Time, Space and Dialogism in Robert Louis Stevenson's Fiction

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Abstract

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It is now something of a commonplace to discuss Robert Louis Stevenson as an innovator of romance. Genre debates at the *fin-de-siècle* have been well researched in relation to his fiction and, increasingly, his critical writings. Since Edwin Eiger (1966) and Robert Kiely (1964) published studies on Stevenson's romance, the interplay between romance and realism that is evident in much of his work has been identified by Roslyn Jolly (1999), Roderick Watson (2004), Hilary J. Beattie (2004) and Michael Saler (2012) to name but a few. Rather than viewing this phenomenon through the lens of genre, which, as Anna Vaninskaya (2008) points out, can lead to unhelpful complications, it is more rewarding to understand Stevenson's new romance aesthetic as related to his experimentation with time and space.

Part of Stevenson's approach to reviving the romance, set out in "A Gossip on Romance" and "A Humble Remonstrance", involved adopting a serious literary perspective, rather than treating it as a lesser fictional mode. This aspiration included reinvigorating the traditional spaces of romance by investing them with a more complex temporality, creating new fictional worlds that operated as Bakhtinian chronotopes.

Stevenson's fiction invariably takes a "polychronotopic" form (following Pearce [1994]), which introduces a dialogic relationship between different methods of constructing time-space within a single text. Through this, Stevenson critiques traditional generic assumptions about the hero's interaction with the romance world and applies a self-reflexive approach to understanding the text he is in the act of producing.

This internal dialogic is often exposed in the narrative through Stevenson's characters who behave beyond the scope of traditional "heroes", often providing a mismatching perspective to that suggested by the worlds they inhabit over the course of their adventures. Stevenson transformed the romance for a new audience in a similar way to that which Bakhtin traces for the novel in Dostoevsky's work.

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Appropriately enough, this thesis has not emerged in isolation. I have been privileged to undertake the journey not only within the context of a vibrant postgraduate community in Durham English Department, but the wider region of the North East. Over the past three and a half years, I have been involved with various reading and research groups, academic networks and college groups. In particular, I've benefited from the opportunity to lead sessions and give papers at the North East Nineteenth Century reading group, based in Newcastle, the Narrating Time seminar series, funded by the Institute of Advanced Study, in Durham and St Aidan's College SCR lecture series. The conversations after these papers always proved enormously stimulating – particularly in the days of confusion when I first started to work out how the chronotope might be applied to Stevenson's fiction. My research has been more generally, but no less greatly, enriched from hearing speakers at an array of IAS workshops and events during the academic year 2011/12 when the theme was "Time", and from attending departmental research seminars. It has also been a pleasure to assist in the establishment of the Edwardian Culture Network which has provided another source of delightful and inspiring discussions.

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Introduction

It is now something of a commonplace to discuss Robert Louis Stevenson as an innovator of romance. What has by no means been determined with as much clarity is exactly how he achieved this transformation. Genre debates at the fin-de-siècle have been well researched in relation to his fiction and, increasingly, his critical writings, since Edwin Eiger and Robert Kiely's studies were published in 1966 and 1964 respectively.[1] Since then, the interplay between romance and realism that is evident in much of his work has been identified and described in studies of individual texts by Roslyn Jolly, Roderick Watson, Hilary J. Beattie and Michael Saler to name but a few.[2] Rather than viewing this phenomenon through the lens of genre, which, as Anna Vaninskaya has pointed out, can lead to unhelpful complications, it is perhaps more rewarding to understand Stevenson's new romance aesthetic as related to his experimentation with time and space in fictional narrative.[3] Part of Stevenson's approach to reviving the romance as an antidote to realism, famously set out in "A Gossip on Romance" and "A Humble Remonstrance", involved adopting a serious literary perspective in undertaking the task, rather than treating it as a lesser fictional mode.[4] This aspiration included reinvigorating the traditional spaces associated with romance by investing them with a more complex temporality. By doing this, Stevenson was creating new fictional worlds that operated, in essence, as Bakhtinian chronotopes.

By reconceptualising the temporal and spatial parameters of traditional romance worlds, Stevenson broke from convention and resisted a reproduction of the cyclical, complete structure – and often primitive style – previously associated with the genre.[5] Within a single romance, Stevenson often introduces several chronotopes, a technique which generates a dialogic relationship between different methods of constructing time-space that allows his fiction to critique the process of storytelling itself. This inscription of time-space in romance

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[1]Robert Kiely, *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Fiction of Adventure* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1964) and Edwin Eigner, *Robert Louis Stevenson and Romantic Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1966).

[2] Roslyn Jolly, "Stevenson's 'Stirling Domestic Fiction'; "The Beach of Falesá"," *The Review of English Studies* 50 (1999): 463-82; Roderick Watson, "'You Cannot Fight me with a Word': *The Master of Ballantrae* and the Wilderness Beyond Dualism," *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 1 (2004): 1-23. *Robert Louis Stevenson Website*. 19 May 2012; Hilary J. Beattie, "Dreaming, Doubling and Gender in the Work of Robert Louis Stevenson: The Strange Case of Olalla," *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 2 (2004): 10-32, 17. *Robert Louis Stevenson Website*. 23 May 2012; Michael Saler, *As If: Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality* (New York: OUP, 2012).

