

Grand Theory III

IN MIKHAIL BAKHTIN we encounter a historical theory of the novel that is both powerfully related to Lukács and Ortega and powerfully distinctive in its idiom and focus. Like them, Bakhtin speaks of the absolute inaccessibility of the epic past as fundamentally different from the novelistic experience of a continuous and contingent temporality.¹ The novel destroys this “epic distance” by disclosing another sort of “distance”: that between “language” and “reality.” “[O]nly in the novel have we the possibility of an authentically objective portrayal of the past as the past.” If a homogenizing memory is the motor of epic, the novel runs on the fuel of knowledge and epistemology, which insists upon a separation or distance between the “object” of knowledge and the means, linguistic and other, by which the subject comes to know it. There is hence a kinship between the innovative and experimental methods of the novel and of science, both of which employ a technique of “objectification”² to the end of “objectivity.” Recalling but eclipsing Ortega’s interest,³ Bakhtin makes mimicry and parody the crucial technique of novelistic scientific method. Epic “displays a profound piety toward . . . the language of tradition.” Novelistic laughter on the contrary “destroys any hierarchical (distancing and valorized) distance.” “It is as if such mimicry rips the word away from its object, disunifies the two, shows that a given straightforward generic word—epic or tragic—is one-sided, bounded, incapable of exhausting the object; the process of parodying forces us to experience those sides of the object that are not otherwise included in a given genre or a given style.”

In Bakhtin’s usage we see what is evident also in Lukács and Lévi-Strauss: empirical objectivity and self-conscious reflexivity are two sides of the same coin of modern epistemological “distance.” To parody, to objectify, is to isolate linguistic form so that it coalesces before us as content: “Language in the novel not only represents, but itself serves as the object of representation. Novelistic discourse is always criticizing itself.” “In a parodied sonnet, the sonnet form is not a genre at all; that is, it is not the form of a whole but is rather *the object of representation*: the sonnet here is *the hero of the parody*.” This thematization of form in Bakhtin is not a process whereby one linguistic level subsumes or sublates another. Rather, it is (like Lukács’s “double reflection”) a dialectical coexistence: “All these languages, with all the direct expressive means at their dis-

1. See Lukács, *Theory*, “The Romanticism of Disillusionment”; Ortega, *Meditations*, “The Epic.”

2. Compare Lukács’s “objectivation,” *Theory*.

3. See *Meditations*, “Mime.”

posals, themselves become the object of representation. . . . But at the same time these represented languages themselves do the work of representing.” By the same token, novelistic characterization refracts the epic “individual,” for whom “[t]here is not the slightest gap between his authentic essence and its external manifestation,” so as to set in motion an oscillation between individual and type. “Outside his destiny, the epic and tragic hero is nothing; he is, therefore, a function of the plot fate assigns him. . . . One of the basic internal themes of the novel is precisely the theme of the hero’s inadequacy to his fate or his situation.”⁴

To observe the deep analytic connection between Bakhtin and Lukács, however, is also to observe the evaluative gulf that divides them. In his most famous figure, the early Lukács conceives novelistic distance as the condition of modern “homelessness.” Bakhtin briefly employs the same figure to opposite ends—to describe the state of novelistic distance in antiquity: “[I]n ancient times the parodic-travesty word was (generically speaking) homeless.” Lukács regrets the loss of the traditional, positive freedom of relation; Bakhtin celebrates the modern, negative freedom of liberation. In (the later) Lukács the term “novelization” plays the limited role of describing a process by which the historical dominance of the novel can impose upon other genres formal features that are “alien in nature” to those genres. In Bakhtin, “the novelization of other genres does not imply their subjection to an alien generic canon; on the contrary, novelization implies their liberation from all that serves as a brake on their unique development, from all that would change them along with the novel into some sort of stylization of forms that have outlived themselves.”⁵

The range and malleability of Bakhtin’s “novelization” suggests an extra-generic scope: “It is of course impossible to explain the phenomenon of novelization purely by reference to the direct and unmediated influence of the novel itself.” Elsewhere Bakhtin speaks of genre “not in its formalistic sense, but as a zone and field of valorized perception, as a mode for representing the world.” We may recall here the later Lukács’s implication⁶ that a fully historical method ultimately must acknowledge the continuity between the categories of genre and mode. However, Bakhtin’s formulation equally recalls Frye’s doubled use of the term “romance”; or, more generally (and with a crucial evaluative reversal), the structuralist dichotomization of structure and history.⁷ If “the novelization of the other genres” entails “a battle to drag them into a zone of contact with reality,” novelization, an affirmative “displacement,” would seem to be nothing less than the positive principle of historical change itself.

4. Compare Lukács, *Historical Novel*, on the difference between the “personal” and the “class” individual.

5. Bertolt Brecht’s “epic theater” brilliantly employs the generic alienation effects entailed in Lukács’s sense of “novelization” to fulfill a Bakhtinian sense of the term. For Brecht, see “The Modern Theatre Is the Epic Theatre,” in *Brecht on Theatre*, ed. John Willett (New York: Hill and Wang, 1964), 33–42.

6. See above, headnote to pt. 4.

7. See above, headnote to pt. 2.

As these comparisons suggest, Bakhtin's theory of the novel represents the most radically evolutionary challenge available to the devolutionary historiography of structuralist theory—an achievement that carries with it the danger of forfeiting dialectical method as it were from the other direction. How fully would Bakhtin have us credit his strikingly absolute characterization of the classical, not-yet-novelized genres as “straightforward,” “fixed,” “rigid,” “ossified,” “walled off”? How are we to reconcile this view with the admission that “there never was a single strictly straightforward genre, no single type of direct discourse . . . that did not have its own parodying and travesty double” which was sometimes “just as sanctioned by tradition and just as canonized as [its] elevated model”? If the early Lukács conceives the novel in terms of psychological self-consciousness, and Ortega in terms of visual perspective, Bakhtin's distinction is to conceive the novel in terms of linguistic structure and function. Working within and against a specific formation of linguistic theory, Bakhtin elaborates a historical theory of language whose dialectical acuity depends very heavily on the riskiness of dichotomous formulation.

From a sufficient elevation, a linguistic historiography can appear to consist in the discontinuous “rupture” of a cultural monoglossia by an external and invasive polyglossia. Here the decisive context is the monoglot homogeneity of late medieval Europe on the one hand, and “the active polyglossia of the new world” on the other. Yet the invasion is of course neither so discontinuous nor so external as this would suggest. The Latin monoglossia of late medieval Europe was also disrupted “internally” by the “new world” of the national vernaculars; and the Renaissance revolution was in any case preceded by that of late antiquity, when the “absolute dogma” of classic Hellenism's “dense monoglossia” was both challenged and reinforced by Roman and barbarian linguistic influence. Whatever the appearance, moreover, Bakhtin is always concerned not with an absolute distinction between the monoglot and the polyglot but with the qualitative and sociological difference between “literary” and “popular” usage. In these terms, “[p]olyglossia had always existed (it is more ancient than pure, canonic monoglossia), but it had not been a factor in literary creation.”

The more closely we enter into the terms of concrete language use, the more compatible Bakhtin's version of tradition and innovation becomes both with Lukács's dialectic of direct givenness and self-consciousness and with Ortega's dialectic of simple and oblique perspective. “[A]n illiterate peasant, miles away from any urban center, naïvely immersed in an unmoving and for him unshakeable everyday world, nevertheless lived in several language systems. . . . But these languages were not dialogically coordinated in the linguistic consciousness of the peasant; he passed from one to the other without thinking, automatically. . . . As soon as a critical interanimation of languages began to occur in the consciousness of our peasant, . . . the inviolability and predetermined quality of these languages came to an end, and the necessity of actively choosing one's orientation among them began.”

That this process can't be thought in absolute, once-for-all terms is clear from Bakhtin's theorization of polyglossia at the micro-level of concrete, in-

tralinguistic heteroglossia: “Closely connected with the problem of polyglossia and inescapable from it is the problem of heteroglossia *within* a language. . . . The novel senses itself on the border between the completed, dominant literary language and the extraliterary languages that know heteroglossia.” “[A]t any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom.” “Unitary language constitutes the theoretical expression of the historical processes of linguistic unification and centralization, an expression of the centripetal forces of language, . . . and at every moment of its linguistic life it is opposed to the [centrifugal] realities of heteroglossia.” But abstract theoretical expression can “oppose” what concrete historical experience must conflate: “Every utterance participates in the ‘unitary language’ (in its centripetal forces and tendencies) and at the same time partakes of social and historical heteroglossia.”

As he makes clear, Bakhtin formulates his historical linguistics against a reigning Saussurean model, whose structuralist theorization of *langue* and *parole*, synchronic language system and diachronic individual utterance, unconditionally dichotomizes linguistic elements that he would conceive dialectically. Like the later Lukács (although within a distinct strain of Marxist thought), Bakhtin pursues the historicity of novelistic usage to the point at which synchrony bleeds into diachrony.⁸ In these terms, Bakhtinian “novelization” might be understood as a feature of all utterance which becomes generically specified and actualized as “the novel” under the intense polyglossia of early modernity. On the one hand, classical antiquity already knew the “cheerfully irreverent quotation marks” characteristic of generic parody. But on the other hand, the dialogic effect of free indirect discourse,⁹ whereby the “novelistic image of another’s style . . . must be taken in *intonational quotation marks* within the system of direct authorial speech,” is the most distinctive historical marker of novelistic discourse in the specific and generic sense of that term. In Ortega’s account of the modernist novel we see the problem-solving mechanism of the novel genre operating in the dimension of historical diachrony to accommodate the formal dissonance of form-as-content within the interior realm of character. In his preoccupation with the micro-dialectics of language use, Bakhtin works within the dimension of historical synchrony to show that the matching of matter to form peculiar to the novel genre takes place not only at the most general, but also at the most minute and local, levels of composition.

8. See above, headnote to pt. 4. Deeply influenced by Russian formalism as much as by Russian Marxism, Bakhtin followed Viktor Shklovsky in the direction of Bertolt Brecht. Like his other oppositions (e.g., epic versus novel), Bakhtin’s apparent dichotomization of “poetry” versus “novel,” of poetic ambiguity versus prosaic double-voicedness, requires an alertly dialectical reader. Similarly, his tendency to personify language, to attribute to it intentional and even appropriative agency, points both toward the historical materialist view of language as social practice and toward the (post)structuralist tendency toward linguistic fetishization.

9. On free indirect discourse see below, chs. 21, 22.

Mikhail M. Bakhtin

*From The Dialogic***Imagination:****Four Essays****Epic and Novel: Toward a Methodology for the Study of the Novel**

The study of the novel as a genre is distinguished by peculiar difficulties. This is due to the unique nature of the object itself: the novel is the sole genre that continues to develop, that is as yet uncompleted. The forces that define it as a genre are at work before our very eyes: the birth and development of the novel as a genre takes place in the full light of the historical day. The generic skeleton of the novel is still far from having hardened, and we cannot foresee all its plastic possibilities.

