

# Macabéa

Revista Eletrônica do Netlli, Volume 1, Número 2, Dez. 2012

## BAKHTIN: THE DANGERS OF DIALOGUE



## BAKHTIN: OS PERIGOS DO DIÁLOGO

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RECEBIDO EM 10/11/2012 • APROVADO EM 18/12/2012

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### Abstract

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This article focuses on the relation to the Other - the underlying aspect of dialogism - in the works of Mikhail Bakhtin. His approach to heterology (science or knowledge of the Other) is fundamental to analysis of such themes of his oeuvre as carnival (laughter), history, and economy of human existence. On a certain stage it appears, that two configurations may be distinguished in Bakhtin's conception of the Other. First, the Other dominated and appropriated by the subject, or Author, or Self in the dialogic relation – it is only a provisional Other. The second is the irreducible Other, outside the possibility of adequate knowledge and thus potentially excluded from dialogue. Thus, the end of dialogue, the silence remains as a dark shadow on the horizon of the meaningful discursive logic. Moreover, the concepts of meaning and truth itself seem to be jeopardized here, since “answers to questions is what I call ‘meanings’” (Bakhtin). Nevertheless, Bakhtin never openly questions the fundamental values of knowledge and final truth; his position may be summed up thus: “The truth is out there. Only it is probably not cognizable to an individual. Or may be not to anybody”.

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## Resumo

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Este artigo tem como foco a relação com o Outro – o aspecto subjacente do dialogismo – nas obras de Mikhail Bakhtin. Sua abordagem da heterologia (a ciência ou conhecimento sobre o Outro) é fundamental para uma análise de temas como o carnaval (riso), a história e a economia da existência humana, objetos de sua investigação teórica. Em certa etapa de seu pensamento, parece que sua concepção de Outro se distingue em duas configurações. Primeiro, o Outro dominado e apropriado pelo sujeito, ou pelo Autor, ou pelo Eu na relação dialógica – é apenas um Outro provisório. O segundo é o Outro irredutível, além da possibilidade de conhecimento adequado e, portanto, potencialmente excluído do diálogo. Assim, o fim do diálogo, o silêncio, permanece como uma sombra obscura no horizonte da lógica discursiva significativa. Além disso, os conceitos de significado e verdade em si parecem ser prejudicados aqui, já que “respostas às perguntas constituem o que eu chamo de ‘significados’” (Bakhtin). Entretanto, Bakhtin nunca questiona abertamente os valores fundamentais de conhecimento e verdade definitiva; sua posição pode ser dada assim: “A verdade está lá fora. Só que provavelmente não é cognoscível a um indivíduo. Ou talvez não seja a nenhum”.

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## Entradas para indexação

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**KEYWORDS:** Heteroglossia. Carnival. Otherness. Bakhtin.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Heteroglossia. Carnaval. Alteridade. Bakhtin.

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## Texto integral

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In his writings on Bakhtin, Tzvetan Todorov (and subsequently American translators of Todorov's books) translates '*raznorech'e*,' one of Bakhtin's cornerstone notions, as 'hétérologie' (heterology, science or knowledge of the Other).<sup>1</sup> While Emerson and Holquist's 'heteroglossia' (in *The Dialogic Imagination*) may be closer to the Russian term, Todorov's translation is fully legitimate: a possible stress on the aspect of 'logos'- thought, knowledge (as in 'logic') as well as on the aspect of 'logos'- word (as in 'philology') is meaningful given the global scope and implications of Bakhtin's ideas. In fact, such fundamental aspects of Bakhtin's heterology as carnival (laughter), history (time and space), economy (appropriation versus expenditure) are all related to the key concept of his world outlook--dialogism--which, in turn, is rooted in Bakhtin's

theory of discourse. The relation to the Other - the underlying aspect of dialogism - is the focus of this essay.

By definition, dialogue presupposes some kind of communication, verbal *par excellence*, with another interlocutor. In Bakhtin's works, dialogue manifests itself, depending on the level of complexity and on the area of implementation (e.g. literary discourse proper vs. history), in a synonymous chain: double- and polyvoicedness (*mnogogolosost'*), polyglossia (*mnogoiazychie*), heteroglossia in additionally varying aspects (*raznorech'e*, *raznogolosost'*, *raznoiazychie*), polyphony, hybridization and so forth. These terms have their antonyms in monologue, homology, one-voicedness and so forth. The limits of dialogism are posed: on one hand it is 'the mutual nonunderstanding represented by people *who speak in different languages*.'<sup>2</sup> This limit is considered by Bakhtin to be only a provisional one, in view of the general ability of, and the modern world tendency to, learning other languages. On the other hand, there is another limit that is altogether more important and indicated in opposition to the very principle of dialogism: this is the word removed from live communication--the monological, and first of all, the authoritative word. (It is worth indicating that for Bakhtin, as is generally the case in Russian, 'word' can also mean 'speech,' 'discourse,' and even 'language,' depending on the context, although more exact equivalents for all these notions exist as well.)

The immediate implication of this premise is the whole system of subsequent oppositions operative in Bakhtin's conception; most importantly, the interactive essence of the dialogical word is opposed to a static word of the language understood as a stable structure (Saussurean 'langage'), and the social dimension of dialogue to individualistic tendencies. At this point, I will focus on the following, closely interconnected, aspects of dialogism.

The staple of carnivalesque and dialogized culture is its collective, anti-individualist basis. Even leaving aside the radical formulations of *Rabelais and his World*, where the individual is sometimes seen as nothing more than a 'fertilizer' for the growth of the collective, formulations like the following are

typical: Oppositions between individuals are only surface upheavals of the untamed elements in social heteroglossia, surface manifestations of those elements that play on such individual oppositions, make them contradictory, saturate their consciousness and discourses with a more fundamental speech diversity. (DN, p. 326)

In Bakhtin's theory of literary genres, *individual* is the main characteristic of poetry, which opposes it to the dialogical genre *par excellence*, the novel (DN, pp. 264, 329 et passim). In fact, the poetic and the novelistic become representative of the forces underlying all social, linguistic, and literary phenomena: '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' (pp. 272-73). Thus, poetry is essentially 'single-voiced,' unlike the 'authentic double-voicedness' of the novel. Furthermore, poetry operates with what Bakhtin calls 'direct word' that 'acknowledges only itself (that is, only its own context), its own object, its own direct expression and its own unitary and singular language' (p.276). In turn, this [u]nitary 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*] - and at every moment of its linguistic life it is opposed to the realities of the heteroglossia. (p. 270).