[3] Anna Vaninskaya, "The Late-Victorian Romance Revival: A Generic Excursus," *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 51 (2008): 57-79. *Project Muse*. 28 Feb. 2012.

[4] Robert Louis Stevenson, "A Humble Remonstrance," *Memories and Portraits* (London: Nelson, n. d.) 259-81; "A Gossip on Romance," *MP* 234-58.

[5] Northrop Frye, *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1976), particularly chapters one and two.

is a consequence of his theoretical approach to authorship as a collaboration, in which the text is produced as the reader engages with the narrative, which also bears a striking resemblance to Bakhtinian thought.[6] These ideas often unsettled contemporaneous assumptions about the nature of both language and narrative, and how the self relates to the world and the wider community. Although his fiction addresses such serious intellectual problems, it is testimony to his literary achievement that when he died in 1894, despite spending his final years in the obscure quasi-Imperial backwater of Samoa, he was mourned by writers and the general public alike.[7] His obituary column in *The Times* noted "It is very much to say of him that he subsequently made himself popular, without degenerating from that fine literary standard."[8] This assessment of his life's work is well-observed; Stevenson's commitment to maintaining the fast-paced action that gave romance its wide audience did not compromise his integrity as a theoretician. Since his death, not enough emphasis has been placed on understanding the theoretical principles behind Stevenson's fine style, which ultimately motivated his redefinition of the popular genre of romance, often while successfully sustaining imaginative appeal.[9]

When Stevenson began to write fiction, his awareness of the limitations of narrative and language as means of expression led him to introduce dialogism into a genre previously associated with an epic spirit of completion.[10] For Stevenson, romance did not have to be an escapist, archaic or formulaic genre. It provided an opportunity for readers to engage with an imagined world where their preconceptions about the structural dichotomies that informed traditional views of reality could be interrogated and deconstructed through encountering other modes of thought. Rather than pursuing a systematically mimetic realism, after the fashion of his friend and theoretical opponent, Henry James, Stevenson wanted to capture and communicate to his reader the complexity of a single aspect of experience, an idea

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[6] For the similarity of Bakhtin's approach, see Michael Holquist, "Introduction," M. M. Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*, eds. Michael Holquist and Vadim Liapunov, trans. Vadim Liapunov and Kenneth Brostom, (Austin: U of Texas P, 1990) xxiv.

[7] For details of Samoa's complex situation after the 1889 Berlin Treaty, see Roslyn Jolly, *Robert Louis Stevenson in the Pacific. Travel, Empire, and the Author's Profession* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009) 25, 77.

[8] Anon. "RLS Obituary," *The Times* 18th Dec. 1894. *The Times Digital Archive*. 15 Feb. 2013, <http://find.galegroup.com/ttda>

[9] The link between romance and accessibility to a non-literary readership is forged in Frye, *Secular Scripture*, 26-7.

[10] This idea will be further explained by the Introduction. See M. M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, ed. & trans. Caryl Emerson, introd. Wayne C. Booth, (London; Minneapolis: U of Minneapolis P, 1993) hereafter cited as *PDP*, and for the sense in which I use the terms "dialogise" and "completion," see "Epic and Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, (Austin: U of Texas P, 1994) hereafter cited as *DI*.

contemplated through representative action. This was the work of romance according to his part in the famous debate conducted on the pages of *Longman's Magazine*.[11]

Another distinguishing feature of the romance extrapolated by Stevenson is its abstract nature. Romance provided a means of imagining fiction in shapes rather than with the close detail encouraged by realist writing. During his long rambles in the wilderness the outline of a narrative was often made visible. For Stevenson, intentionally pursuing romance meant writing down these tales which had been evoked by suggestive places, such as Queen's Ferry Inn outside Edinburgh, or the Highland pine-forests. The essence of a story could be distilled from the vapours of past incidents that seemed to cling to the environment, transforming the observer's experience of the present. The romantic imagination is inspired by perceiving historical time as it is transposed in space. Stevenson understood this integral connection between space and time in romance and it is this significant relationship which makes Bakhtin's chrontope such a useful tool for approaching his fiction. Although several studies in both time and space have emerged since Bakhtin, the topics have continued to be treated as separate modes for approaching literature.[12] If one is interested in considering the art of constructing a fictional world in terms of a fused understanding of time and space then Bakhtin's work remains the most fruitful point of departure.