We know other genres, as genres, in their completed aspect, that is, as more or less fixed pre-existing forms into which one may then pour artistic experience. The primordial process of their formation lies outside historically documented observation. We encounter the epic as a genre that has not only long since completed its development, but one that is already antiquated. With certain reservations we can say the same for the other major genres, even for tragedy. The life they have in history, the life with which we are familiar, is the life they have lived as already completed genres, with a hardened and no longer flexible skeleton. Each of them has developed its own canon that operates in literature as an authentic historical force.

All these genres, or in any case their defining features, are considerably older than written language and the book, and to the present day they retain their ancient oral and auditory characteristics. Of all the major genres only the novel is younger than writing and the book: it alone is organically receptive to new forms of mute perception, that is, to reading. But of critical importance here is the fact that the novel has no canon of its own, as do other genres; only individual examples of the novel are historically active, not a generic canon as such. Studying other genres is analogous to studying dead languages; studying the novel, on the other hand, is like studying languages that are not only alive, but still young.

This explains the extraordinary difficulty inherent in formulating a theory of the novel. For such a theory has at its heart an object of study completely different from that which theory treats in other genres. The novel is not merely

The numbered notes to this chapter are the author's. Those designated by letters are by the editor of the original volume.

one genre among other genres. Among genres long since completed and in part already dead, the novel is the only developing genre. It is the only genre that was born and nourished in a new era of world history and therefore it is deeply akin to that era, whereas the other major genres entered that era as already fixed forms, as an inheritance, and only now are they adapting themselves—some better, some worse—to the new conditions of their existence. Compared with them, the novel appears to be a creature from an alien species. It gets on poorly with other genres. It fights for its own hegemony in literature; wherever it triumphs, the other older genres go into decline. Significantly, the best book on the history of the ancient novel—that by Erwin Rohde^a—does not so much recount the history of the novel as it does illustrate the process of disintegration that affected all major genres in antiquity.

The mutual interaction of genres within a single unified literary period is a problem of great interest and importance. In certain eras—the Greek classical period, the Golden Age of Roman literature, the neoclassical period—all genres in “high” literature (that is, the literature of ruling social groups) harmoniously reinforce each other to a significant extent; the whole of literature, conceived as a totality of genres, becomes an organic unity of the highest order. But it is characteristic of the novel that it never enters into this whole, it does not participate in any harmony of the genres. In these eras the novel has an unofficial existence, outside “high” literature. Only already completed genres, with fully formed and well-defined generic contours, can enter into such a literature as a hierarchically organized, organic whole. They can mutually delimit and mutually complement each other, while yet preserving their own generic natures. Each is a unit, and all units are interrelated by virtue of certain features of deep structure that they all have in common.

The great organic poetics of the past—those of Aristotle, Horace, Boileau—are permeated with a deep sense of the wholeness of literature and of the harmonious interaction of all genres contained within this whole. It is as if they literally hear this harmony of the genres. In this is their strength—the inimitable, all-embracing fullness and exhaustiveness of such poetics. And they all, as a consequence, ignore the novel. Scholarly poetics of the nineteenth century lack this integrity: they are eclectic, descriptive; their aim is not a living and organic fullness but rather an abstract and encyclopedic comprehensiveness. They do not concern themselves with the actual possibility of specific genres coexisting within the living whole of literature in a given era; they are concerned rather with their coexistence in a maximally complete anthology. Of course these poetics can no longer ignore the novel—they simply add it (albeit in a place of honor) to already existing genres (and thus it enters the roster as merely one genre among many; in literature conceived as a living whole, on the other hand, it would have to be included in a completely different way).

We have already said that the novel gets on poorly with other genres. There can be no talk of a harmony deriving from mutual limitation and complementariness. The novel parodies other genres (precisely in their role as genres); it exposes the conventionality of their forms and their language; it squeezes out some genres and incorporates others into its own peculiar struc-

ture, re-formulating and re-accentuating them. Historians of literature sometimes tend to see in this merely the struggle of literary tendencies and schools. Such struggles of course exist, but they are peripheral phenomena and historically insignificant. Behind them one must be sensitive to the deeper and more truly historical struggle of genres, the establishment and growth of a generic skeleton of literature.

Of particular interest are those eras when the novel becomes the dominant genre. All literature is then caught up in the process of “becoming,” and in a special kind of “generic criticism.” This occurred 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. In an era when the novel reigns supreme, almost all the remaining genres are to a greater or lesser extent “novelized”: drama (for example Ibsen, Hauptmann, the whole of Naturalist drama), epic poetry (for example, *Childe Harold* and especially Byron’s *Don Juan*), even lyric poetry (as an extreme example, Heine’s lyrical verse). Those genres that stubbornly preserve their old canonic nature begin to appear stylized. In general any strict adherence to a genre begins to feel like a stylization, a stylization taken to the point of parody, despite the artistic intent of the author. In an environment where the novel is the dominant genre, the conventional languages of strictly canonical genres begin to sound in new ways, which are quite different from the ways they sounded in those eras when the novel was *not* included in “high” literature.

Parodic stylizations of canonized genres and styles occupy an essential place in the novel. In the era of the novel’s creative ascendancy—and even more so in the periods of preparation preceding this era—literature was flooded with parodies and travesties of all the high genres (parodies precisely of genres, and not of individual authors or schools)—parodies that are the precursors, “companions” to the novel, in their own way studies for it. But it is characteristic that the novel does not permit any of these various individual manifestations of itself to stabilize. Throughout its entire history there is a consistent parodying or travesty of dominant or fashionable novels that attempt to become models for the genre: parodies on the chivalric romance of adventure (*Dit d’aventures*, the first such parody, belongs to the thirteenth century), on the Baroque novel, the pastoral novel (Sorel’s *Le Berger extravagant*),^b the Sentimental novel (Fielding, and *The Second Grandison* of Musäus) and so forth. This ability of the novel to criticize itself is a remarkable feature of this ever-developing genre.

What are the salient features of this novelization of other genres suggested by us above? They become more free and flexible, their language renews itself by incorporating extraliterary heteroglossia and the “novelistic” layers of literary language, they become dialogized, permeated with laughter, irony, humor, elements of self-parody and finally—this is the most important thing—the novel inserts into these other genres an indeterminacy, a certain semantic openendedness, a living contact with unfinished, still-evolving contemporary reality (the openended present). As we will see below, all these phenomena are explained by the transposition of other genres into this new and peculiar zone

for structuring artistic models (a zone of contact with the present in all its openendedness), a zone that was first appropriated by the novel.

It is of course impossible to explain the phenomenon of novelization purely by reference to the direct and unmediated influence of the novel itself. Even where such influence can be precisely established and demonstrated, it is intimately interwoven with those direct changes in reality itself that also determine the novel and that condition its dominance in a given era. The novel is the only developing genre and therefore it reflects more deeply, more essentially, more sensitively and rapidly, reality itself in the process of its unfolding. Only that which is itself developing can comprehend development as a process. The novel has become the leading hero in the drama of literary development in our time precisely because it best of all reflects the tendencies of a new world still in the making; it is, after all, the only genre born of this new world and in total affinity with it. In many respects the novel has anticipated, and continues to anticipate, the future development of literature as a whole. In the process of becoming the dominant genre, the novel sparks the renovation of all other genres, it infects them with its spirit of process and inconclusiveness. It draws them ineluctably into its orbit precisely because this orbit coincides with the basic direction of the development of literature as a whole. In this lies the exceptional importance of the novel, as an object of study for the theory as well as the history of literature.

Unfortunately, historians of literature usually reduce this struggle between the novel and other already completed genres, all these aspects of novelization, to the actual real-life struggle among “schools” and “trends.” A novelized poem, for example, they call a “romantic poem” (which of course it is) and believe that in so doing they have exhausted the subject. They do not see beneath the superficial hustle and bustle of literary process the major and crucial fates of literature and language, whose great heroes turn out to be first and foremost genres, and whose “trends” and “schools” are but second- or third-rank protagonists.

The utter inadequacy of literary theory is exposed when it is forced to deal with the novel. In the case of other genres literary theory works confidently and precisely, since there is a finished and already formed object, definite and clear. These genres preserve their rigidity and canonic quality in all classical eras of their development; variations from era to era, from trend to trend or school to school are peripheral and do not affect their ossified generic skeleton. Right up to the present day, in fact, theory dealing with these already completed genres can add almost nothing to Aristotle’s formulations. Aristotle’s poetics, although occasionally so deeply embedded as to be almost invisible, remains the stable foundation for the theory of genres. Everything works as long as there is no mention of the novel. But the existence of novelized genres already leads theory into a blind alley. Faced with the problem of the novel, genre theory must submit to a radical re-structuring.

Thanks to the meticulous work of scholars, a huge amount of historical material has accumulated and many questions concerning the evolution of various types of novels have been clarified—but the problem of the novel genre

as a whole has not yet found anything like a satisfactory principled resolution. The novel continues to be seen as one genre among many; attempts are made to distinguish it as an already completed genre from other already completed genres, to discover its internal canon—one that would function as a well-defined system of rigid generic factors. In the vast majority of cases, work on the novel is reduced to mere cataloging, a description of all variants on the novel—albeit as comprehensive as possible. But the results of these descriptions never succeed in giving us as much as a hint of comprehensive formula for the novel as a genre. In addition, the experts have not managed to isolate a single definite, stable characteristic of the novel—without adding a reservation, which immediately disqualifies it altogether as a generic characteristic.

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I find three basic characteristics that fundamentally distinguish the novel in principle from other genres: (1) its stylistic three-dimensionality, which is linked with the multi-linguaged consciousness realized in the novel; (2) the radical change it effects in the temporal coordinates of the literary image; (3) 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.

These three characteristics of the novel are all organically interrelated and have all been powerfully affected by a very specific rupture in the history of European civilization: its emergence from a socially isolated and culturally deaf semipatriarchal society, and its entrance into international and interlingual contacts and relationships. A multitude of different languages, cultures and times became available to Europe, and this became a decisive factor in its life and thought.

In another work¹ I have already investigated the first stylistic peculiarity of the novel, the one resulting from the active polyglossia of the new world, the new culture and its new creative literary consciousness. I will summarize here only the basic points.

Polyglossia had always existed (it is more ancient than pure, canonic monoglossia), but it had not been a factor in literary creation; an artistically conscious choice between languages did not serve as the creative center of the literary and language process. Classical Greeks had a feeling both for “languages” and for the epochs of language, for the various Greek literary dialects (tragedy is a polyglot genre), but creative consciousness was realized in closed, pure languages (although in actual fact they were mixed). Polyglossia was appropriated and canonized among all the genres.

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In ancient literature it is memory, and not knowledge, that serves as the source and power for the creative impulse. That is how it was, it is impossible to change it: the tradition of the past is sacred. There is as yet no consciousness of the possible relativity of any past.