However, some important correlations complicate the concept of dialogism at this point. 'Every discourse has its own selfish and biased proprietor; there are no words with meanings shared by all, no words 'belonging to no one'' (p. 401). In fact, it makes sense that the dialogized word is opposed to the dogmatic one, as unique is opposed to unitary; such a uniqueness is, at least in part, constituted by the *individuality* of the personalized interlocutor. Thus, in Bakhtin's words to this effect: the 'authentic environment of the 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*' (p. 272; emphasis added). Actually, in one short paragraph Bakhtin manages to oppose the 'poet's *individuality* as reflected in his language and speech' to the 'social heteroglossia and the variety of *individual voices in it, the prerequisite for authentic novelistic prose*' (p. 264; emphasis added). In addition, the same *individual* poetic idiom is actually equated in the same text ('Discourse in the Novel') with a '*common unitary language*' and a '*system of linguistic norms*' (p. 270; emphasis added). All this requires some further analysis; for now, though, I will turn to another, yet closely related, aspect of dialogism.

The direct, individual, poetic word is formally and essentially completed or finalized (*zaversheno*), whereas the dialogized, carnivalistic, novelistic word is always open to heteroglot operation and is never finalized. Thus, in Dostoevsky's novels, '*nothing conclusive has yet taken place in the world, the ultimate word of the world and about the world has not yet been spoken, the world is open and free, everything is still in the future and will always be in the future.*'<sup>3</sup> In fact, the opposition between the always contextual dialogized word and the opaque, finalized word leads Bakhtin to the implicit and sometimes explicit valuation of speech and utterance in live form over the written - and thus, in a certain sense, finalized - text.<sup>4</sup>

Here we should recall the economical basis for the dialogized culture of the carnival - the economy of appropriation. Thus, Bakhtin notes that 'Paul Lehmann states outright that the history of medieval literature and its Latin literature in particular "is the history of appropriation, re-working and imitation of someone's else property" . . . --or as we would say, of another's language, another's style, another's word.'<sup>5</sup> The juxtaposition of word with material property here is characteristic, for the very essence or *force motrice* for the collective progress of humanity in the carnivalesque conception is the 'material surplus,' quantitative growth of matter, and the consequent valuation of the *thing*.<sup>6</sup> This opaqueness and materiality obviously contradicts the above stated "openendedness" (*nezavershennost'*) of the dialogized word. The following complicates the argument even further.

The problem of reification on the ethical plane is (at some point at least) interpreted by Bakhtin in unambiguously Marxist terms: man becomes thing in class society, particularly under capitalism, where the 'reifying devaluation of man had permeated into . . . the very foundations of human thinking' (PDP, p. 62). 'This is violence in all possible forms of its manifestation: economical, political, ideological; it is not possible to fight these forces except on the exterior plane and by exterior means (a justified revolutionary violence). *Personal self is what is at stake in this fight.*'<sup>7</sup> This confrontational premise leads to certain deterministic aspects of Bakhtin's heterology, or, to use de Man's expression, to 'dialectical imperialism' in Bakhtin's dialogism with its ideologically sanctioned violence. Speaking about discourse proper, it 'is still warm from that [social] struggle and hostility, as yet unresolved and still fraught with hostile intentions and accents'; generally, Bakhtin's dialogical vocabulary is saturated with the spirit of aggressive confrontation and military-style terminology such as 'enemy territory,' 'borders,' 'resistance,' 'domination' and so forth (DN, p. 331 and passim). The ideological premise of the Marxist class struggle provides, in fact, one more reason for the anti-poetical stance: in a convincing interpretation of Mikhail Gasparov, Bakhtin - a 'man of a new culture' - attacks poetry as a traditional 'high' genre in the literary hierarchy.<sup>8</sup>

Subtracted from the personalized dialogical exchange (for instance, between the speaker or author, and the listener or reader), the word also runs the danger of reification (e.g. poetical word) (DN, p. 346). Hence the all-important opposition of '[t]he thing and person (subject) as the *limits* of cognition' ('K metodologii', 383/161 et passim). The most important second part of Bakhtin's syllogism is the opposition of thing to sense (meaning) (pp. 385/162, 387/164). Thus, the subject (self) participating in dialogue, and a meaning correlated to the dialogized word, are interdependent and to a certain extent are a precondition of each other. With all this, '[o]ne must not forget that thing and person are *limits* and not absolute substances' (p. 387/164-65). So that even a reified substance can and should be 'turned into a meaningful context for the thinking, speaking and (creatively) acting *individual*' (ibid.; emphasis added). Thus, opposite processes are

always (potentially) at play: 'reification and personalization,' recognizable as versions of centripetal and centrifugal forces (pp. 391, 392/168). However, as we already saw, it is precisely the opaqueness, crystallization, and reification of the individualized word (poetic, authoritarian, centripetal) and to some extent of the written--materialized in brute matter--text, that opposes it to the openness and incompleteness (*nezavershennost'*) of the dialogized word.

The indicated problems are interrelated; in the final analysis they lead to the 'last questions' of Bakhtin's heterology.<sup>9</sup> At this point, however, I would like to turn to the question of the (relative) inherent otherness contained in the figure of Bakhtin-the author.

Frequent allusions to Goethe in Bakhtin's works are by no means accidental occurrences. In fact, from various materials and especially from those prepared for, and used in, *The Bildungsroman and its Significance in the History of Realism*, Russian researchers have concluded that 'it becomes clear that Goethe, alongside Dostoevsky and Rabelais, was the third principal protagonist in Bakhtin's creative oeuvre' (EST86, p.415 n).<sup>10</sup> It is important to underscore that no clear-cut chronological or thematic boundaries divide Bakhtin's work into a 'Dostoevsky period,' 'Rabelais period,' or 'Goethe period'; references to Rabelais abound in the works on Dostoevsky, while those on Goethe abound in *Rabelais and his World*. One might see here a manifestation of the principle of dialogism, where words, names and ideas enter into an unencumbered open dialogue as well as into a struggle. At the same time, considering Bakhtin's truly panoramic outlook, one could conjecture that he would in some way group his manifold ideas in and around the proposed thematical clusters. In fact, the suggestion of such a grouping move seems to find confirmation in Bakhtin's own observations of strategic character, as well as when one considers his oeuvre as a whole - from a thematic angle. Thus, in several contexts he juxtaposes, and to a large extent opposes, aesthetics to ethics and to gnoseology.<sup>11</sup> If we provisionally accept the possibility of a thematic division, precisely this tripartite structure can be discerned, with concentrations on problematic of an aesthetical, ethical, and gnoseological order. Focusing on a representative figure for these three thematic clusters, we may to a



certain extent identify them with, respectively, Goethe (aesthetics), Rabelais (ethics: Bakhtin's 'philosophy of act') and Dostoevsky (generally, gnoseology).