Stevenson's attempt to reimagine romance in these terms resulted in the experimental character of all his writing, and caused him to be dismissed as "the literary equivalent of a singer who cannot hold a note" in the decades immediately following his death; curiously, in recent years, this flexibility has become a familiar illustration of his distinctive strength.[13] Other than the official biography written by his cousin, Graham Balfour, and a few slender,

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[11] The debate began in response to a lecture given by Walter Besant entitled "The Art of Fiction" to which Henry James responded in an article of the same name. Stevenson disagreed with James on the relationship between fiction and reality, and the author's role in writing for the public, and replied in "A Humble Remonstrance" which became part of a wider collection of essays written on the defence of romance, largely coordinated by Andrew Lang in *Longman's Magazine*. See Henry James, "The Art of Fiction," *Literary Criticism: Essays on Literature, American Writers, English Writers* (Cambridge: Press Syndicate of University of Cambridge, 1984) 44-65, and Robert Louis Stevenson, "A Humble Remonstrance," *MP*, 259-81, published respectively in the September and December issues of *Longman's Magazine*, 1884.

[12] The most important examples are Gillian Beer, *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (Cambridge: CUP, 2009) which considers the influence of scientific understanding of time as a shaper of fictional works during the nineteenth century; Sue Zemka, *Time and the Moment in Victorian Literature and Society* (Cambridge: CUP, 2012) traces the gradual evolution of the cultural obsession with the moment, and how this process is embedded in nineteenth century industrialisation and technological progress; Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (New York: Orion Press, 1964) which assesses how the shape of various spaces have influenced the literary imagination; and Franco Moretti, *Atlas of the European Novel 1800-1900* (London: Verso, 1998) which discusses some nineteenth-century novelists according to the maps plotted by their characters' geographical movements.

[13] Frank McLynn, *Robert Louis Stevenson* (London: Pimlico, 1994), 2, provides a useful paraphrase of Frank Swinnerton, *Robert Louis Stevenson* (1924).

often dismissive, articles in the press, critics were silent on Stevenson for many decades: he was completely excluded from the 1973 *Norton Anthology of English Literature*.[14] Since the 1980s, the work of researchers such as Jenni Calder, Jean-Pierre Naugrette and Roger Swearingen has done much to recover his reputation amongst academics.[15] The revival of interest in his work has continued to generate a variety of theoretical and critical readings of his writing, including his essays, short fiction and poetry, which rank among the less well-known material in his corpus.[16]

As has already been intimated, there are certain aspects of his oeuvre that have not been sufficiently explored, the most compelling of which are the many links yet to be forged between his theoretical understanding of literature and his fictional practice. Importantly, Stevenson's attitude to writing narrative as an indeterminable act of communication with an unknown reader proved one of the earliest articulations of the central ideas that have motivated contemporary narrative theory. His understanding of the theoretical problems associated with the use of language compelled him to write with a greater self-reflexivity than is generally true of nineteenth-century authors. This same intellectual awareness ultimately caused him to reconceive the temporal and spatial structure of the romance world which had largely characterized the genre since Malory and de Troyes.[17] As chapters one and two reveal, the publication of his first novel, *Treasure Island*, demonstrated a different approach to writing children's fiction which influenced future generations of

[14] Recently it has come to light that Arthur Ransome wrote a balanced critical life in the mid-1920s which went against the condemnatory few volumes that dealt with Stevenson's work during this decade, which McLynn otherwise summarises nicely. This was only the start of Stevenson's fall from favour; he was condemned to the archives of literature by falling short in the eyes of the next generation of literary figures such as Virginia Woolf and F. R. Leavis. David Daiches, Edwin Eigner, Robert Kiely and Irving S. Saposnik contributed most of the work on Stevenson before 1980 and after G. K. Chesterton (1927). For a full bibliography of Stevenson criticism, see "Critical Studies of Robert Louis Stevenson" *Robert Louis Stevenson Website* Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, 2009. 22 Feb. 2013 <http://www.robert-louis-stevenson.org/rls-studies>.

[15] Jenni Calder (ed.), *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1981), Jean-Pierre Naugrette, *Robert Louis Stevenson: l'aventure et son double* (Paris: Off Shore; Presses de l'Ecole Normale Supérieu, 1987), and Roger Swearingen, *The Prose Writings of Robert Louis Stevenson: A Guide* (Hamden, CT; London: Shoe String (Archon)/Macmillan, 1980).

[16] For work on Stevenson's non-fiction writing see Jolly, *Stevenson in the Pacific*; Stevenson's essays are the sole consideration of *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 10 (2013). For Stevenson's place in romantic tradition, see Kiely and Eigner; for more recent considerations of Stevenson's fiction and its relationship to wider cultural literary debates see Julia Reid, *Robert Louis Stevenson, Science and the Fin-de-Siècle* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), Vanessa Smith, *Literary Culture and the Pacific: Nineteenth-Century Textual Encounters* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), Rod Edmund, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), Richard Ambrosini and Richard Dury (eds.), *European Stevenson* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009) and Stephen Arata, Linda Dryden and Eric Massie (eds.), *Robert Louis Stevenson and Joseph Conrad: Writers of Transition* (Lubbock, Texas: Texas Tech. UP, 2009).