The novel, by contrast, is determined by experience, knowledge and prac-

tice (the future). In the era of Hellenism a closer contact with the heroes of the Trojan epic cycle began to be felt; epic is already being transformed into novel. Epic material is transposed into novelistic material, into precisely that zone of contact that passes through the intermediate stages of familiarization and laughter. When the novel becomes the dominant genre, epistemology becomes the dominant discipline.

The epic past is called the “absolute past” for good reason: it is both monochronic and valorized (hierarchical); it lacks any relativity, that is, any gradual, purely temporal progressions that might connect it with the present. It is walled off absolutely from all subsequent times, and above all from those times in which the singer and his listeners are located. This boundary, consequently, is immanent in the form of the epic itself and is felt and heard in its every word.

To destroy this boundary is to destroy the form of the epic as a genre. But precisely because it is walled off from all subsequent times, the epic past is absolute and complete. It is as closed as a circle; inside it everything is finished, already over. There is no place in the epic world for any openendedness, indecision, indeterminacy. There are no loopholes in it through which we glimpse the future; it suffices unto itself, neither supposing any continuation nor requiring it. Temporal and valorized definitions are here fused into a single inseparable whole (as they are also fused in the semantic layers of ancient languages). Everything incorporated into this past was simultaneously incorporated into a condition of authentic essence and significance, but therefore also took on conclusiveness and finality, depriving itself, so to speak, of all rights and potential for a real continuation. Absolute conclusiveness and closedness is the outstanding feature of the temporally valorized epic past.

Let us move on to tradition. The epic past, walled off from all subsequent times by an impenetrable boundary, is preserved and revealed only in the form of national tradition. The epic relies entirely on this tradition. Important here is not the fact that tradition is the factual source for the epic—what matters rather is that a reliance on tradition is immanent in the very form of the epic, just as the absolute past is immanent in it. Epic discourse is a discourse handed down by tradition. By its very nature the epic world of the absolute past is inaccessible to personal experience and does not permit an individual, personal point of view or evaluation. One cannot glimpse it, grope for it, touch it; one cannot look at it from just any point of view; it is impossible to experience it, analyze it, take it apart, penetrate into its core. It is given solely as tradition, sacred and sacrosanct, evaluated in the same way by all and demanding a pious attitude toward itself. Let us repeat: the important thing is not the factual sources of the epic, not the content of its historical events, nor the declarations of its authors—the important thing is this formal constitutive characteristic of the epic as a genre (to be more precise, the formal-substantive characteristic): its reliance on impersonal and sacrosanct tradition, on a commonly held evaluation and point of view—which excludes any possibility of another approach—and which therefore displays a profound piety toward the subject described and toward the language used to describe it, the language of tradition.

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Precisely here, in popular laughter, the authentic folkloric roots of the novel are to be sought. The present, contemporary life as such, “I myself” and “my contemporaries,” “my time”—all these concepts were originally the objects of ambivalent laughter, at the same time cheerful and annihilating. It is precisely here that a fundamentally new attitude toward language and toward the word is generated. Alongside direct representation—laughing at living reality—there flourish parody and travesty of all high genres and of all lofty models embodied in national myth. The “absolute past” of gods, demigods and heroes is here, in parodies and even more so in travesties, “contemporized”: it is brought low, represented on a plane equal with contemporary life, in an everyday environment, in the low language of contemporaneity.

In classical times this elemental popular laughter gave rise directly to a broad and varied field of ancient literature, one that the ancients themselves expressively labeled *spoudogeloion*, that is, the field of “serio-comical.” The weakly plotted mimes of Sophron,^d all the bucolic poems, the fable, early memoir literature (the *Epidemiai* of Ion of Chios,^e the *Homilae* of Critias),^f pamphlets all belong to this field; here the ancients themselves included the “Socratic dialogues” (as a genre), here belong Roman satire (Lucilius,^g Horace, Persius,^h Juvenal), the extensive literature of the “Symposia” and finally Menippean satire (as a genre) and dialogues of the Lucianic type. All these genres, permeated with the “serio-comical,” are authentic predecessors of the novel. In addition, several of these genres are thoroughly novelistic, containing in embryo and sometimes in developed form the basic elements characteristic of the most important later prototypes of the European novel. The authentic spirit of the novel as a developing genre is present in them to an incomparably greater degree than in the so-called Greek novels (the sole ancient genre bearing the name). The Greek novel [Greek romance] had a powerful influence on the European novel precisely in the Baroque era, that is, precisely at that time when novel theory was beginning to be reworked (Abbé Huet)ⁱ and when the very term “novel” was being tightened and made more precise. Out of all novelistic works of antiquity, the term “novel” was, therefore, attached to the Greek novel alone. Nevertheless, the serio-comical genres mentioned above anticipate the more essential historical aspects in the development of the novel in modern times, even though they lack that sturdy skeleton of plot and composition that we have grown accustomed to demand from the novel as a genre. This applies in particular to the Socratic dialogues, which may be called—to rephrase Friedrich Schlegel—“the novels of their time,” and also to Menippean satire (including the *Satyricon* of Petronius), whose role in the history of the novel is immense and as yet inadequately appreciated by scholarship. These serio-comical genres were the first authentic and essential step in the evolution of the novel as the genre of becoming.

Precisely what is this novelistic spirit in these serio-comical genres, and on what basis do we claim them as the first step in the development of the novel? It is this: contemporary reality serves as their subject, and—even more important—it is the starting point for understanding, evaluating and formulating such genres. For the first time, the subject of serious literary representation (although, it is true, at the same time comical) is portrayed without any

distance, on the level of contemporary reality, in a zone of direct and even crude contact. Even where the past or myth serves as the subject of representation in these genres there is no epic distance, and contemporary reality provides the point of view. Of special significance in this process of demolishing distance is the comical origin of these genres: they derive from folklore (popular laughter). It is precisely laughter that destroys the epic, and in general destroys any hierarchical (distancing and valorized) distance. As a distanced image a subject cannot be comical; to be made comical, it must be brought close. Everything that makes us laugh is close at hand, all comical creativity works in a zone of maximal proximity. 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 of 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.

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It is precisely this new situation, that of the original formally present author in a zone of contact with the world he is depicting, that makes possible at all the appearance of the authorial image on the field of representation. This new positioning of the author must be considered one of the most important results of surmounting epic (hierarchical) distance. The enormous formal, compositional and stylistic implications this new positioning of the author has for the specific evolution of the novel as a genre require no further explanation.

Let us consider in this connection Gogol's *Dead Souls*. The form of his epic Gogol modeled on the *Divine Comedy*; it was in this form that he imagined the greatness of his work lay. But what in fact emerged was Menippean satire. Once having entered the zone of familiar contact he was unable to leave it, and he was unable to transfer into this sphere distanced and positive images. The distanced images of the epic and the images of familiar contact can never meet on the same field of representation; pathos broke into the world of Menippean satire like a foreign body, affirmative pathos became abstract and simply fell out of the work. Gogol could not manage the move from Hell to Purgatory and then to Paradise with the same people and in the same work; no continuous transition was possible. The tragedy of Gogol is to a very real extent the tragedy of a genre (taking genre not in its formalistic sense, but as

a zone and a field of valorized perception, as a mode for representing the world). Gogol lost Russia, that is, he lost his blueprint for perceiving and representing her; he got muddled somewhere between memory and familiar contact—to put it bluntly, he could not find the proper focus on his binoculars.

But as a new starting point for artistic orientation, contemporaneity by no means excludes the depiction of a heroic past, and without any travesty. As an example we have Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*ⁱ (not, of course, a serio-comical work, but one that does lie on the borderline). Its subject is the past, its hero is Cyrus the Great. But the starting point of representation is Xenophon's own contemporary reality; it is that which provides the point of view and value orientation. It is characteristic that the heroic past chosen here is not the national past but a foreign and barbaric past. The world has already opened up; one's own monolithic and closed world (the world of the epic) has been replaced by the great world of one's own plus "the others." This choice of an alien heroism was the result of a heightened interest, characteristic for Xenophon's time, in the Orient—in Eastern culture, ideology and sociopolitical forms. A light was expected from the East. Cultural interanimation, interaction of ideologies and languages had already begun. Also characteristic was the idealization of the oriental despot, and here one senses Xenophon's own contemporary reality with its idea (shared widely by his contemporaries) of renovating Greek political forms in a spirit close to oriental autocracy. Such an idealization of oriental autocracy is of course deeply alien to the entire spirit of Hellenic national tradition. Characteristic and even extremely typical for the time was the concept of an individual's upbringing; this was to become one of the most important and productive themes for the new European novel. Also characteristic is the intentional and completely explicit transfer onto the image of Cyrus the Great of the features of Cyrus the Younger, a contemporary of Xenophon in whose campaign Xenophon participated. And one also senses here the personality of another contemporary and close friend of Xenophon, Socrates; thus are elements of the memoir introduced into the work. As a final characteristic we might mention the form of the work itself—dialogues framed by a story. In such a way, contemporary reality and its concerns become the starting point and center of an artistic ideological thinking and evaluating of the past. This past is given us without distancing, on the level of contemporary reality, although not (it is true) in its low but in its high forms, on the level of its most advanced concerns. Let us comment upon the somewhat utopian overtones in this work that reflect a slight (and uncertain) shift of its contemporaneity from the past toward the future. *Cyropaedia* is a novel, in the most basic sense of the word.

The depiction of a past in the novel in no sense presumes the modernization of this past (in Xenophon there are, of course, traces of such modernization). On the contrary, only in the novel have we the possibility of an authentically objective portrayal of the past as the past. Contemporary reality with its new experiences is retained as a way of seeing, it has the depth, sharpness, breadth and vividness peculiar to that way of seeing, but should not in any way penetrate into the already portrayed content of the past, as a force moderniz-

ing and distorting the uniqueness of that past. After all, every great and serious contemporaneity requires an authentic profile of the past, an authentic other language from another time.

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We will summarize with some conclusions.

The present, in its all openendedness, taken as a starting point and center for artistic and ideological orientation, is an enormous revolution in the creative consciousness of man. In the European world this reorientation and destruction of the old hierarchy of temporalities received its crucial generic expression on the boundary between classic antiquity and Hellenism, and in the new world during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. The fundamental constituents of the novel as a genre were formed in these eras, although some of the separate elements making up the novel were present much earlier, and the novel's roots must ultimately be sought in folklore. In these eras all other major genres had already long since come to completion, they were already old and almost ossified genres. They were all permeated from top to bottom with a more ancient hierarchization of temporalities. The novel, from the very beginning, developed as a genre that had at its core a new way of conceptualizing time. The absolute past, tradition, hierarchical distance played no role in the formation of the novel as a genre (such spatiotemporal categories did play a role, though insignificant, in certain periods of the novel's development, when it was slightly influenced by the epic—for example in the Baroque novel). 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 very 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. At its core lay personal experience and free creative imagination. Thus a new, sober artistic-prose novelistic image and a new critical scientific perception came into being simultaneously. From the very beginning, then, the novel was made of different clay than the other already completed genres; it is a different breed, and with it and in it is born the future of all literature. Once it came into being, it could never be merely one genre among others, and it could not erect rules for interrelating with others in peaceful and harmonious co-existence. In the presence of the novel, all other genres somehow have a different resonance. A lengthy battle for the novelization of the other genres began, a battle to drag them into a zone of contact with reality. The course of this battle has been complex and tortuous.