In their overviews of Bakhtin's work, such authorities as Holquist, Clark, Emerson, Todorov, and Morson all seem to agree on the desirability of differentiating between several stages in Bakhtin's creative biography (their approaches, however, focus on different aspects than the ones proposed here). Such conventional periodization seems to be as justified as a simultaneous recognition of an overall coherent pattern, which allows us to speak about the unity of Bakhtin's thought. So we may tentatively discern Bakhtin of the 'earlier' works (concentration on aesthetics); the 'canonical' Bakhtin (ethics, action); and the later Bakhtin ('Dostoevsky' and gnoseology). Despite the fact that in the unity of 'Bakhtin's world' the chronological division is mostly conventional (especially due to the fact that Bakhtin sometimes worked on his texts for decades, reworking, revising and publishing new versions), I will refer to this periodization on those occasions when it involves some meaningful turn in analysis.

The 'Dostoevsky' pole, in particular, presents a certain difficulty in addition to chronological overlappings and intersections. If such works as 'Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity' or *Rabelais and His World* to some extent bear out the principle of thematic unity (respectively, aesthetics and ethics), the works on Dostoevsky, along with gnoseological problematics, deal extensively with aesthetic and ethics. Again, however, this question itself can be approached in the spirit of the universality of dialogism which, for Bakhtin, is a truly dialectical philosophical principle: 'Dialectics was born from dialogue, in order to return to it on a higher level' (K metodologii, p. 384/162).<sup>12</sup> In any case, whether we call it dialectics or dialogism, the 'Dostoevsky' or generally speaking gnoseological, pole of the proposed tripartite structure would correspond to the *Aufhebung* of the dialectical synthesis, where the opposition of thesis and antithesis (or inherent contradictions that in fact occur between Bakhtin's aesthetics and ethics, or 'Goethe' and 'Rabelais') would be relieved. For instance, in the 'Rabelaisian' action nexus of Bakhtin's oeuvre, the problem of individuality versus collectivity seems to be 'resolved' in a straightforward manner in favor of the 'collective body' and



collective consciousness. Nevertheless, some issues therein were differently approached in Bakhtin's writings related to the conventional 'aesthetics' or 'Goethe' pole. Thus, the analysis of subjectivity in art and literature is the focus of such works as 'Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity' and 'The Problem of Content, Material, and Form in Verbal Creative Art,' both written in the 1920s. And, moreover, Bakhtin continued to elaborate the problematic of subjectivity in his much later works - that is, it remained a central theme in the conventionally gnoseological, or rather synthetic, 'Dostoevsky' corpus (i.e., in the revised edition of the book on Dostoevsky, as well as in his notes and drafts from the 1970s).

In terms of a concern for methodological rigor, it is important that Bakhtin himself practices and formulates grounds for a simultaneous analysis of discourse from aesthetical as well as from epistemological and ethical angles, since the principle of dialogism is relevant to all planes of human existence (cf., e.g. DN, pp. 337-38). In this vein, for instance, the 'carnival sense of the world helps Dostoevsky overcome gnoseological as well as ethical solipsism' (PDP, p. 177).

The quotation continues: 'A single person, remaining alone with himself, cannot make ends meet even in the deepest and most intimate spheres of his own spiritual life, he cannot manage without *another* consciousness. One person can never find complete fulness in himself alone.' We are back to the issue of the Other proper.

The problem of the Other is thus formulated by Bakhtin:

The *I* and the *other* are the fundamental *value-categories* that for the first time make possible any *actual valuation*, and the moment of valuation or, rather, that of the valuational attitude of consciousness, is present not only in an act proper, but also in every lived experience and even in the simplest sensation: to live means to take an axiological stand in every moment of one's life or to position oneself with respect to values. (AH, pp. 187-88)

This position is indicated in the cornerstone notion of *exotopy* (in some earlier texts, 'transgredience'). In fact, exotopy continued to be one of the main props in Bakhtin's theoretical thought from his early works to the last years. Essentially it is based on the empirical observation that we cannot perceive, conceive of, or represent ourselves with absolute exactness: just as we cannot see the back of our head, we cannot comprehend our own birth or death. Of course, the ramifications and implications of this premise extend very far, but I will concentrate on the following fundamental moment: the fullness of self-being denied to being (esthetically as well as emotionally and cognitively), '[t]he values of being a qualitatively defined personality are inherent only to another' ('Avtor i geroi', p. 99/105). In other words, any qualitatively adequate evaluation, description, knowledge of anything or of anybody is possible only from an exterior position. The basic example of exotopy is the relation of the author to the hero in his creation.

Even if in some early instances Bakhtin differentiates--never very consistently--between application of the exotopical principle to the esthetical, ethical and gnoseological spheres, it fast (often on the same page with a differentiation) becomes quite universal. Thus, in 'The Problem of Content, Material and Form in Verbal Art': 'We shall subsequently illuminate the role of the creative personality of the author as a constitutive moment in artistic form; it is within the unity of his activity that the cognitive and ethical moment finds its unification'.<sup>13</sup>

The exotopical position of the subject creates what Bakhtin calls a '*surplus* of vision and knowledge of the author in relation to every one of his heroes' ('Avtor i geroi', pp. 16/12, 27/24-25; 'K pererabotke, p. 343; 'Epic and Novel', p. 32; et passim)<sup>14</sup>. This coupling of the visual with the cognitive and the general 'process of the conclusive spherization and unification of the real world' are positively exemplified in Goethe, for whom, 'as is widely known, . . . the *seeing eye* was the center, the first and last authority'.<sup>15</sup> Bakhtin's position is extremely characteristic in terms of the conclusively logocentric metaphoricality of eye and circle (preeminently Hegelian, as discussed by Derrida in 'La mythologie blanche').

Furthermore, for Bakhtin, the author is the embracing and framing 'consciousness of the consciousness,' endowed with a surplus of meaning (sense) conversely with the surplus of word, and that of truth ('Avtor i geroi', pp. 16/12, 18/14-15, 175/190-91).<sup>16</sup> Thus, for instance, 'the author-spectator always embraces temporally the whole; he always *succeeds*, and not only temporally, but *in meaning*' ('Avtor i geroi', p. 110/118; I will return to this temporal aspect). This hierarchical structure reserves for the author a stable position not in existence but in 'superexistence' ('Iz 70-71', p. 361/136-37; emphasis added).