[17] See Helen Cooper, *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), Frye, *Secular Scripture*, 4, and Bakhtin, "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel," *DI*, 84-258.

writers both thematically and conceptually.[18] Stevenson's ideas regarding genre and the importance of constructing dialogues intrinsic to communicating through literature establish him as a serious theoretician as well as an essayist, critic and romancer.

The theories of literature and philosophies of language as a tool for communication that Stevenson considered in his essays and letters form the criteria by which he measured the success or failure of his own work. The following analysis of Stevenson's fiction suggests that his two most original ideas are his understanding of how words operate in the process of communication between two subjects and, closely linked to this in creating fictional narratives, how the author organises time and space in his imagined world – a decision which has a close affinity with genre. Both these lines of enquiry have since become critical, theoretical and philosophical fields in their own right. Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin's theories surrounding the dialogic imagination, this thesis will examine Stevenson's temporal and spatial decisions in creating his imagined worlds. By tracing the interaction between the differing structures of time-space in Stevenson's work, both within a single work of fiction and in contention with established convention, a wider theory of the dialogic nature of his narratives emerges.

Reading Time and Space

The ability to create a fully-fledged imagined world for the reader to encounter was vitally important to Stevenson's authorial vision. He understood the organisation of time and space to be of crucial significance to the writer's craft because the evocation of these dimensions established the success or failure of communicating the fictional universe to the reader. Analysing Stevenson's construction of temporality in relation to the spaces of romance in his fiction indicates how he understood his manifesto to "make romance new." Significantly, Stevenson was writing at a divisive moment in the historical development of fiction, as pinpointed by Bakhtin in his essay, "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel", which expands a vision for understanding literary history according to the dynamic interplay between the temporal and spatial coordinates of fiction. The realist novel which had dominated the nineteenth-century market was beginning to find a challenger in both popularity and literary quality. New literary forms, new theories of fiction and a new breed of criticism were emerging towards the end of the Victorian era – a trend which is examined

[18] Stevenson's work had obvious influence on stories of adventure for boys. His influence over children's literature can be seen in the work of writers as diverse as J. M. Barrie, Oscar Wilde, Arthur Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling, E. Nesbitt, C. S. Lewis, and P. M. Travers.

in more detail in the second part of this thesis. By beginning with a consideration of the chronotopes at work in any given narrative, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of the innovations Stevenson brought to the romance, and the literary debates with which he intended his reader to engage through his stories.

One of Stevenson's motivations for writing as he did was to challenge the reputation romance had earned for being badly written, sacrificing all sense of style and intellectual rigour to describing the event in bold detail and at a swift pace. As a young artist, he spent a formative summer at Griez and produced several essays which began his theoretical and philosophical reflections on the nature of literary practice. In "Forest Notes" and "Fontainebleau – Village Communities of Painters," he sets out a Pateresque argument that literature ought to submit "idea" to "style." Young craftsmen should practice and revise "style" before beginning the task of writing seriously, with the intention of illuminating an element of knowledge that relates to an aspect of lived experience. During subsequent periods of mature artistic creation, where the idea becomes dominant, the well-rehearsed writer will automatically find his thoughts directed according to the stylistic habits established in his earlier years of preparation. This model of creative imagination is distinct from the Wordsworthian Romantic school where the need to communicate an idea takes precedence, leading to a reverence for the spontaneity of style which had permeated much of Victorian literary culture.[19] Refining the script will, of course, also play a major part in the process – Stevenson's manuscripts are often heavily corrected and he was sometimes irritated by the control publishers had over material, particularly on the odd occasion when they decided to ignore his wishes.[20]

Much work has been done on the close attention Stevenson paid to style, following his famous repost of Scott's romantic approach to form in "A Gossip on Romance": "here we have a man of the finest creative instinct touching with perfect certainty and charm the romantic junctures of his story; and we find him utterly careless, almost, it would seem, incapable, in the technical matter of style, and not only frequently weak, but frequently wrong in points of drama."[21] Less criticism has been expended in considering Stevenson's

[19] Wordsworth famously argued that "all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." This principle is, by and large, applicable to the first generation of romantic poets, and influenced the nineteenth-century mania for authors and *belle-lettrists* to view personal integrity as central to writing and orating. Carlyle describes the genuine man of letters as "uttering forth, in such way as he has, the inspired soul of him; … for what we call 'originality,' 'sincerity,' 'genius,' the heroic quality we have no good name for, signifies that." See William Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads 1800* (Poole: Woodstock, 1997), "Preface," and Thomas Carlyle, "The Hero as a Man of Letters," *Works: Centenary Edition*, vol. 5, ed. H.D. Traill (New York: AMS, 1969), 154-95, 155.

[20] McLynn traces through the disagreement Stevenson had with his publishers over the short story collection, *Island Nights' Entertainments*. See McLynn, 447.