The novelization of literature does not imply attaching to already completed genres a generic canon that is alien to them, not theirs. The novel, after all, has no canon of its own. It is, by its very nature, not canonic. It is plasticity itself. It is a genre that is ever questing, ever examining itself and subjecting its established forms to review. Such, indeed, is the only possibility open to a genre that structures itself in a zone of direct contact with developing reality.

Therefore, the novelization of other genres does not imply their subjection to an alien generic canon; on the contrary, novelization implies their liberation from all that serves as a brake on their unique development, from all that would change them along with the novel into some sort of stylization of forms that have outlived themselves.

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From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse

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This novelistic image of another's style (with the direct metaphors that it incorporates) must be taken in *intonational quotation marks* within the system of direct authorial speech (postulated by us here), that is, taken as if the image were parodic and ironic. Were we to discard intonational quotation marks and take the use of metaphors here as the direct means by which the author represents himself, we would in so doing destroy the novelistic image [*obraz*] of another's style, that is, destroy precisely that image that Pushkin, as novelist, constructs here. Lensky's represented poetic speech is very distant from the direct word of the author himself as we have postulated it: Lensky's language functions merely as an *object* of representation (almost as a material thing); the author himself is almost completely outside Lensky's language (it is only his parodic and ironic accents that penetrate this "language of another").

Another example from *Onegin* [I.46, 1-7]:

He who has lived and thought can never
 Look on mankind without disdain;
 He who has felt is haunted ever
 By days that will not come again;
 No more for him enchantment's semblance,
 On him the serpent of remembrance
 Feeds, and remorse corrodes his heart.

One might think that we had before us a direct poetic maxim of the author himself. But these ensuing lines:

All this is likely to impart
 An added charm to conversation

(spoken by the posited author to Onegin) already give an objective coloration to this maxim. Although it is part of authorial speech, it is structured in a realm where Onegin's voice and Onegin's style hold sway. We once again have an example of the novelistic image of another's style. But it is structured somewhat differently. All the images in this excerpt become in turn the object of representation: they are represented as Onegin's style, Onegin's world view. In this respect they are similar to the images in Lensky's song. But unlike Lensky's song these images, being the object of representation, at the same time represent themselves, or more precisely they express the thought of the author, since the author agrees with this maxim to a certain extent, while nevertheless

seeing the limitations and insufficiency of the Onegin-Byronic world view and style. Thus the author (that is, the direct authorial word we are postulating) is considerably closer to Onegin's "language" than to the "language" of Lensky: he is no longer merely outside it but in it as well; he not only represents this "language" but to a considerable extent he himself speaks in this "language." The hero is located in a zone of potential conversation with the author, in a zone of *dialogical contact*. The author sees the limitations and insufficiency of the Oneginesque language and world view that was still fashionable in his (the author's) time; he sees its absurd, atomized and artificial face ("A Muscovite in the cloak of a Childe Harold," "A lexicon full of fashionable words," "Is he not really a parody?"); at the same time, however, the author can express some of his most basic ideas and observations only with the help of this "language," despite the fact that as a system it is a historical dead end. The image of another's language and outlook on the world [*čuzoe jazykmirovozzrenie*], simultaneously represented *and* representing, is extremely typical of the novel; the greatest novelistic images (for example, the figure of Don Quixote) belong precisely to this type. These descriptive and expressive means that are direct and poetic (in the narrow sense) retain their direct significance when they are incorporated into such a figure, but at the same time they are "qualified" and "externalized," shown as something historically relative, delimited and incomplete—in the novel they, so to speak, criticize themselves.

They both illuminate the world and are themselves illuminated. Just as all there is to know about a man is not exhausted by his situation in life, so all there is to know about the world is not exhausted by a particular discourse about it; every available style is restricted, there are protocols that must be observed.

The author represents Onegin's "language" (a period-bound language associated with a particular world view) as an image that speaks, and that is therefore preconditioned [*ogovorennij govorjaščij*]. Therefore, the author is far from neutral in his relationship to this image: to a certain extent he even polemicalizes with this language, argues with it, agrees with it (although with conditions), interrogates it, eavesdrops on it, but also ridicules it, parodically exaggerates it and so forth—in other words, the author is in a dialogical relationship with Onegin's language; the author is actually *conversing* with Onegin, and such a conversation is the fundamental constitutive element of all novelistic style as well as of the controlling image of Onegin's language. The author represents this language, carries on a conversation with it, and the conversation penetrates into the interior of this language-image and dialogizes it from within. And all essentially novelistic images share this quality: they are internally dialogized images—of the languages, styles, world views of another (all of which are inseparable from their concrete linguistic and stylistic embodiment). The reigning theories of poetic imagery are completely powerless to analyze these complex internally dialogized images of whole languages.

Analyzing *Onegin*, it is possible to establish without much trouble that in addition to the images of Onegin's language and Lensky's language there exists yet another complex language-image, a highly profound one, associated with Tatiana. At the heart of this image is a distinctive internally dialogized combi-

nation of the language of a “provincial miss”—dreamy, sentimental, Richardsonian—with the folk language of fairy tales and stories from everyday life told to her by her nurse, together with peasant songs, fortune telling and so forth. What is limited, almost comical, old-fashioned in Tatiana’s language is combined with the boundless, serious and direct truth of the language of the folk. The author not only represents this language but is also in fact speaking in it. Considerable sections of the novel are presented in Tatiana’s voice-zone (this zone, as is the case with zones of all other characters, is not set off from authorial speech in any formally compositional or syntactical way; it is a zone demarcated purely in terms of style).

In addition to the character-zones, which take up a considerable portion of authorial speech in the novel, we also find in *Onegin* individual parodic stylizations of the languages associated with various literary schools and genres of the time (such as a parody on the neoclassical epic formulaic opening, parodic epitaphs, etc.). And the author’s lyrical digressions themselves are by no means free of parodically stylized or parodically polemicizing elements, which to a certain degree enter into the zones of the characters as well. Thus, from a stylistic point of view, the lyrical digressions in the novel are categorically distinct from the direct lyrics of Pushkin. The former are not lyrics, they are the novelistic image of *lyrics* (and of the poet as lyricist). As a result, under careful analysis almost the entire novel breaks down into images of languages that are connected to one another and with the author via their own characteristic dialogical relationships. These languages are, in the main, the period-bound, generic and common everyday varieties of the epoch’s literary language, a language that is in itself ever evolving and in process of renewal. All these languages, with all the direct expressive means at their disposal, themselves become the object of representation, are presented as images of whole languages, characteristically typical images, highly limited and sometimes almost comical. But at the same time these represented languages themselves do the work of representing to a significant degree. The author participates in the novel (he is omnipresent in it) with *almost no direct language of his own*. The language of the novel is a *system* of languages that mutually and ideologically interanimate each other. It is impossible to describe and analyze it as a single unitary language.

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The stylistic structure of *Evgenij Onegin* is typical of all authentic novels. 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. Language in the novel not only represents, but itself serves as the object of representation. Novelistic discourse is always criticizing itself.

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One of the most ancient and widespread forms for representing the direct word of another is *parody*. What is distinctive about parody as a form?

Take, for example, the parodic *sonnets* with which *Don Quixote* begins.

Although they are impeccably structured as sonnets, we could never possibly assign them to the sonnet genre. In *Don Quixote* they appear as part of a novel—but even the isolated parodic sonnet (outside the novel) could not be classified generically as a sonnet. In a parodied sonnet, the sonnet form is not a genre at all; that is, it is not the form of a whole but is rather *the object of representation*: the sonnet here is the *hero of the parody*. In a parody on the sonnet, we must first of all recognize a sonnet, recognize its form, its specific style, its manner of seeing, its manner of selecting from and evaluating the world—the world view of the sonnet, as it were. A parody may represent and ridicule these distinctive features of the sonnet well or badly, profoundly or superficially. But in any case, what results is not a sonnet, but rather the *image of a sonnet*.

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It is our conviction that there never was a single strictly straightforward genre, no single type of direct discourse—artistic, rhetorical, philosophical, religious, ordinary everyday—that did not have its own parodying and travesty double, its own comic-ironic *contre-partie*. What is more, these parodic doubles and laughing reflections of the direct word were, in some cases, just as sanctioned by tradition and just as canonized as their elevated models.

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For any and every straightforward genre, any and every direct discourse—epic, tragic, lyric, philosophical—may and indeed must itself become the object of representation, the object of a parodic travesty “mimicry.” It is as if such mimicry rips the word away from its object, disunifies the two, shows that a given straightforward generic word—epic or tragic—is one-sided, bounded, incapable of exhausting the object; the process of parodying forces us to experience those sides of the object that are not otherwise included in a given genre or a given style. Parodic-travesty literature introduces the permanent corrective of laughter, of a critique on the one-sided seriousness of the lofty direct word, the corrective of reality that is always richer, more fundamental and most importantly *too contradictory and heteroglot* to be fit into a high and straightforward genre. The high genres are monotonic, while the “fourth drama” and genres akin to it retain the ancient binary tone of the word. Ancient parody was free of any nihilistic denial. It was not, after all, the heroes who were parodied, nor the Trojan War and its participants; what was parodied was only its epic heroization; not Hercules and his exploits but their tragic heroization. The genre itself, the style, the language are all put in cheerfully irreverent quotation marks, and they are perceived against a backdrop of a contradictory reality that cannot be confined within their narrow frames. The direct and serious word was revealed, in all its limitations and insufficiency, only after it had become the laughing image of that word—but it was by no means discredited in the process. Thus it did not bother the Greeks to think that Homer himself wrote a parody of Homeric style.

Evidence from Roman literature casts additional light on the problem of the “fourth drama.” In Rome its functions were filled by the Atellan literary

farces. When, beginning with the period of Sulla, the Atellan farces were re-worked for literature and fixed in texts, they were staged after the tragedy, during the exodium.^k Thus the Atellan farces^l of Pomponius^m and Noviusⁿ were performed after the tragedies of Accius.^o The strictest correspondence was observed between the Atellan farces and the tragedies. The insistence upon a single source for both the serious and the comic material was more strict and sustained in Rome than had been the case in Greece. At a later date, the Atellan farces that had been performed during the tragic exodium were replaced by mimes: apparently they also travestied the material of the preceding tragedy.

