1975) XVII:143.
83. Gary Saul Morson, "Preface: Perhaps Bakhtin," *Bakhtin* (1986) vii-xii, ix,ix. Morson refers to *MPL*, 141-159.
84. *DP*, 232-3.
85. *DP*, 234-5, 233.
86. *DP*, 202; *MPL*, 144; *DP*, 209.
87. Felperin (1987) 29; see Wellek (1985) 239-40.
88. Holquist, "The Surd Heard," 145. The difficulty in understanding Holquist's position is pointed out also by Morson in "Commentary: The Lions of Siberia," *Literature and Russian Case Studies*, Stanford (1986) 194.
89. Holquist, "The Surd Heard," 147, 143; "The Carnival . . ." 231.
90. Felperin (1987) 118.
91. *DP*, 166.
92. *MPL*, 41.
93. *SG*, 146.

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