[21] Robert Louis Stevenson, "A Gossip on Romance," *MP*, 234-58, 258.

theoretical contribution to literature. In "A Humble Remonstrance", his major thesis that a central, controlling idea must receive consideration from many perspectives, but never be finally concluded or stamped with an explicit value by the author, is an important premonition of Bakhtin's work; "Talk and Talkers" and "Lay Morals" both articulate similar ideas to the concepts of "dialogism" and "speech genre." In his arrangement of time and space, Stevenson recalibrates the world of romance; his ideas regarding the art of engaging in effective dialogue transform the inhabitants of these worlds. By creating characters who each embody distinct perspectives, Stevenson invests romance with an unprecedented philosophical seriousness and a proto-postmodern diversity of thought.

Glenda Norquay's excellent study, *Robert Louis Stevenson and Theories of Reading*, illuminates the relationship between Stevenson's readerly and writerly practice.[22] Stevenson freely admitted to playing the "sedulous ape" to writers he admired, and saw this imitation as a crucial part of his self-directed apprenticeship to his chosen trade. Norquay suggests that Stevenson became a "vagabond reader" by selectively allowing the style and nature of his reading material to influence his writing. This concept can be advanced one step further to produce an understanding of how Stevenson's desire for his audience to take an active role in reading, as he so vividly describes in "Child's Play" and "A Humble Remonstrance", led him to represent the reading experience itself. The different means by which Stevenson's characters use and process language in an effort to establish a dialogue encourages his readers in turn towards a greater depth of critical engagement with the text.[23] In his own reading, as R. L. Abrahamson has noted, "[h]e speaks of authors as though they are intimates of his," quoting Stevenson's opening remarks to "A Gossip on a Novel of Dumas:" "We "revisit" books "as we choose and revisit human friends.""[24] The same moral imperative for integrity that is associated with speech becomes attached to writing; stories ought to "imitate not life, but speech," in anticipation of finding readers who will reciprocate such sincere engagement, and transform the process of interpretation into a friendly negotiation.[25] The importance of reading texts and using language responsibly is part of Stevenson's Calvinist

[22] Glenda Norquay, *Robert Louis Stevenson and Theories of Reading: The Reader as Vagabond* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2007). Here I am following Roland Barthes's definitions of "readerly" and "writerly" texts. See Roland Barthes, *S/Z* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 4.
[23] Robert Louis Stevenson, "Child's Play," *Virginibus Puerisque and Other Essays in Belle Lettres* (London: Heinemann, 1924), 109, "A Humble Remonstrance," *MP*, 267.
[24] R. L. Abrahamson, "Living in a Book," Richard Ambrosini and Richard Dury (eds.), *Robert Louis Stevenson: Writer of Boundaries* (Wisconsin: U of Wisconsin P, 2006), 13-22.
[25] Stevenson, *MP*, 167.

inheritance from his parents and his nurse Cummy, and is an attitude from which he derives his occasional conservative sympathies.[26]

This buried subtext in Stevenson's fiction, which interrogates the process of reading by representing language, authorship and the text as subjective, and open to interpretation, often provides a counterpoint to the expectations of genre. One of Stevenson's most important contributions to literature is his contravention of literary precedent to reimagine the abstract, and often miraculous, literary worlds of romance as a means of posing questions about the nature of literature and life beyond the text. By using romance to explore essential literary concepts usually reserved for discussion in the novels of high culture, Stevenson reclaimed the form as capable of inspiring sustained intellectual engagement. The challenge *fin-de-siècle* writers faced in particular was the task of making the reading experience as new and diverse as the technological advances that increasingly defined culture towards the close of the Victorian era.[27] The change in the pace of life caused by these innovations obviously affected the way people experienced being in the world, as Stephen Kern has pointed out.[28] Increasingly sophisticated transport systems, new scientific theories, and problematic international relationships were complicating the way Britain understood the world and how people ought to operate in it.[29] Methods of long-distance communication were beginning to diversify into the dynamic mediums of radio, telephone and telegraph causing an unprecedented simultaneity in temporal-spatial perception which provoked experiments in new kinaesthetic modes of artistic expression. As Bakhtin's influential concept of the chronotope suggests, such a shift in culture inevitably elicits a literary response; as new channels of perception are discovered, extended and refined, the relationship between the

[26] See Ann Colley, *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Colonial Imagination* (London: Ashgate, 2004). For a more detailed discussion of the ways this influence affected his writing and attitude towards reading, see Jeremy Lim, "Calvinism and Forms of Storytelling: Mackellar's Parental Voice in *The Master of Ballantrae*," *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 7 (2010): 83-105. *Robert Louis Stevenson Website*. 6 Nov. 2013.