The attempt to accompany every tragic (or serious) treatment of material with a parallel comic (parodic-travesty) treatment also found its reflection in the graphic arts of the Romans. In the so-called “consular diptychs,” comic scenes in grotesque masks were usually depicted on the left, while on the right were found tragic scenes. An analogous counterposing of scenes can also be observed in the mural paintings in Pompeii. Dieterich, who made use of the Pompeian paintings to unlock the secret of ancient comic forms, describes, for example, two frescoes arranged facing each other: on the one we see Andromeda being rescued by Perseus, on the opposite wall is a picture of a naked woman bathing in a pond with a serpent wrapped around her; peasants are trying to come to her aid with sticks and stones.² This is an obvious parodic travesty of the first mythological scene. The plot of the myth is relocated in a specifically prosaic reality; Perseus himself is replaced by peasants with rude weapons (compare the knightly world of Don Quixote translated into Sancho’s language).

From a whole series of sources, and particularly from the fourteenth book of Atheneus, we know of the existence of an enormous world of highly heterogeneous parodic-travesty forms; we know, for instance, of the performances of phallophors^p and deikelists^q [mimers] who on the one hand travestied national and local myths and on the other mimicked the characteristically typical “languages” and speech mannerisms of foreign doctors, procurers, *betaerae*, peasants, slaves and so forth. The parodic-travesty literature of southern Italy was especially rich and varied. Comic parodic plays and riddles flourished there, as did parodies of the speeches of scholars and judges, and forms of parodic and agonistic dialogues, one of whose variants became a structural component of Greek comedy. Here the word lived an utterly different life from that which it lived in the high, straightforward genres of Greece.

It is worth remembering that the most primitive mime, that is, a wandering actor of the most banal sort, always had to possess, as a professional minimum, two skills: the ability to imitate the voices of birds and animals, and the ability to mimic the speech, facial expressions and gesticulation of a slave, a peasant, a procurer, a scholastic pedant and a foreigner. To this very day this is still the stock-in-trade for the farcical actor-impersonators at annual fairs.

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Some forms of parodic-travesty literature issue directly from the form of the genres being parodied—parodic poems, tragedies (Lucian’s *Tragopodagra*

["Gout-Tragedy"], for example), parodic judicial speeches and so forth. This is a parody and travesty in the narrow sense of the word. In other cases we find special forms of parody constituted as genres—satyr-drama, improvised comedy, satire, plotless dialogue [*bessjužetnyj dialog*] and others. As we have said above, parodied genres do not belong to the genres that they parody; that is, a parodic poem is not a poem at all. But the particular genres of the parodic-travesty word of the sort we have enumerated here are unstable, compositionally still unshaped, lacking a firm or definite generic skeleton. It can be said, then, that in ancient times the parodic-travesty word was (generically speaking) homeless. All these diverse parodic-travesty forms constituted, as it were, a special extra-generic or inter-generic world. But this world was unified, first of all, by a common purpose: to provide the corrective of laughter and criticism to all existing straightforward genres, languages, styles, voices; to force men to experience beneath these categories a different and contradictory reality that is otherwise not captured in them. Such laughter paved the way for the impiety of the novelistic form. In the second place, all these forms are unified by virtue of their shared subject: language itself, which everywhere serves as a means of direct expression, becomes in this new context the image of language, the image of the direct word. Consequently this extra-generic or inter-generic world is internally unified and even appears as its own kind of totality. Each separate element in it—parodic dialogue, scenes from everyday life, bucolic humor, etc.—is presented as if it were a fragment of some kind of unified whole. I imagine this whole to be something like an immense novel, multi-generic, multi-styled, mercilessly critical, soberly mocking, reflecting in all its fullness the heteroglossia and multiple voices of a given culture, people and epoch. In this huge novel—in this mirror of constantly evolving heteroglossia—any direct word and especially that of the dominant discourse is reflected as something more or less bounded, typical and characteristic of a particular era, aging, dying, ripe for change and renewal. And in actual fact, out of this huge complex of parodically reflected words and voices the ground was being prepared in ancient times for the rise of the novel, a genre formed of many styles and many images. But the novel could not *at that time* gather unto itself and make use of all the material that language images had made available. I have in mind here the "Greek romance," and Apuleius and Petronius. The ancient world was apparently not capable of going further than these.

These parodic-travesty forms prepared the ground for the novel in one very important, in fact decisive, respect. They liberated the object from the power of language in which it had become entangled as if in a net; they destroyed the homogenizing power of myth over language; they freed consciousness from the power of the direct word, destroyed the thick walls that had imprisoned consciousness within its own discourse, within its own language. A distance arose between language and reality that was to prove an indispensable condition for authentically realistic forms of discourse.

Linguistic consciousness—parodying the direct word, direct style, exploring its limits, its absurd sides, the face specific to an era—constituted itself *outside* this direct word and outside all its graphic and expressive means of representation. A new mode developed for working creatively with language:

the creating artist began to look at language from the outside, with another's eyes, from the point of view of a potentially different language and style. It is, after all, precisely in the light of another potential language or style that a given straightforward style is parodied, travestied, ridiculed. The creating consciousness stands, as it were, on the boundary line between languages and styles. This is, for the creating consciousness, a highly peculiar position to find itself in with regard to language. The aedile or rhapsode experienced himself in his own language, in his own discourse, in an utterly different way from the creator of "War between the Mice and the Frogs," or the creators of *Margites*.^r

One who creates a direct word—whether epic, tragic or lyric—deals only with the subject whose praises he sings, or represents, or expresses, and he does so in his own language that is perceived as the sole and fully adequate tool for realizing the word's direct, objectivized meaning. This meaning and the objects and themes that compose it are inseparable from the straightforward language of the person who creates it: the objects and themes are born and grow to maturity in this language, and in the national myth and national tradition that permeate this language. The position and tendency of the parodic-travestyng consciousness is, however, completely different: it, too, is oriented toward the object—but toward another's word as well, a parodied word *about* the object that in the process becomes *itself* an image. Thus is created that distance between language and reality we mentioned earlier. Language is transformed from the absolute dogma it had been within the narrow framework of a sealed-off and impermeable monoglossia into a working hypothesis for comprehending and expressing reality.

But such a full and complete transformation can occur only under certain conditions, namely, under the condition of thoroughgoing *polyglossia*.

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Closely connected with the problem of polyglossia and inseparable from it is the problem of heteroglossia *within* a language, that is, the problem of internal differentiation, the stratification characteristic of any national language. This problem is of primary importance for understanding the style and historical destinies of the modern European novel, that is, the novel since the seventeenth century. This latecomer reflects, in its stylistic structure, the struggle between two tendencies in the languages of European peoples: one a centralizing (unifying) tendency, the other a decentralizing tendency (that is, one that stratifies languages). The novel senses itself on the border between the completed, dominant literary language and the extraliterary languages that know heteroglossia; the novel either serves to further the centralizing tendencies of a new literary language in the process of taking shape (with its grammatical, stylistic and ideological norms), or—on the contrary—the novel fights for the renovation of an antiquated literary language, in the interests of those strata of the national language that have remained (to a greater or lesser degree) outside the centralizing and unifying influence of the artistic and ideological norm established by the dominant literary language. The literary-artistic consciousness of the modern novel, sensing itself on the border between two languages, one literary, the other extraliterary, each of which now knows hetero-

glossia, also senses itself on the border of time: it is extraordinarily sensitive to time in language, it senses time's shifts, the aging and renewing of language, the past and the future—and all in language.

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Thus it is that in parody two languages are crossed with each other, as well as two styles, two linguistic points of view, and in the final analysis two speaking subjects. It is true that only one of these languages (the one that is parodied) is present in its own right; the other is present invisibly, as an actualizing background for creating and perceiving. Parody is an intentional hybrid, but usually it is an intra-linguistic one, one that nourishes itself on the stratification of the literary language into generic languages and languages of various specific tendencies.

Every type of intentional stylistic hybrid is more or less dialogized. This means that the languages that are crossed in it relate to each other as do rejoinders in a dialogue; there is an argument between languages, an argument between styles of language. But it is not a dialogue in the narrative sense, nor in the abstract sense; rather it is a dialogue between points of view, each with its own concrete language that cannot be translated into the other.

Thus every parody is an intentional dialogized hybrid. Within it, languages and styles actively and mutually illuminate one another.

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Discourse in the Novel

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. Form and content in discourse are one, once we understand that verbal discourse is a social phenomenon—social throughout its entire range and in each and every one of its factors, from the sound image to the furthest reaches of abstract meaning.

It is this idea that has motivated our emphasis on “the stylistics of genre.” The separation of style and language from the question of genre has been largely responsible for a situation in which only individual and period-bound overtones of a style are the privileged subjects of study, while its basic social tone is ignored. The great historical destinies of genres are overshadowed by the petty vicissitudes of stylistic modifications, which in their turn are linked with individual artists and artistic movements. For this reason, stylistics has been deprived of an authentic philosophical and sociological approach to its problems; it has become bogged down in stylistic trivia; it is not able to sense behind the individual and period-bound shifts the great and anonymous destinies of artistic discourse itself. More often than not, 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. Stylistics is concerned not with living discourse but with a histological specimen made from it, with abstract linguistic discourse in the service of an artist's individual cre-

ative powers. But these individual and tendentious overtones of style, cut off from the fundamentally social modes in which discourse lives, inevitably come across as flat and abstract in such a formulation and cannot therefore be studied in organic unity with a work's semantic components.

Mikhail M.
Bakhtin

MODERN STYLISTICS AND THE NOVEL. Before the twentieth century, problems associated with a stylistics of the novel had not been precisely formulated—such a formulation could only have resulted from a recognition of the stylistic uniqueness of novelistic (artistic-prose) discourse.

For a long time treatment of the novel was limited to little more than abstract ideological examination and publicistic commentary. Concrete questions of stylistics were either not treated at all or treated in passing and in an arbitrary way: the discourse of artistic prose was either understood as being poetic in the narrow sense, and had the categories of traditional stylistics (based on the study of tropes) uncritically applied to it, or else such questions were limited to empty, evaluative terms for the characterization of language, such as “expressiveness,” “imagery,” “force,” “clarity” and so on—without providing these concepts with any stylistic significance, however vague and tentative.

Toward the end of the last century, as a counterweight to this abstract ideological way of viewing things, interest began to grow in the concrete problems of artistic craftsmanship in prose, in the problems of novel and short-story technique. However, in questions of stylistics the situation did not change in the slightest; attention was concentrated almost exclusively on problems of composition (in the broad sense of the word). But, as before, the peculiarities of the stylistic life of discourse in the novel (and in the short story as well) lacked an approach that was both principled and at the same time concrete (one is impossible without the other); the same arbitrary judgmental observations about language—the spirit of traditional stylistics—continued to reign supreme, and they totally overlooked the authentic nature of artistic prose.