In terms of appropriation, the subject acts somewhat like the Borg from the used-to-be popular Star Trek TV series: after 'self-implantation' into (the world of) the other, (s)he literally feeds on the other's life and its sufferings in order to accumulate them as *valuables* and then to return to the exotopical position of the superbeing ('Avtor i geroi', pp. 20/17, 27-29/24-27). Again, this exotopical program is not restricted to the sphere of aesthetics, since

only from this place the material acquired by self-implantation may be comprehended ethically, cognitively, or aesthetically . . . Strictly speaking, a pure self-implantation, involving the loss of one's own place external to the other, is hardly possible and in any case is absolutely useless and meaningless. Implanting myself into another's sufferings, I experience them precisely as *his* sufferings, inside the category of the *other* . . . (p. 28/26).

Thus, in Bakhtin's exotopical model of dialogism we have the following key elements: the basis of knowledge-as-appropriation; (self-) identity; the temporal sequence opening onto duration; the theme of the self-domestication of the subject armed with knowledge and word, taking place despite (or because of) his domineering position--so, Bakhtin's exotopical subject 'must feel [him]self at home in the world of other people' (p. 105/111). (Appropriation and domestication--two aspects of the same human activity--dominate in both the Rabelaisian-carnavalesque and exotopical models in Bakhtin's theory).

Whereas self-sacrifice--a manifestation of loss--is totally alien to Bakhtin's theory, there is a *gift* even in his economy of appropriation. Sharing, in a way, the given (in advance and 'in succession'), acquired, and accumulated surplus, the author bestows on the hero the 'gift of form' which is also the 'gift of love' (pp. 80-86/84-90). (And again, it is the 'surplus of *vision* [that] is the bud where the form is slumbering' [p. 27/24-25]. This love is strictly controlled by the subject: it is not a passion but a compassion or sympathy (cf. etymology: Gr. *syn* - together; *pathos* - feeling) to a cripple ('a person with disabilities' in proper parlance), a 'relation of gift to need, forgiveness *gratis* to crime, grace to a sinner' (86/90). The borderline between this relation and anything more excessive is very exactly located in the difference between compassion (*sochuvstvie*, literally: 'co-feeling') and 'co-suffering' (*sostradanie*) which would endanger the authorial exotopy (pp. 19-20/15-17, 59/59).<sup>17</sup> The word and concept *sostradanie* is extremely rich and developed in Russian language, ethics, aesthetics and theology; for instance, it is a real mode of existence for many of Dostoevsky heroes, and it takes Bakhtin a great deal of dialectical-dialogical skill to circumvent this problem in his writings on Dostoevsky.

All in all, from the dominant position of exotopy, the relation subject-object is characterized by Bakhtin in the following eloquent sequence. 'The other is entirely objectivized for me, and his *I* is only an object for me'; 'completeness of the interior and exterior being in the *other* is experienced [by me] as an *abject and miserable passivity*'; 'the soul of the other [is] the *soul-slave*' (pp. 40/38, 116-17/125, 33/32, respectively; emphasis added). On the plane of discourse proper, the object corresponds to or is equated with his 'word,' or dialogized speech. Accordingly, representation of the object becomes representation of his verbal activity (e.g.: 'Characteristic for the novel as a genre is not the image of a man in his own right, but a man who is precisely the *image of a language*' [DN, p. 336]). Thus, accordingly to the 'slavish' image of the other, his is the 'language-servant,' crude material--that is, reified matter--to be worked with, *formed* and *overcome* by the subject-author ('Avtor i geroi', pp. 178, 177/192-94). Between it and master's (subject's) enframing discourse the opposition is established: 'Word as a means

(language) versus word as comprehension. The comprehensive word pertains to the domain of goals. Word as the ultimate (highest) goal' ('Iz 70-71', p. 357/134). And, vis-à-vis the Calibanian language of an 'under-being' (which is nevertheless given to him by the master and is the *same* language for both), violence - supposedly 'loving,' 'compassionate,' in-forming violence - becomes quite justified: 'artistic completion [is] a kind of violence' ('K pererabotke', p. 335). Here we find a most interesting connection between the theme of violence in Bakhtin's dialogism, the ideological premise of Bakhtin's anti-poetical stance, suggested by Gasparov, and the parallels drawn later by Paul de Man and Michael André Bernstein: the first one between Bakhtin's 'dialogized' interlocutor and Hegel's slave in the dialectics of master and slave; the second between the same figure in Bakhtin and the slave's reactive consciousness in Nietzsche's *The Genealogy of Morals*.<sup>18</sup> And so, in this particular aspect, Bakhtin's exotopical model of relation with the Other generates a version of unmistakably 'colonial discourse' where the 'gift of form' proves to be truly poisonous (and characteristic of the 'dialogical imperialism' noticed by de Man).

At the not very distant limit in this direction, the object is condemned to a near total reification, and can actually be seen and treated as *thing*, even though it is a live human body. Here the laws of the laughing culture are enforced, *vendange* of blood is celebrated, and human flesh is chopped like pork liver, all according to the following principle:

As a distanced image an *object* 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 a 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 guts, doubt it, take it apart, dismember it, lay it bare and expose it, examine it freely and experiment with it. . . . [The contact here means] *laughter, then abuse, then beating. . . . What reigns supreme here is the artistic logic of analysis, dismemberment, murdering the object.* (EN, pp. 23-24; trans. mod., emphasis added)<sup>19</sup>

Thus, it is precisely via reification of the object (but by the same token, and unavoidably, of the subject) and violence, that the exotopical model is connected with its opposite in terms of exteriority--the anti-distancing familiarity of the laughing culture.

Similarly to the concept of Other-object, a sequence of shifts occurs with the subject-self. Here I will let Bakhtin's text speak for itself: 'Only *I-for-myself*, unique in all being, and all other *others-for-me*: this is the premise without which there is no value and cannot be any value for me . . .'; '[T]o be means to be for the other and, through him, for oneself. . . . But the thing is that the real human being is I myself . . . I remain the only one in the world' ('Avtor i geroi', pp. 120-21/129; 'K pererabotke', pp. 330, 337). And in a later draft from the 70s, dealing with selfhood, otherness and various possibilities of their relation: 'The '*I*' hides in the *other* and *others*, wants to be only another one for others, wants to enter the world of others as other, to discard the burden of the unique in the world *I (I-for-myself)*' ('Iz 70-71', p. 371/147, emphasis added; see also 'Avtor i geroi', p. 118/126).<sup>20</sup> With other as just a provisional shelter for the self (again the motif of 'home'), the very concept of otherness appears to be potentially undermined.

Following this line of thought it becomes difficult to distinguish between the authorial and authoritarian word, which is demarcated in the same exotopical way and 'requires a *distance vis-à-vis* itself' (DN, p. 343). In a rather obvious manner a conflict also arises with egalitarian ideology, axiomatic for Bakhtin's conception. A certain corrective or amortization was required, and it was introduced mainly, though not exclusively, in works leaning toward the synthetical 'Dostoevsky' pole. The new configuration comes with the individualization *of the object*.