[27] The challenge of keeping pace with innovations in entertainment which was faced by the fiction writer is discussed in Alexander Nemerov, "Interventions: The Boy in Bed: The Scene of reading in N. C. Wyeth's Wreck of the 'Covenant.'" *Art Bulletin* 88 (2006): 7-27; for a discussion of Stevenson's pre-cinematic technique, see David Annwn, "'The Gnome's Lighted Scrolls': Consumerism and Pre-Cinematic Visual Technologies in *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr Hyde*," *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 7 (2010): 9-33. *Robert Louis Stevenson Website*. 8 Feb. 2013. For a more general synopsis of the impact of rail travel on human perception and forms of moving optic entertainment, see Ana Parejo Vadillo and John Plunkett, "The Railway Passenger, or: The Training of the Eye," and Patrick Keiller, "Phantom Rides: The Railway and Early Film," Michael Beaumont and Michael J. Freeman (eds.), *The Railway and Modernity: Time, Space and the Machine Ensemble* (Oxford: Lang, 2007), 48-84.

[28] Stephen Kern, *The Cultural History of Time and Space, 1880-1914* (Harvard: Harvard UP, 2003).

[29] See Hilary Grimes, *The Late Victorian Gothic: Mental Science, the Uncanny, and Scenes of Writing* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1988).

self and the world is open to redefinition and contestation.[30] Literature's attempt to capture an element of this fresh experience demanded a new mode of calibrating time-space in language and incident on the pages of its fiction. Reading chronotopes in Stevenson's romances exposes a new conception of time-space that is indicative of this emerging literary epoch. As is now widely accepted, language in the form of utterance is bound by both its linguistic and historical position – whether printed on the page or spoken in conversation, intentionally literary or part of a colloquial exchange.[31] Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossia reinforces this supposition, describing each spoken or written utterance as a synthesis of the unique cacophony of speech acts and literary texts to which the individual subject has been exposed. From and into this lively assortment of discordant voices, the self is constructed at the point of expression, defined through the act of entering into dialogue with other speaking subjects. It is in the negotiation between two consciousnesses that the self is realised, as the subject clothes itself in discourse and enters into an interpretative relationship with another speaker.[32] Each articulated thought has the potential to reorient the world, however slightly. Language is sensitive to and reliant on the context in which it is uttered for its purpose and its sense, and yet it is also involved, to some degree, in the construction of that context. In this sense, Bakhtin was a neo-Kantian thinker, as he saw the relationship between the mind and the world as constructing a synthesis (or dialogue) between sensory experience and conceptual understanding. Chronotopes become fundamental to knowledge in Bakhtinian thought because rather than being "transcendental," this dialogic process of engaging with the world was determined by the specific point in time and space occupied by an individual in the moment of perception.

Turning to Stevenson's fiction with this in mind emphasises his awareness of the theoretical limitations of language for achieving an effective understanding, both of other individuals and of the world. The dialogue between his characters purposefully complements or agitates the arrangement of time-space in the narrative, depending on the strength of their grasp on the limitations implicit in their inherent subjectivity. He requires his reader to enter the time-space of a fictional world imaginatively in order to engage dialogically with the ideas dramatized in the text; the writer is involved in a process of communication with the reader where each word, sentence or event of the narrative is open to negotiation. Stevenson was adamant that he wrote *romance,* but while he was loyal to the focus on action and incident

[30] Bakhtin, *DI*, 84-258.
[31] Much has been written on this topic; see Eric Griffiths, *The Printed Voice of Victorian Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 1-96; Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (New York: Methuen, 1988).
[32] It is thus in the act of speaking one's mind and entering into conversation that the conditions for a dialogic imagination are created and experienced. The basis for this concept can be found in Bakhtin's earliest work, see Bakhtin, "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity," *AA*, 216.

that traditionally delineated the contours of the genre, he was equally determined to breathe new life into a somewhat antiquated form. He achieves this novelty by being more deliberate in his craft – in terms of style, character development and the shape of his narratives, as many have noted.[33] What ties all of these aspects of Stevenson's writing practices together is his manipulation of time-space through the various methods by which he chooses to tell his tale. In other words, the chronotopes that his narratives create, which flesh out his fictional worlds and bring them to life, allow the reader to become involved in each story and be "tortured and purified" in the process of encountering the embedded dialogic exchange.[34]

Chronotopes

Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope considers time and space to be inextricably fused together; he argues that different narrative spaces are understood according to varying temporal patterns. Bakhtin lays out the numerous implications of this observation in terms of the literary text in several of his theoretical writings, most explicitly in "The *Bildungsroman* and Its significance in the History of Realism (Towards a Historical Typology of the Novel)" and his complex extended essay, "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel".[35] A common criticism of his theory is that the most systematic consideration of the chronotope seems to make contrary claims for how time-space functions in narrative, and what an understanding of that pattern achieves for the critic. One can go some way to resolving these issues by identifying a series of chronotopic types. I have split the chronotope into five separate categories [see Appendix 1 for a diagrammatic representation].[36] Three are directly borrowed from Bemong and Borghart's chronotopic scheme, which identifies the major, minor and motivic chronotopes. In an attempt to decipher the full implications of this theory for Stevenson's fiction, I have added the "master