There is a highly characteristic and widespread point of view that sees novelistic discourse as an extra-artistic medium, a discourse that is not worked into any special or unique style. After failure to find in novelistic discourse a purely poetic formulation (“poetic” in the narrow sense) as was expected, prose discourse is denied any artistic value at all; it is the same as practical speech for everyday life, or speech for scientific purposes, an artistically neutral means of communication.³

Such a point of view frees one from the necessity of undertaking stylistic analyses of the novel; it in fact gets rid of the very problem of a stylistics of the novel, permitting one to limit oneself to purely thematic analyses of it.

It was, however, precisely in the 1920s that this situation changed: the novelistic prose word began to win a place for itself in stylistics. On the one hand there appeared a series of concrete stylistic analyses of novelistic prose; on the other hand, systematic attempts were made to recognize and define the stylistic uniqueness of artistic prose as distinct from poetry.

But it was precisely these concrete analyses and these attempts at a principled approach that made patently obvious the fact that all the categories of traditional stylistics—in fact the very concept of a *poetic* artistic discourse,

which lies at the heart of such categories—were not applicable to novelistic discourse. Novelistic discourse proved to be the acid test for this whole way of conceiving style, exposing the narrowness of this type of thinking and its inadequacy in all areas of discourse's artistic life.

All attempts at concrete stylistic analysis of novelistic prose either strayed into linguistic descriptions of the language of a given novelist or else limited themselves to those separate, isolated stylistic elements of the novel that were includable (or gave the appearance of being includable) in the traditional categories of stylistics. In both instances the stylistic whole of the novel and of novelistic discourse eluded the investigator.

The novel as a whole is a phenomenon multiform in style and variform in speech and voice. In it the investigator is confronted with several heterogeneous stylistic unities, often located on different linguistic levels and subject to different stylistic controls.

We list below the basic types of compositional-stylistic unities into which the novelistic whole usually breaks down:

1. Direct authorial literary-artistic narration (in all its diverse variants);
2. Stylization of the various forms of oral everyday narration (*skaz*);
3. Stylization of the various forms of semiliterary (written) everyday narration (the letter, the diary, etc.);
4. Various forms of literary but extra-artistic authorial speech (moral, philosophical or scientific statements, oratory, ethnographic descriptions, memoranda and so forth);
5. The stylistically individualized speech of characters.

These heterogeneous stylistic unities, upon entering the novel, combine to form a structured artistic system, and are subordinated to the higher stylistic unity of the work as a whole, a unity that cannot be identified with any single one of the unities subordinated to it.

The stylistic uniqueness of the novel as a genre consists precisely in the combination of these subordinated, yet still relatively autonomous, unities (even at times comprised of different languages) into the higher unity of the work as a whole: the style of a novel is to be found in the combination of its styles; the language of a novel is the system of its "languages." Each separate element of a novel's language is determined first of all by one such subordinated stylistic unity into which it enters directly—be it the stylistically individualized speech of a character, the down-to-earth voice of a narrator in *skaz*, a letter or whatever. The linguistic and stylistic profile of a given element (lexical, semantic, syntactic) is shaped by that subordinated unity to which it is most immediately proximate. At the same time this element, together with its most immediate unity, figures into the style of the whole, itself supports the accent of the whole and participates in the process whereby the unified meaning of the whole is structured and revealed.

The novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized. The internal stratification of any single national language into social dialects, characteristic group behavior, professional jargons, generic lan-

languages, languages of generations and age groups, tendentious languages, languages of the authorities, of various circles and of passing fashions, languages that serve the specific sociopolitical purposes of the day, even of the hour (each day has its own slogan, its own vocabulary, its own emphases)—this internal stratification present in every language at any given moment of its historical existence is the indispensable prerequisite for the novel as a genre. The novel orchestrates all its themes, the totality of the world of objects and ideas depicted and expressed in it, by means of the social diversity of speech types [*raznorečie*] and by the differing individual voices that flourish under such conditions. Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help heteroglossia [*raznorečie*] can enter the novel; each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships (always more or less dialogized). These distinctive links and interrelationships between utterances and languages, this movement of the theme through different languages and speech types, its dispersion into the rivulets and droplets of social heteroglossia, its dialogization—this is the basic distinguishing feature of the stylistics of the novel.

Such a combining of languages and styles into a higher unity is unknown to traditional stylistics; it has no method for approaching the distinctive social dialogue among languages that is present in the novel. Thus stylistic analysis is not oriented toward the novel as a whole, but only toward one or another of its subordinated stylistic unities. The traditional scholar bypasses the basic distinctive feature of the novel as a genre; he substitutes for it another object of study, and instead of novelistic style he actually analyzes something completely different. He transposes a symphonic (orchestrated) theme onto the piano keyboard.

We notice two such types of substitutions: in the first type, an analysis of novelistic style is replaced by a description of the language of a given novelist (or at best of the “languages” of a given novel); in the second type, one of the subordinated styles is isolated and analyzed as if it were the style of the whole.

In the first type, style is cut off from considerations of genre, and from the work as such, and regarded as a phenomenon of language itself: the unity of style in a given work is transformed either into the unity of an individual language (“individual dialect”), or into the unity of an individual speech (*parole*). It is precisely the individuality of the speaking subject that is recognized to be that style-generating factor transforming a phenomenon of language and linguistics into a stylistic unity.

We have no need to follow where such an analysis of novelistic style leads, whether to a disclosing of the novelist’s individual dialect (that is, his vocabulary, his syntax) or to a disclosing of the distinctive features of the work taken as a “complete speech act,” an “utterance.” Equally in both cases, style is understood in the spirit of Saussure: as an individualization of the general language (in the sense of a system of general language norms). Stylistics is transformed either into a curious kind of linguistics treating individual languages, or into a linguistics of the utterance.

In accordance with the point of view selected, the unity of a style thus

presupposes on the one hand a unity of language (in the sense of a system of general normative forms) and on the other hand the unity of an individual person realizing himself in this language.

Both these conditions are in fact obligatory in the majority of verse-based poetic genres, but even in these genres they far from exhaust or define the style of the work. The most precise and complete description of the individual language and speech of a poet—even if this description does choose to treat the expressiveness of language and speech elements—does not add up to a stylistic analysis of the work, inasmuch as these elements relate to a system of language or to a system of speech, that is, to various linguistic unities and not to the system of the artistic work, which is governed by a completely different system of rules than those that govern the linguistic systems of language and of speech.

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The novel is an artistic genre. Novelistic discourse is poetic discourse, but one that does not fit within the frame provided by the concept of poetic discourse as it now exists. This concept has certain underlying presuppositions that limit it. The very concept—in the course of its historical formulation from Aristotle to the present day—has been oriented toward the specific “official” genres and connected with specific historical tendencies in verbal ideological life. Thus a whole series of phenomena remained beyond its conceptual horizon.

Philosophy of language, linguistics and stylistics [i.e., such as they have come down to us] have all postulated a simple and unmediated relation of speaker to his unitary and singular “own” language, and have postulated as well a simple realization of this language in the monologic utterance of the individual. Such disciplines actually know only two poles in the life of language, between which are located all the linguistic and stylistic phenomena they know: on the one hand, the system of a *unitary language*, and on the other the *individual* speaking in this language.

Various schools of thought in the philosophy of language, in linguistics and in stylistics have, in different periods (and always in close connection with the diverse concrete poetic and ideological styles of a given epoch), introduced into such concepts as “system of language,” “monologic utterance,” “the speaking *individuum*,” various differing nuances of meaning, but their basic content remains unchanged. This basic content is conditioned by the specific socio-historical destinies of European languages and by the destinies of ideological discourse, and by those particular historical tasks that ideological discourse has fulfilled in specific social spheres and at specific stages in its own historical development.

These tasks and destinies of discourse conditioned specific verbal-ideological movements, as well as various specific genres of ideological discourse, and ultimately the specific philosophical concept of discourse itself—in particular, the concept of poetic discourse, which had been at the heart of all concepts of style.

The strength and at the same time the limitations of such basic stylistic categories become apparent when such categories are seen as conditioned by

specific historical destinies and by the task that an ideological discourse assumes. These categories arose from and were shaped by the historically *aktuell* forces at work in the verbal-ideological evolution of specific social groups; they comprised the theoretical expression of actualizing forces that were in the process of creating a life for language.

These forces are *the forces that serve to unify and centralize the verbal-ideological world*.

Unitary language constitutes the theoretical expression of the historical processes of linguistic unification and centralization, an expression of the centripetal forces of language. A unitary language is not something given [*dan*] but is always in essence posited [*zadan*]¹—and at every moment of its linguistic life it is opposed to the realities of heteroglossia. But at the same time it makes its real presence felt as a force for overcoming this heteroglossia, imposing specific limits to it, guaranteeing a certain maximum of mutual understanding and crystallizing into a real, although still relative, unity—the unity of the reigning conversational (everyday) and literary language, “correct language.”

A common unitary language is a system of linguistic norms. But these norms do not constitute an abstract imperative; they are rather the generative forces of linguistic life, forces that struggle to overcome the heteroglossia of language, forces that unite and centralize verbal-ideological thought, creating within a heteroglot national language the firm, stable linguistic nucleus of an officially recognized literary language, or else defending an already formed language from the pressure of growing heteroglossia.

What we have in mind here is not an abstract linguistic minimum of a common language, in the sense of a system of elementary forms (linguistic symbols) guaranteeing a *minimum* level of comprehension in practical communication. We are taking language not as a system of abstract grammatical categories, but rather language conceived as ideologically saturated, language as a world view, even as a concrete opinion, insuring a *maximum* of mutual understanding in all spheres of ideological life. Thus a unitary language gives expression to forces working toward concrete verbal and ideological unification and centralization, which develop in vital connection with the processes of sociopolitical and cultural centralization.

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 sociolinguistic 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.

But the centripetal forces of the life of language, embodied in a “unitary language,” operate in the midst of heteroglossia. At any given moment of its evolution, 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. From this point of view, literary language itself is only one of these heteroglot languages—and in its turn is also stratified into languages (generic, period-bound and others). And this stratification and heteroglossia, once realized, is not only a static invariant of linguistic life, but also what insures its dynamics: stratification and heteroglossia widen and deepen as long as language is alive and developing. 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.

Every concrete utterance of a speaking subject serves as a point where centrifugal as well as centripetal forces are brought to bear. The processes of centralization and decentralization, of unification and disunification, intersect in the utterance; the utterance not only answers the requirements of its own language as an individualized embodiment of a speech act, but it answers the requirements of heteroglossia as well; it is in fact an active participant in such speech diversity. And this active participation of every utterance in living heteroglossia determines the linguistic profile and style of the utterance to no less a degree than its inclusion in any normative-centralizing system of a unitary language.

Every utterance 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).