To avoid reification of the object, Bakhtin establishes new parameters, interactive in today's parlance, for the relation between the subject and the object; here the author engages the hero in an open live dialogue: e.g. Dostoevsky and his characters ('K pererabotke', p. 343; PDP passim; PT, N70). First, the hero's consciousness is defined as 'in its own right'; furthermore, he becomes upgraded

to the status of subject, and now '[f]or the author the hero is not 'he' and not 'I' but a fully valid 'thou', that is, another and autonomous 'I' ('thou art'). The hero is the subject of a deeply serious, *real* dialogic mode of address, not the subject of a rhetorically *performed* or *conventionally* literary [dialogical] one' ('K pererabotke', p. 331; *Problemy poetiki Dostoevskogo* pp. 84-85/63).<sup>21</sup>

At its peak, the 'thou-model' quite explicitly contradicts the exotopical one: '*In a human being there is always something that only he himself can reveal, in a free act of self-consciousness and discourse, something that does not submit to an externalizing secondhand definition* (PDP, p. 58). At this point, authorial speech and the speech of his characters are equalized as 'merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help heteroglossia can enter the novel' (DN, p. 263). Conversely, authorial function is that of the 'transmission belt,' and the author himself is 'only a participant in the dialogue' ('K pererabotke', pp. 343, 341). A small detail, however, spoils the picture: Bakhtin adds in parenthesis: 'and its organizer [of the dialogue]' (this minimal addition deservedly attracted Todorov's attention). From here it goes downhill fast: '[O]ne may speak of another's discourse only with the help of that alien discourse itself, although in the process, it is true, the speaker introduces into the other's words his own intentions and highlights the context of those words in his own way'; 'An authorial emphasis is present of course, in all these orchestrating and distanced elements of language, and in the final analysis all these elements are determined by the author's artistic will' (DN, pp. 355, 416). The familiar circle is completed; we are back to the exotopical 'supereexistence,' and the mirage of the 'autonomous I' for the object fades away with the very notion of individuality: 'Individual character and individual fates . . . are in themselves of no concern for the novel' (p. 333; of course one should not forget that for Bakhtin the novel is the utmost realization of the dialogical principle as such).

Here I would like to dwell additionally on a couple of points in Bakhtin's philosophy of act and project, mainly related to the problem of the subject. The following paragraph introduces important concepts often analyzed in Bakhtinian studies: 'From within my consciousness, co-participating in being, the world is the



object of an act: an act of thinking, act of feeling, act of speech, act of doing . . . [Objects are opposed to me] in the open, still risky event of (co-) being whose unity, meaning and value are not given [*dany*] but posited [*zadany*]' ('Avtor i geroi', p. 93/97-98). (Characteristically, the unity of the cognitive, ethical and aesthetical aspects is again stated by Bakhtin.) The central opposition is that of the highly charged notions 'given' and 'posited': the latter generally referring to the ever-open, incompleting, free, dialogized world (as we already saw, *de facto* reserved for the subject). However, to repeat part of an already quoted passage, it is the authoritarian 'unitary language [that] is not something given [*dan*] but is always in essence posited [*zadan*]--and at every moment of its linguistic life it is opposed to the realities of the heteroglossia' (DN, p. 270). The discursive values, but evidently not the ideological ones, are altogether reversed here--a split that Bakhtin himself would call impossible. To my knowledge, little or no attention has been paid to this detail, which, at the very least, compromises the clarity of Bakhtin's concepts and terminology.

Of course, the 'co-participation in being' (perceptibly slipping back to the 'superexistence') imposes a certain *responsibility* ('answerability' in Liapunov's translation) on the transgredient author. In terms of 'colonial discourse,' it is a kind of 'white man's burden' in regard to the object, the responsibility of giving *sense* to and making sense for this 'abject and miserable passivity' ('Avtor i geroi', pp. 116-17/125, 114/122, 119-20/127-29). As to the other, his '[t]emporally completed life is hopeless from the point of view of meaning' and 'I rightly relieve him of the *responsibility* that poses a categorical imperative only for myself' (pp. 119/127, 112-13/120; emphasis added). The real problem of the 'mission, or posited givenness' [*zadanie, dannost' zadannosti*] is defined 'not in categories of the temporal being, but in categories of *not-yet-being*, in categories of goal and sense, in the meaningful future inimical to any actual presence of myself in the past and the present' (pp. 115-16/123-24). Again, the essence of the project is rigidly linked with goal, sense, and priority of the future versus the present.

A passage from 'Avtor i geroi v esteticheskoi deiatel'nosti' deals with what Bakhtin calls 'the problem of rhythm.' 'Rhythm makes meaning immanent to the

experience itself, the goal immanent to the aspiration . . . It presupposes a certain hopelessness for meaning . . . [B]eing and responsibility come together as enemies . . . In rhythmic being . . . there is no responsibility for the goal . . . [Here] the totality . . . is justified without th[e] future' (pp. 110-12/117-20). Thus, the pure experience of being, the rhythm of existence opposes meaning and responsibility of the project. A certain analogy to Nietzsche's Dionysian and Apollonian aspects of life appears here and is confirmed by further analysis of Bakhtin's texts. To this end I will briefly examine Bakhtin's notion of *igra* (in Russian: play, game and acting in the sense of performance), which is antonymically related to responsibility.

In the true dialogical spirit, and like all concepts and notions in Bakhtin's theory, 'play-game' is not a stable notion. Its trajectory can be most economically considered in conjunction with the concepts of laughter (and conversely seriousness) and time. In a circular trajectory, Bakhtin's 'laughing culture of the carnival' comes to recognize the 'new,' 'better' seriousness (e.g. RW, pp. 94, 122 *et passim*). Similarly, carnival time -as-crisis is invalidated in duration: for instance, in the exotopical model with its spatial-temporal transgression. By the same token, the concept of game as a carnivalized heterogeneous moment--'The *stake* is similar to a *crisis* . . . [It is] 'life taken out of life' - is reinscribed into the responsible and serious philosophy of act (PDP, pp. 171-72). The conclusive characteristics of game-play: it is pure fantasy, a dream - a 'surrogate of life' below the level of (serious) representation ('Avtor i geroi', pp. 71-76). At the very best, it attains the status of a more or less coherent system, secondary in relation to the primary one ('real life'). Thus, for instance, 'such a peculiar substitution of different systems - a game in a game - 'drew the players out of the bonds of everyday life, liberated them from usual laws and regulations, and *replaced established conventions by other lighter conventionalities*.'<sup>22</sup> It is precisely via the irresponsibility of game and play that Nietzsche gets evaluated in the context of project and exotopy. 'The aesthetized philosophy of Nietzsche is a conception which grew on the basis of the key moments of the first type of biography': here Bakhtin defines Nietzsche's work in terms of the adventuresque-heroic type of the biographical genre, one of the constituent moments or *value* of which is 'gambling [playing] with . . . life,