[33] See G. K. Chesterton, "Stevenson's Style," Harold Bloom (ed.), *Robert Louis Stevenson: Critical Essays* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2004), 5-11, and Paul Maxiner (ed.), *Robert Louis Stevenson: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge, Regan Paul, 1981).
[34] Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson*, vol. 5, ed. Bradford A. Booth and Ernest Mehew, (New Haven, London: Yale UP, 1995), 220-1.
[35] M. M. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Vern W. McGee, (Texas: U of Texas P, 1986), 10-59, hereafter cited as *SG*. See also *DI*, 84-258.
[36] Several of these have been suggested by other critics: Joy Ladin produces a list of twelve, see Caryl Emerson (ed.), *Critical Essays on Mikhail Bakhtin* (New York: Hall, 1999). A less wieldy summary of four is offered in Nele Bemong and Pieter Borghart (eds.), "Introduction" *Bakhtin's Theory of the Literary Chronotope: Reflections, Applications, Perspectives* (Gent: Academia P, 2010), 1-12. It is worth noting that Michael Holquist urges caution in applying the chronotope theory with too greater specificity. Michael Holquist, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World* (London: Routledge, 1990), 121.

chronotope" and the "material chronotope" to this list. The major chronotope is by far the most significant category, and has received the most attention from literary critics to date.[37]

Bakhtin's ambitions for the chronotope are to redefine the way we understand literary history, arguing that the major chronotope is closely equivalent to genre.[38] This type of chronotope is given the most detailed coverage by Bakhtin, and he traces the novel's progression from the indeterminate adventure-time of Greek prototypes of the novel, such as *The Odyssey*, *The Golden Ass* and *Jason and the Golden Fleece*, to the nineteenth-century realist novels of domestic-time which operate according to extremely precise temporal and spatial delineations. Along the way, Bakhtin points to the chronotopes that emerge to create genre-fiction according to socio-historical influences and evolving perceptions of time. These include the chivalric-romance-time of the Medieval Period, the cyclical-time of Pastoral Romance, prevalent before and during the decades of Industrial Revolution, and the gothic-castle-time of the early nineteenth century, which was obsessed by the science of heredity and supernatural "returns" of the past. In terms of Stevenson's experiments with genre, the major chronotope is useful for determining the reasons behind his decision to incorporate various competing time-spaces into his narratives, invariably rendering his fiction polychronotopic.[39] As Stevenson brings mismatching chronotopes into contact within a single text, the action and psychological responses of the characters are scrutinised through the corresponding patterns which emerge in their use of language, relative to their situation in time-space. For example, the opening of *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* bears many of the hallmarks of domestic-time, indicating Utterson's wish to produce a mimetic narrative, but this is undermined by the intervention of dreams, gothic returns and the proliferation of subjective accounts which belie his materialist approach. Bakhtin explains this phenomenon: "it is common … for one of these chronotopes to envelop or dominate the others. … they may be interwoven with, replace or oppose one another,

[37] See Cara Murray, "Catastrophe and Development in the Adventure Romance," *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 53 (2010): 150-69, Elana Gomel, "'Part of the Dreadful Thing': The Urban Chronotope of Bleak House," *Partial Answers: Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas* 9 (2011): 297-309, Ingrid Johnston, "The Chronotope of the Threshold in Contemporary Canadian Literature for Young Adults," *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, Cultures* 4 (2012): 139-149, Clemena Antonova, *Space, Time and Presence in the Icon: Seeing the World with the Eyes of God* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010) and Lily Alexander, "Storytelling in Time and Space: Studies in the Chronotope and Narrative Logic on Screen" *Journal of Narrative Theory* 37 (2007): 27-64.

[38] Tzvetan Todorov has argued in several places that there is no distinction between the two in Bakhtin's mind. See Tzvetan Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Dialogic Principle*, trans. Wlad Godzich, (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984), 83.

[39] Pearce defines "polychronotopic" texts as those which bear a similar chronotopic structure to the "polyphonic" novels of his earlier theory on dialogics. In a truly polychronotopic text, the contending forces implicit in the different chronotopes represented are held in equilibrium within the narrative. See Lynne Pearce, *Reading Dialogics* (London: Routledge, 1994), 71, 175.

contradict one another or find themselves in ever more complex interrelationships."[40] Chapters two and six consider this type of dialogised chronotope in most detail, but the broader concerns of viewing the romance as a major chronotope in which the dialogic encounter between other chronotopes occurs are essential throughout.