Such is the fleeting language of a day, of an epoch, a social group, a genre, a school and so forth. It is possible to give a concrete and detailed analysis of any utterance, once having exposed it as a contradiction-ridden, tension-filled unity of two embattled tendencies in the life of language.

The authentic environment of an utterance, 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.

At the time when major divisions of the poetic genres were developing under the influence of the unifying, centralizing, centripetal forces of verbal-ideological life, the novel—and those artistic-prose genres that gravitate toward it—was being historically shaped by the current of decentralizing, centrifugal forces. At the time when poetry was accomplishing the task of cultural, national and political centralization of the verbal-ideological world in the higher official socio-ideological levels, on the lower levels, on the stages

of local fairs and at buffoon spectacles, the heteroglossia of the clown sounded forth, ridiculing all “languages” and dialects; there developed the literature of the *fabliaux* and *Schwänke* of street songs, folksayings, anecdotes, where there was no language-center at all, where there was to be found a lively play with the “languages” of poets, scholars, monks, knights and others, where all “languages” were masks and where no language could claim to be an authentic, incontestable face.

Heteroglossia, as organized in these low genres, was not merely heteroglossia vis-à-vis the accepted literary language (in all its various generic expressions), that is, vis-à-vis the linguistic center of the verbal-ideological life of the nation and the epoch, but was a heteroglossia consciously opposed to this literary language. It was parodic, and aimed sharply and polemically against the official languages of its given time. It was heteroglossia that had been dialogized.

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The living utterance, having taken meaning and shape at a particular historical moment in a socially specific environment, cannot fail to brush up against thousands of living dialogic threads, woven by socio-ideological consciousness around the given object of an utterance; it cannot fail to become an active participant in social dialogue. After all, the utterance arises out of this dialogue as a continuation of it and as a rejoinder to it—it does not approach the object from the sidelines.

The way in which the word conceptualizes its object is a complex act—all objects, open to dispute and overlain as they are with qualifications, are from one side highlighted while from the other side dimmed by heteroglot social opinion, by an alien word about them.⁴ And into this complex play of light and shadow the word enters—it becomes saturated with this play, and must determine within it the boundaries of its own semantic and stylistic contours. The way in which the word conceives its object is complicated by a dialogic interaction within the object between various aspects of its socio-verbal intelligibility. And an artistic representation, an “image” of the object, may be penetrated by this dialogic play of verbal intentions that meet and are interwoven in it; such an image need not stifle these forces, but on the contrary may activate and organize them. If we imagine the *intention* of such a word, that is, its *directionality toward the object*, in the form of a ray of light, then the living and unrepeatably play of colors and light on the facets of the image that it constructs can be explained as the spectral dispersion of the ray-word, not within the object itself (as would be the case in the play of an image-as-trope, in poetic speech taken in the narrow sense, in an “autotelic word”), but rather as its spectral dispersion in an atmosphere filled with the alien words, value judgments and accents through which the ray passes on its way toward the object; the social atmosphere of the word, the atmosphere that surrounds the object, makes the facets of the image sparkle.

The word, breaking through to its own meaning and its own expression across an environment full of alien words and variously evaluating accents, harmonizing with some of the elements in this environment and striking a

dissonance with others, is able, in this dialogized process, to shape its own stylistic profile and tone.

Such is the *image in artistic prose* and the image of *novelistic prose* in particular. In the atmosphere of the novel, the direct and unmediated intention of a word presents itself as something impermissably naïve, something in fact impossible, for naïveté itself, under authentic novelistic conditions, takes on the nature of an internal polemic and is consequently dialogized (in, for example, the work of the Sentimentalists, in Chateaubriand and in Tolstoy). Such a dialogized image can occur in all the poetic genres as well, even in the lyric (to be sure, without setting the tone).⁵ But such an image can fully unfold, achieve full complexity and depth and at the same time artistic closure, only under the conditions present in the genre of the novel.

In the poetic image narrowly conceived (in the image-as-trope), all activity—the dynamics of the image-as-word—is completely exhausted by the play between the word (with all its aspects) and the object (in all its aspects). The word plunges into the inexhaustible wealth and contradictory multiplicity of the object itself, with its “virginal,” still “unuttered” nature; therefore it presumes nothing beyond the borders of its own context (except, of course, what can be found in the treasure-house of language itself). The word forgets that its object has its own history of contradictory acts of verbal recognition, as well as that heteroglossia that is always present in such acts of recognition.

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The world of poetry, no matter how many contradictions and insoluble conflicts the poet develops within it, is always illumined by one unitary and indisputable discourse. Contradictions, conflicts and doubts remain in the object, in thoughts, in living experiences—in short, in the subject matter—but they do not enter into the language itself. In poetry, even discourse about doubts must be cast in a discourse that cannot be doubted.

To take responsibility for the language of the work as a whole at all of its points as *its* language, to assume a full solidarity with each of the work’s aspects, tones, nuances—such is the fundamental prerequisite for poetic style; style so conceived is fully adequate to a single language and a single linguistic consciousness. The poet is not able to oppose his own poetic consciousness, his own intentions to the language that he uses, for he is completely within it and therefore cannot turn it into an object to be perceived, reflected upon or related to. Language is present to him only from inside, in the work it does to effect its intention, and not from outside, in its objective specificity and boundedness. Within the limits of poetic style, direct unconditional intentionality, language at its full weight and the objective display of language (as a socially and historically limited linguistic reality) are all simultaneous, but incompatible. The unity and singularity of language are the indispensable prerequisites for a realization of the direct (but not objectively typifying) intentional individuality of poetic style and of its monologic steadfastness.

This does not mean, of course, that heteroglossia or even a foreign language is completely shut out of a poetic work. To be sure, such possibilities are limited: a certain latitude for heteroglossia exists only in the “low” poetic

genres—in the satiric and comic genres and others. Nevertheless, heteroglossia (other socio-ideological languages) can be introduced into purely poetic genres, primarily in the speeches of characters. But in such a context it is objective. It appears, in essence, as a *thing*, it does not lie on the *same* plane with the real language of the work: it is the depicted gesture of one of the characters and does not appear as an aspect of the word doing the depicting. Elements of heteroglossia enter here not in the capacity of another language carrying its own particular points of view, about which one can say things not expressible in one's own language, but rather in the capacity of a depicted thing. Even when speaking of alien things, the poet speaks in his own language. To shed light on an alien world, he never resorts to an alien language, even though it might in fact be more adequate to that world. Whereas the writer of prose, by contrast—as we shall see—attempts to talk about even his *own* world in an alien language (for example, in the nonliterary language of the teller of tales, or the representative of a specific socio-ideological group); he often measures his own world by alien linguistic standards.

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In any given historical moment of verbal-ideological life, each generation at each social level has its own language; moreover, every age group has as a matter of fact its own language, its own vocabulary, its own particular accentual system that, in their turn, vary depending on social level, academic institution (the language of the cadet, the high school student, the trade school student are all different languages) and other stratifying factors. All this is brought about by socially typifying languages, no matter how narrow the social circle in which they are spoken. It is even possible to have a family jargon define the societal limits of a language, as, for instance, the jargon of the Irtenevs in Tolstoy, with its special vocabulary and unique accentual system.

And finally, at any given moment, languages of various epochs and periods of socio-ideological life cohabit with one another. Even languages of the day exist: one could say that today's and yesterday's socio-ideological and political "day" do not, in a certain sense, share the same language; every day represents another socio-ideological semantic "state of affairs," another vocabulary, another accentual system, with its own slogans, its own ways of assigning blame and praise. Poetry depersonalizes "days" in language, while prose, as we shall see, often deliberately intensifies difference between them, gives them embodied representation and dialogically opposes them to one another in unresolvable dialogues.

Thus at any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form. These "languages" of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new socially typifying "languages."

Each of these "languages" of heteroglossia requires a methodology very different from the others; each is grounded in a completely different principle

for marking differences and for establishing units (for some this principle is functional, in others it is the principle of theme and content, in yet others it is, properly speaking, a socio-dialectological principle). Therefore languages do not *exclude* each other, but rather intersect with each other in many different ways (the Ukrainian language, the language of the epic poem, of early Symbolism, of the student, of a particular generation of children, of the run-of-the-mill intellectual, of the Nietzschean and so on). It might even seem that the very word “language” loses all meaning in this process—for apparently there is no single plane on which all these “languages” might be juxtaposed to one another.

In actual fact, however, there does exist a common plane that methodologically justifies our juxtaposing them: all languages of heteroglossia, 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. As such they all may be juxtaposed to one another, mutually supplement one another, contradict one another and be interrelated dialogically. As such they encounter one another and co-exist in the consciousness of real people—first and foremost, in the creative consciousness of people who write novels. As such, these languages live a real life, they struggle and evolve in an environment of social heteroglossia. Therefore they are all able to enter into the unitary plane of the novel, which can unite in itself parodic stylizations of generic languages, various forms of stylizations and illustrations of professional and period-bound languages, the languages of particular generations, of social dialects and others (as occurs, for example, in the English comic novel). They may all be drawn in by the novelist for the orchestration of his themes and for the refracted (indirect) expression of his intentions and values.

This is why we constantly put forward the referential and expressive—that is, intentional—factors as the force that stratifies and differentiates the common literary language, and not the linguistic markers (lexical coloration, semantic overtones, etc.) of generic languages, professional jargons and so forth—markers that are, so to speak, the sclerotic deposits of an intentional process, signs left behind on the path of the real living project of an intention, of the particular way it imparts meaning to general linguistic norms. These external markers, linguistically observable and fixable, cannot in themselves be understood or studied without understanding the specific conceptualization they have been given by an intention.

Discourse lives, as it were, beyond itself, in a living impulse [*napravlenost'*] toward the object; if we detach ourselves completely from this impulse all we have left is the naked corpse of the word, from which we can learn nothing at all about the social situation or the fate of a given word in life. *To study the word as such, ignoring the impulse that reaches out beyond it, is just as senseless as to study psychological experience outside the context of that real life toward which it was directed and by which it is determined.*

By stressing the intentional dimension of stratification in literary language, we are able, as has been said, to locate in a single series such method-

ologically heterogeneous phenomena as professional and social dialects, world views and individual artistic works, for in their intentional dimension one finds that common plane on which they can all be juxtaposed, and juxtaposed dialogically. The whole matter consists in the fact that there may be, between “languages,” highly specific dialogic relations; no matter how these languages are conceived, they may all be taken as particular points of view on the world. However varied the social forces doing the work of stratification—a profession, a genre, a particular tendency, an individual personality—the work itself everywhere comes down to the (relatively) protracted and socially meaningful (collective) saturation of language with specific (and consequently limiting) intentions and accents. The longer this stratifying saturation goes on, the broader the social circle encompassed by it and consequently the more substantial the social force bringing about such a stratification of language, then the more sharply focused and stable will be those traces, the linguistic changes in the language markers (linguistic symbols), that are left behind in language as a result of this social force’s activity—from stable (and consequently social) semantic nuances to authentic dialectological markers (phonetic, morphological and others), which permit us to speak of particular social dialects.