devoid of any *responsibility* in the unified and unique event of (co-)being' ('Avtor i geroi', pp. 148/160, 147/158; emphasis added). This kind of creativity is also shown to be on the side of rhythm in the indicated opposition, and, furthermore, it is minimally exotopical, due to the maximal proximity of the author and the hero. Finally, and somewhat unexpectedly for present-day views on Nietzsche, the author and the hero in this genre represent a 'naive individualism linked to naive and ingenuous parasitism' (p. 144/156). Of course there is a direct correlation between the (critical) attitude toward Nietzsche indicated here and the analogy between the participant in Bakhtin's dialogue and Nietzschean slave, noted by Bernstein.

On the other hand, Bakhtin's notion of responsibility obviously has much to do with Hegel. Thus, Bakhtin proposes what is a rather faithful version of the Hegelian (and subsequently Engelsian) formula: 'The better a man understands his determinedness (his thingness) the closer he is to understanding and realizing his true freedom' ('Iz 70-71', pp. 362-63). Note that here Bakhtin actually establishes common parameters for responsibility and reification.

Up to this point in Bakhtin's conception, the relation to the Other was seen in parameters of domination, at best a stale-mate. 'Inexhaustability of the second consciousness, that is of the consciousness understanding and answering: there is a potential infinity of answers, languages, codes. *Infinity versus infinity*' ('Iz 70-71', pp. 359-60/136; emphasis added; cf. 'K pererabotke', pp. 331-32). But despite the observed shifts of attitude, the "ultimate positions in being are taken" (Bakhtin's expression), and the borders between the world of the author and the represented world of the other are 'sharp and categorical' (FTC, p. 253). A symmetrically mirroring picture appears when the situation is transposed into a new perspective.

The transgredient vision of the author resolves the problem of the 'blind spot' of vision and knowledge for the hero but not for the author himself (since a full-fledged self-representation is impossible, and attempts to achieve it can lead only to the precarious doubling and to 'naive and parasitic individualism' of a Nietzschean kind). Thus appears the third Other, the 'higher super addressee,' the

'loophole addressee': all-seeing and, hopefully, understanding and benevolent (like the good master already portrayed) ('Problema teksta', p. 323/126). In fact, his existence is implicit in dialogism, since the word wants to, and must be, heard, answered, and understood. At the same time, despite the 'fully valid "thou",' the (abject and slavish) 'hero' cannot comprehend the author, give *sense* to his speech. And, since the exotopical position of the subject-author applies to any *other* on the same plane of existence as his (they are all 'heroes'), only a higher comprehending entity can resolve the problem.

This Other is called, in ascending succession: artist, author, author-creator, Dostoevsky, Author (with capital A), divine artist, Prometheus, and God--the latter quite logically completing the succession (EST86 *passim*).<sup>23</sup> Generally, in the texts collected in *Estetika slovesnogo tvorchestva*, Bakhtin speaks of God explicitly, often, and in a reverential tone appropriate for the true believer.<sup>24</sup> The following quotation, although not the most characteristic in this respect, is from one of the most famous passages in Bakhtin, which is widely interpreted in a sense different from the one proposed here:

It is impossible to prove one's *alibi* in the event of being. Nothing answerable, serious, and significant can exist where that *alibi* becomes a presupposition for creation and utterance. Special answerability is indispensable (in an autonomous domain of culture) - one cannot create directly in God's world. This specialization of answerability, however, can be founded only upon a deep trust in the highest level of authority that blesses a culture - upon trust, that is, in the fact that there is another - the highest other - who answers for my own special answerability, and trust in the fact that I do not act in an axiological void. Outside this trust, only empty pretensions are possible. (AH, p. 206)

The obvious complication here is that this answer of the highest other is undistinguishable from the 'other's sanctified word, and sanctified and authoritarian word in general' ('Iz 70-71', p. 356/133). Thus: 'Often the authoritative word is in fact a word spoken by another in a foreign language (cf. for example the phenomenon of *foreign-language religious texts* in most cultures' (DN,

p. 343 note; emphasis added). Both 'speech in other language' (*inoiazychie*) and the authoritarian word are, at the outset of Bakhtin's theory, posed as limits for dialogism and yet both *de facto* merge here, in his profession of faith.

Here we may recall the issue of Bakhtin's religiosity. He was, of course, an orthodox Christian; but he also was a man of a profoundly dialectical or dialogical persuasion (cf. the already quoted 'Dialectics was born from dialogue, in order to return to it on a higher level' and 'Dialectics is an abstract product of the dialogue' ['K metodologii', p. 384/162; 'K pererabotke', p. 337]). His own authorial ideas, such as the postulates of the laughing culture or dialogism, almost seem to attain the status of religious dogma for Bakhtin. This may explain a remark that sounds shocking to an orthodox believer's ears, the one made in a private conversation and 'in a conspiratorial tone of voice': 'The New Testament is also a carnival.'<sup>25</sup> Be that as it may, and even if God is left as a skeleton in a personal closet of the anti-authoritarian – heteroglot – free-thinker Bakhtin (as he is most often portrayed), the following list of positive instances and possible avatars of the 'loophole addressee' reads rather as an enumeration of logocentric values, obviously with certain ideological preferences: 'God, absolute truth, the court of impartial human conscience, the people, court of history, science, and so forth' ('Problema teksta', p. 323/126).

On any level of analysis, the contradictory character of Bakhtin's thought remains always in play. As an alternative to the conception of the authorial truth we might recall a conclusion based on significantly different, 'Rabelaisian-carnavalesque' and collective, premises. Criticizing the 'monistic principle' of the 'unity of consciousness,' Bakhtin contends that

[i]t should be pointed out that the single and unified consciousness is by no means an inevitable consequence of the concept of a unified [unique, single] truth that requires a plurality of consciousnesses, one that cannot in principle be fitted into the bounds of a single consciousness, one that is, so to speak, by its very nature *full of event potential* and is born at a point of contact among various consciousnesses. (PDP, p. 81)<sup>26</sup>

One can again comment, parenthetically, on the Borg-like character of this universal 'truth,' accessible only to a plurality of consciousness.<sup>27</sup> In a close analysis, however, it seems possible, on a certain level, to reconcile the collective and the exotopical models. The former seems to be antithetical to the latter in terms of the collectivity - individuality opposition. But collective consciousness and truth, just as the 'ring of the finalizing authorial consciousness' present, in fact, the same encompassing structure, and in this major sense they both are exotopic ('Avtor i geroi', p. 17/13). By the same token, the collective may be considered just a quantitative growth of the 'intersection of two consciousness' (with all that follows in Bakhtin's argument) ('K pererabotke', p. 332).<sup>28</sup> Thus, in a conclusive evaluation of the controversy of 'Rabelais' versus 'Goethe,' the exotopical model seems to prevail, at any rate in aspects of gnoseology ('Dostoevsky'). And, be it in the 'collective consciousness' model or in the highest 'loophole addressee,' the actual human personality becomes lost, different aspects of the full-fledged human life lose their immediate givenness and rather become *posited* 'image of language,' 'image of idea,' 'sense of theory,' and even: 'Not a belief . . . but a *sense of belief*' (p. 338).

Overall, two configurations may be distinguished in Bakhtin's conception of the Other. First, the Other dominated and appropriated in the dialogic relation, parameters of which are established in the authorial power-range of the exotopical subject; it is, therefore, only a provisional Other. The second is the 'primary author' or the subject, exotopic to any given level of the 'secondary authorship.' This is the irreducible Other, outside the possibility of adequate knowledge by a 'secondary author' (who is thus put on the plane of protagonist), and thus potentially (and eventually, considering the 'temporal succession') excluded from dialogue.

Primary, not created, and secondary author (the image of the author created by the primary author). Primary author - *natura non creata quae creat*, secondary author - *natura creata quae creat*. Image of the hero - *natura creata quae non creat*. The

primary author cannot be an image: he escapes any imaginative conception . . . That is why the primary author is draped in *silence*. ('Iz 70-71', p. 373/148-49; emphasis added)<sup>29</sup>

Here, still in the frame of Bakhtin's predominant authorial model, the exotopical and authoritative Author, the Other, acquires specific features of *deus otiosus* and is somewhat pessimistically defined in terms of *silence* in his (lack of) response to the eagerness of the 'last questions' posed by participants - intermediate 'authors' - in the presumably all-embracing and all-permeating dialogue. This *silence* is never absolutized by Bakhtin as a negative principle and can even 'adapt different forms of expression, different forms of the reduced laughter (irony), of allegorical narration etc.' ('Iz 70-71', p. 373/149). Still, it remains as a dark shadow on the horizon of meaningful discursive logic and, for instance, can be recognized precisely in the carnivalized literature, since '[l]aughter is a specific relationship to reality, but not the one that can be translated into logical thought' (PDP, p. 164). Moreover, the concepts of meaning and of truth itself seem to be seriously jeopardized here, since '[a]nswers to questions is what I call 'meanings'' ('Iz 70-71', p. 369/145; emphasis added).

On the other side, the staunch logocentric credo in *the ultimate truth* seems to be at odds with (although in the overall scope of Bakhtin's thought it manifestly outweighs) his somewhat 'poststructuralist' formulation of the endless dialogue where there is 'no first or last word' nor 'first or last meaning' ('K metodologii', pp. 393/170, see also p. 391/168; 'Iz 70-71' p.370/145-46). Thus, Bakhtin's optimistic and positivistic thrust sometimes seems to be thwarted as to the cognizability of the final truth; in other words, a certain imbalance between ontology and epistemology appears.

Nevertheless, and however suggestive may seem Bakhtin's formulations concerning the dualistic relation subject - object or self - other, he never openly questions the fundamental values of knowledge, sense (meaning), and final truth, even when it is relegated on a certain level to the competence of the ever-receding Author.



Meaning, truth, and otherness are inseparable in Bakhtin's theory: truth is a valorized (first of all, ideologically valorized) meaning and is expressed in utterance by a subject or the secondary subject - between whom the relation of otherness exists. In terms of truth, Bakhtin's position may be summed up thus: 'The truth is out there. Only it may be not cognizable to an individual. Or maybe not to anybody.' But Bakhtin himself never explicitly crosses the line of ontological disbelief, and in all versions language and discourse - 'names, definitions and value judgements' - remain at the very least a 'hypothesis of meaning' prodding the 'sober and fearless knowledge of the [historical] process' (DN, p. 278; *Voprosy literatury i estetiki* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1975), p. 182; RW, p. 237).

## Notas

<sup>1</sup> In Mikhail Bakhtine: le principe dialogique (Paris: Seuil, 1981) and a chapter on Bakhtin in Critique de la critique (Paris: Seuil, 1984). The term 'hétérologie' was introduced and developed in the writings of Georges Bataille (1897-1962).

<sup>2</sup> 'Discourse in the Novel', in The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin (ed. M. Holquist; trans. C. Emerson and M. Holquist; Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 259-422 (356); subsequent references to DN and DI, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> Bakhtin, M.M. Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics (ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 166; subsequent references to PDP.

<sup>4</sup> 'Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel', in DI, pp. 84-258 (252-53); 'Problema teksta v lingvistike, filologii i drugikh gumanitarnykh naukakh', in Estetika slovesnogo tvorchestva (comp. S.G. Bocharov; Moscow: Iskusstvo, 2nd edn, 1986), pp. 297-325 (318); English translation 'The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology, and the Human Sciences', in M. M. Bakhtin. Speech Genres and Other Late Essays (ed. C. Emerson and M. Holquist; trans. Vern W. McGee; Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986) pp. 103-31 (122); subsequent references to FTC, 'Problema teksta', EST86, PT, and SG, respectively. Also see 'K metodologii gumanitarnykh nauk', in EST86, 381-93 (385); English translation 'Toward a Methodology for the Human Sciences', in SG, pp. 159-72 and Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, passim; subsequent references to 'K metodologii.'

<sup>5</sup> 'From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse', in DI, pp. 41-83 (69); see also DN, pp. 293-94.

<sup>6</sup> See Rabelais and His World (trans. Helene Iswolsky; Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The M.I.T. Press, 1968) pp. 373-74, 376; subsequent references to RW. Also see FTC, p.207.

<sup>7</sup> 'K pererabotke knigi o Dostoevskom', in EST86, pp. 326-46 (342), emphasis added; subsequent references to 'K pererabotke.' See also PDP, p. 62.

<sup>8</sup> M.L. Gasparov, 'M.M. Bakhtin in Russian Culture of the Twentieth Century', in *Studies in the Twentieth Century Literature*, 9.1 (fall 1984): pp.169-76.

<sup>9</sup> 'Last' or 'ultimate questions of being'--Dostoevsky's expression recurrently used by Bakhtin.