As a result of the work done by all these stratifying forces in language, there are no “neutral” words and forms—words and forms that can belong to “no one”; language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and accents. For any individual consciousness living in it, language is not an abstract system of normative forms but rather a concrete heteroglot conception of the world. All words have the “taste” of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life; all words and forms are populated by intentions. Contextual overtones (generic, tendentious, individualistic) are inevitable in the word.

As a living, socio-ideological concrete thing, as heteroglot opinion, language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else’s. It becomes “one’s own” only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people’s mouths, in other people’s contexts, serving other people’s intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one’s own. And not all words for just anyone submit equally easily to this appropriation, to this seizure and transformation into private property: many words stubbornly resist, others remain alien, sound foreign in the mouth of the one who appropriated them and who now speaks them; they cannot be assimilated into his context and fall out of it; it is as if they put themselves in quotation marks against the will of the speaker. Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker’s intentions; it is

populated—overpopulated—with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process.

We have so far proceeded on the assumption of the abstract-linguistic (dialectological) unity of literary language. But even a literary language is anything but a closed dialect. Within the scope of literary language itself there is already a more or less sharply defined boundary between everyday-conversational language and written language. Distinctions between genres frequently coincide with dialectological distinctions (for example, the high—Church Slavonic—and the low—conversational—genres of the eighteenth century); finally, certain dialects may be legitimized in literature and thus to a certain extent be appropriated by literary language.

As they enter literature and are appropriated to literary language, dialects in this new context lose, of course, the quality of closed socio-linguistic systems; they are deformed and in fact cease to be that which they had been simply as dialects. On the other hand, these dialects, on entering the literary language and preserving within it their own dialectological elasticity, their other-languedness, have the effect of deforming the literary language; it, too, ceases to be that which it had been, a closed socio-linguistic system. Literary language is a highly distinctive phenomenon, as is the linguistic consciousness of the educated person who is its agent; within it, intentional diversity of speech [*raznorečivost'*] (which is present in every living dialect as a closed system) is transformed into diversity of language [*raznojazyčie*]; what results is not a single language but a dialogue of languages.

The national literary language of a people with a highly developed art of prose, especially if it is novelistic prose with a rich and tension-filled verbal-ideological history, is in fact an organized microcosm that reflects the macrocosm not only of national heteroglossia, but of European heteroglossia as well. The unity of a literary language is not a unity of a single, closed language system, but is rather a highly specific unity of several “languages” that have established contact and mutual recognition with each other (merely one of which is poetic language in the narrow sense). Precisely this constitutes the peculiar nature of the methodological problem in literary language.

Concrete socio-ideological language consciousness, as it becomes creative—that is, as it becomes active as literature—discovers itself already surrounded by heteroglossia and not at all a single, unitary language, inviolable and indisputable. The actively literary linguistic consciousness at all times and everywhere (that is, in all epochs of literature historically available to us) comes upon “languages,” and not language. Consciousness finds itself inevitably facing the necessity of *having to choose a language*. With each literary-verbal performance, consciousness must actively orient itself amidst heteroglossia, it must move in and occupy a position for itself within it, it chooses, in other words, a “language.” Only by remaining in a closed environment, one without writing or thought, completely off the maps of socio-ideological becoming, could a man fail to sense this activity of selecting a language and rest assured in the inviolability of his own language, the conviction that his language is pre-determined.

Even such a man, however, deals not in fact with a single language, but with languages—except that the place occupied by each of these languages is fixed and indisputable, the movement from one to the other is predetermined and not a thought process; it is as if these languages were in different chambers. They do not collide with each other in his consciousness, there is no attempt to coordinate them, to look at one of these languages through the eyes of another language.

Thus an illiterate peasant, miles away from any urban center, naïvely immersed in an unmoving and for him unshakable everyday world, nevertheless lived in several language systems: he prayed to God in one language (Church Slavonic), sang songs in another, spoke to his family in a third and, when he began to dictate petitions to the local authorities through a scribe, he tried speaking yet a fourth language (the official-literate language, “paper” language). All these are *different languages*, even from the point of view of abstract socio-dialectological markers. But these languages were not dialogically coordinated in the linguistic consciousness of the peasant; he passed from one to the other without thinking, automatically: each was indisputably in its own place, and the place of each was indisputable. He was not yet able to regard one language (and the verbal world corresponding to it) through the eyes of another language (that is, the language of everyday life and the everyday world with the language of prayer or song, or vice versa).⁶

As soon as a critical interanimation of languages began to occur in the consciousness of our peasant, as soon as it became clear that these were not only various different languages but even internally variegated languages, that the ideological systems and approaches to the world that were indissolubly connected with these languages contradicted each other and in no way could live in peace and quiet with one another—then the inviolability and predetermined quality of these languages came to an end, and the necessity of actively choosing one’s orientation among them began.

Notes

1. See “From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse,” below.

2. Cf. A. Dieterich, *Pulcinella: Pompeyanische Wandbilder und römische Satyrspiele* (Leipzig, 1897), p. 131.

3. As recently as the 1920s, V. M. Žirmunskij [important fellow-traveler of the Formalists, ed.] was writing: “When lyrical poetry appears to be authentically a work of *verbal art*, due to its choice and combination of words (on semantic as well as sound levels) all of which are completely subordinated to the aesthetic project, Tolstoy’s novel, by contrast, which is free in its verbal composition, does not use words as an artistically significant element of interaction but as a neutral medium or as a system of significations subordinated (as happens in practical speech) to the communicative function, directing our attention to thematic aspects quite abstracted from purely verbal considerations. We cannot call such a *literary work* a work of *verbal art* or, in any case, not in the sense that the term is used for lyrical poetry.” “On the Problem of the Formal Method,” in an anthology of his articles, *Problems of a Theory of Literature* (Leningrad, 1928, p. 173); Russian ed.: “K voprosu o ‘formal’nom metode’,” in *Voprosy teorii literatury* (L[eningrad], 1928).

4. Highly significant in this respect is the struggle that must be undertaken in

such movements as Rousseauism, Naturalism, Impressionism, Acmeism, Dadaism, Surrealism and analogous schools with the “qualified” nature of the object (a struggle occasioned by the idea of a return to primordial consciousness, to original consciousness, to the object itself in itself, to pure perception and so forth).

5. The Horatian lyric, Villon, Heine, Laforgue, Annenskij and others—despite the fact that these are extremely varied instances.

6. We are of course deliberately simplifying: the real-life peasant could and did do this to a certain extent.

a. Erwin Rohde (1845–98), *Der Griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer* (1876, but many later eds., most recently that published by F. Olds [Hildesheim, 1960]), one of the greatest monuments of nineteenth-century classical scholarship in Germany. It has never really ever been superseded. But see: Ben F. Perry, *The Ancient Romances* (Berkeley, 1967) and Arthur Heiserman, *The Novel before the Novel* (Chicago, 1977).

b. Charles Sorel (1599–1674), an important figure in the reaction to the *preciosité* of such figures as Honoré d’Urfé (1567–1625), whose *L’Astrée* (1607–27), a monstrous 5,500-page volume overflowing with highflown language, is parodied in *Le Berger extravagant* (1627). The latter book’s major protagonist is a dyed-in-the-wool Parisian who reads too many pastoral novels; intoxicated by these, he attempts to live the rustic life as they describe it—with predictably comic results.

c. Johann Karl August Musäus (1735–87), along with Tieck and Brentano, one of the great collectors of German folktales and author of several *Kunstmärchen* of his own (trans. into English by Carlyle). Reference here is to his *Grandison der Zweite* (1760–62, rewritten as *Der deutsche Grandison*, 1781–82), a satire on Richardson.

d. Sophron (fl. 5th century B.C.) was probably the first writer to give literary form to the mime. He was greatly admired by Plato. The mimes were written in rhythmic prose and took as their subject matter events of everyday life.

e. Ion of Chios (490–421 B.C.), a Greek poet who, when he won first for tragedy in the Great Dionysia, made a present of Chian wine to every Athenian. His memoirs have not come down to us, but Athenaeus gives long quotes, including the description of an evening Sophocles spent with him in his home on Chios. It has been said no other Greek before Socrates has been presented so vividly. The title of these *Epidēmiāi* probably refers to the visits of distinguished Athenians who came to see Ion on Chios.

f. Critias (460–403 B.C.), one of the Thirty Tyrants, also active as a writer. He wrote mostly elegies and tragedies. Fragments of *Homilai* (“discussions”) have come down to us; Galen is cited by the editors of the Pauly-Wissowa (vol. II of the 1910 ed., p. 1910) as calling the two books of the original *Homilai* “aimless discussions” (*zwan-glose Unterhaltungen*).

g. Lucilius Gaius (?–102 B.C.), member of one of the greatest Roman families, author of several important satires, chiefly remarkable for the personal, almost autobiographical tone he introduces into them.

h. Persius, Flaccus Aulus (A.D. 34–62), satirist heavily influenced by Stoic philosophy.

i. Abbé Huet (1630–1721), bishop of Avranches, learned scholar who wrote numerous works on a wide variety of subjects. His *Traité de l’origine des romans* (1670) was first published as an introduction to Mme. de La Fayette’s *Zaïde*, a novel written while its author was still influenced by ideas of the *précieux* society.

j. Xenophon (428–354 B.C.), *Cyropaedia*, a text that haunts the history of thinking about novels from Julian the Apostate’s citation of it as a model to be avoided (cf. Perry, *Ancient Romances*, p. 78) to Boileau, who, in his *Dialogue sur les héros des romans* (1664) attacks Mme. de Scudéry’s monstrous *Artamène, ou le grand Cyrus* (1649–53).

k. The exodium was, in Greek drama, the end or catastrophe of a play, but is used here by Bakhtin as it applied in Roman plays, where the word means a comic interlude or farce following something more serious. Its function is comparable with the satyr play in Athenian tetralogies. (Not to be confused with *exodos*, the portion near the end of Greek plays where the chorus leaves the stage.)

l. First-century B.C. farces that emphasized crude physiological details and bawdy jokes.

m. Lucius Pomponius of Bonomia (fl. 100–85 B.C.), author of at least seventy Atellan farces.

n. Novius (fl. 95–80 B.C.), younger contemporary of Pomponius, and author of forty-three farces.

o. Lucius Accius (170–90 B.C.), historian of literature, but cited here by Bakhtin because he was generally regarded as the last real tragedian of Rome.

p. Phallophors, “phallus bearers,” the figures who carried carved *phalloi* in religious processions and whose role was to joke and cavort obscenely.

q. Deikelists, from the Greek *deikeliktas*, simply “one who represents,” but according to Athenaeus, in bk. 14 of the *Deipnosophistai*, they were actors who specialized in burlesque parts.

r. An early satirical epic, traditionally ascribed to Homer, but to Pigres as well.