<sup>10</sup> Notes and comments on this publication were made by the preeminent Russian theorist Sergei Averintsev and Sergei Bocharov, a friend of Bakhtin's and specialist in his work.

<sup>11</sup> E.g., in 'Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity', in *Art and Answerability* (ed. M. Holquist and V. Liapunov; trans. Liapunov and K. Brostrom; Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), pp. 4-256 (88); Russian original 'Avtor i geroi v esteticheskoi deiatel'nosti', in EST86, pp. 9-191; subsequent references to AH, AA, and 'Avtor i geroi', respectively.

<sup>12</sup> By the same token, 'the culture of folk humor reflects precisely [the] dialectics in the form of imagery' (RW, p. 410).

<sup>13</sup> 'The Problem of Content, Material, and Form in Verbal Creative Art', in AA, pp. 286-87 et passim.

<sup>14</sup> 'Epic and Novel' in DI, pp. 3-40 (32); subsequent references to EN. 'Surplus' in my opinion is more contextually exact than 'excess,' as in Liapunov's translation.

<sup>15</sup> 'Roman vospitania i ego znachenie v istorii realizma', in EST86, pp. 199-249 (239, 218); English translation 'The Bildungsroman and its Significance in the History of Realism', in SG, pp. 10-59 (49, 27).

<sup>16</sup> See also 'Iz zapisei 1970-1971 godov', in EST86, pp. 355-80 (361); English translation 'From Notes Made in 1970-71', in SG, pp. 132-58 (136-37); subsequent references to 'Iz 70-71' and N70.

<sup>17</sup> Cf.: 'It is necessary to underscore the absoluteness of profit, surplus, productivity and enrichment of the compassionate understanding . . . The key here is not to reflect or duplicate, exactly and passively, another's emotions in myself--in fact, such a doubling is impossible--but to transpose emotion into a radically different stratum of values, into a new category of value and form. The suffering that I co-experience with the other is fundamentally alien, in the most important and essential sense, to the suffering he experiences for himself or the suffering I keep to myself. The only common thing here is the logically identical to itself notion of suffering--an abstract moment that is never and nowhere realized in pure form; in real-life consciousness even the word 'suffering' every time changes its register' (p. 97/102-103). (so)stradanie and strast' (passion) derive from the same etymon (cf. splitting between [Christ's] passions and everyday casual meaning of 'passion' in English). Thus English 'compassion' hypothetically may be located in-between sochuvstvie and sostradanie on the emotional scale.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Paul de Man, 'Dialogue and Dialogism', in *Rethinking Bakhtin: Extensions and Challenges* (ed. Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson; Northwestern University Press, 1989), pp.105-14 and Michael André Bernstein, 'The Poetics of Ressentiment', *ibid.*, pp. 197-223. In the present essay, it is not the only time that Hegel and Nietzsche appear as points of, respectively, attraction and rejection for Bakhtin. However, a specialized approach to the theme of Bakhtin vis-à-vis Hegel and Nietzsche requires an in-depth analysis, which is beyond my scope here.

<sup>19</sup> Emphasized segments replace the following in Emerson and Holquist's translation: 'subject . . . center . . . laughter means abuse, and abuse could lead to blows . . . turning things into dead objects.'

<sup>20</sup> Bakhtin unambiguously writes here from gnoseological positions (cf. the headline of the passage: 'Essays on philosophical anthropology'). I would like to underscore once again that his, from time to time proclaimed, differentiation between aesthetical, ethical and gnoseological approaches is not rigorous and he easily transgresses categorical boundaries.

<sup>21</sup> *Problemy poetiki Dostoevskogo* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 2nd edn, 1963). The bracketed 'dialogical' is omitted in Emerson's translation. Is this 'dialogical' 'just' a lapsus on Bakhtin's part, or more: a Freudian 'slip of tongue'?

<sup>22</sup> *Tvorchestvo Fransua Rable i narodhaia kul'tura srednevekov'a i Renessansa* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1965) p. 252; RW, p. 235, emphasis added. The quotation from *Tvorchestvo* is omitted in Iswolsky's translation.

<sup>23</sup> In the light of Boris Groys' interpretation, Stalin may be added to Bakhtin's list of authorities (cf. Boris Groys, 'Mezhdru Stalinym i Dionisom', in *Sintaksis* 25 (1989): pp. 92-97).

<sup>24</sup> For the most part these texts were published after Bakhtin's death; thus, considerations of ideological (anti-religious) censorship and potential--and eventual--repressive measures are mainly uplifted here, which were to different extent imminent, probable or possible at different stages of his life.

<sup>25</sup> Qtd in M.M. Bakhtin i filosofskaia kul'tura dvadtsatogo veka (Peterburg: RGPU, 1991), p. 28.

<sup>26</sup> Bakhtin links the themes of collectivity versus individuality, project and work, and the very principle of cognition thus: 'All objects--the sun, the stars, the earth, the sea and so forth--are present to man not as objects of an uninvolved thinking, but exclusively as part of the collective process of labor and the battle against nature' (FTC, p. 209; trans. mod.). By the same token, 'collective labor concerns itself for the future: men sow for the future, gather in the harvest for the future, mate and copulate for the sake of the future'--the last one is a rather unorthodox example of 'collective labor' (p. 207).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. the following formula: 'The individual feels that he is an indissoluble part of the collectivity, a member of the people's mass body. In this whole the individual body ceases to a certain extent to be itself; it is possible, so to say, to exchange bodies, to be renewed . . .' (RW, p. 255). Sometimes it almost seems likely that the creators of 'Star Trek: Voyager' consulted Bakhtin's text.

<sup>28</sup> On the subject of the quantitative growth (characteristic of the economy of appropriation) cf. Bakhtin's scathing the 'numerous philosophical, ethical, philosophical-historical, metaphysical, religious theories that we can call impoverishing theories insofar as they tend to explain a productive event by impoverishing it, first of all by the quantitative reduction of the participants' ('Avtor i geroi', p. 83/87).

<sup>29</sup> 'It is striking to note that the scholastic definition Bakhtin uses to identify the author was applied, in its original context (for example by John Scotus Erigena), to God and to him alone' (Todorov T. *Literature and Its Theorists* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987], p. 81). Bakhtin recurrently uses this and similar Latin formulae. The analogous 'natura naturans' and 'natura naturata' are known from Latin translations of Averroes and from Spinoza's texts (cf. EST86, p. 428 n).

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## Referências

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Vide notas.

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## Para citar este artigo

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KHOREV, Andrei. Bakhtin: the dangers of dialogue. **Macabéa – Revista Eletrônica do Netlli**, Crato, v. 1., n. 2., Dez. 2012, p. 267-292.

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