More often than not, the interaction between several different chronotopes within a single narrative is achieved through the introduction of a minor chronotope, a concept Bakhtin first explains by using the illustration of the road. In this example, which is particularly significant for adventure fiction, the allegorical force of the journey of life is expressed as an explicit fusion of time and space:

> [T]he chronotope of the road is both a point of new departures and a place for events to find their denouement. Time, as it were, fuses together with space and flows in it (forming the road); this is the source of rich metaphorical expansion on the image of the road as a course: "the course of life," "to set a new course," "the course of history" and so on; varied and multi-levelled are the ways in which the road is turned into metaphor, but its fundamental pivot is the flow of time.[41]

This type of chronotope is localised within the narrative and can be associated with a specific environment or place. It functions in one of two ways in relation to the major chronotope, either by reinforcing the narrative's principal conception of time-space from a different perspective, for example by implying the continuation of a literary tradition, or by providing a foil to the prevalent chronotope. As the minor chronotope defined by Bakhtin can embody a variety of forms, it is useful to distinguish two categories from this section of the essay: the minor chronotope and the motivic chronotope. These chronotopic types both interact dialogically with the major chronotope but they differ according to scale within the narrative.

As the distinction is one of scale rather than of kind the boundaries between these two forms of chronotope are blurred. The motivic chronotope is often peripatetic and functions as a chronotopic fragment, symbol or metaphor, providing a gateway to a different perspective. In recent years, it has been adopted by the social sciences, and fused with the notion of the individual consciousness.[42] This provides a particularly useful device for understanding

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[40] Bakhtin, *DI*, 252.
[41] *Ibid*., 245.
[42] Fraser and Valentine discuss how methadone users experience the time-space of clinic visits. Clinic queues have a particular resonance as chronotopes which influence the behaviour of drug users waiting for their dose. See Susan Fraser and Kyle Valentine, "The Chronotope of the Queue,"

literature, as the narrator-author's consciousness shapes the text and its chronotopes through their choice of language, as much as they are defined by time-space, opening up another site of dialogic encounter. As Bakhtin explains, "each such [major] chronotope can include within it an unlimited number of minor chronotopes; in fact, … any motif may have a special chronotope of its own."[43] To make such a grand caveat weakens the value of assessing the chronotopes at work in a single text, but the principle that chronotopes can operate in a more specialised manner is important for a consideration of Stevenson's experiments with romance as it introduces the possibility for dialogic engagement within a generically specific text.

Bakhtin's assertion that the "image of man" is intrinsically chronotopic places individual subjects on the same plane as motivic chronotopes. Stevenson is particularly interesting in this regard as he is so fond of writing first-person narratives which trace the protagonist's psychological development through his or her adventures. Stevenson tends to use the motivic chronotope, or "image of man," in conjunction with the major and minor chronotopes to sustain a contrast or make a comparison. Although Bakhtin refers to the road as a minor chronotope, because it is a recurring feature of adventure fiction it often functions as a motivic chronotope in Stevenson's work, making a brief appearance in the narrative but carrying a host of temporal and spatial implications which are embedded in the romance tradition. Another chronotopic symbol that has been recognised in his corpus is the frozen grave.[44] This is more than just an anachronistic object; the sense of time bound in space directly influences the wider form of the narrative. To this list it is possible to add from Stevenson's fiction the ship (chapter one), the river (chapter four), and the letter (chapter six). It is possible to see the island and the forest as motivic chronotopes, for example, David is marooned on Earraid and then Bass Rock in symbolic isolation from the main action of the plot. The nature of an island or a forest's spatial delineations means that they usually function as minor chronotopes; that is, they create localised spaces in the narrative where time is experienced or processed differently.

The claims Bakhtin makes about the smaller, more specific applications of time-space in narrative provide a useful insight into his understanding of the self; it is for this reason that individually realised subjects can be understood as operating as motivic chronotopes in narrative. In the same paragraph as Bakhtin claims that "it can even be said that it is

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Substance and Substitution: Methadone Subjects in Liberal Societies (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 99-102.

[43] Bakhtin, *DI*, 252.

[44] Saverio Tomaiuolo, "Under Mackellar's Eyes: Metanarrative Strategies in *The Master of Ballantrae*," *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 3 (2006): 85-111. 93. *Robert Louis Stevenson Website*. 26 April 2012.

precisely the chronotope that defines genre and generic distinctions," he goes on to say that "[t]he chronotope as a formally constitutive category determines to a significant degree the image of man in literature as well. The image of man is always intrinsically chronotopic."[45] This secondary classification of the motivic chronotope is generated by a specific character's perspective in a novel, where it retains distinction from the author's voice.[46] It is similar to free indirect speech, but also applies to first person narratives, organising the story from a particular point of view embodied by a participant in the action. By choosing to narrate a story from the perspective of a marginal figure in the plot, Stevenson plays with notions of implied authorship and the formal construction of a text. Introducing several thinking subjects acting as motivic chronotopes within the narrative establishes a dialogic relationship which draws several competing perspectives into open-ended discussion, thereby creating a symbiotic exchange of ideas. This bears the hallmark of Lynne Pearce's "true polychronotopic text" but importantly retains the internal cohesion offered by establishing a principle major chronotope.[47] By depicting different subjects in relation to a shared major chronotope, it is possible to introduce a self-reflexivity regarding the writerly project in which author and reader are engaged. The indeterminacy of the characters' discussion requires the reader to make interpretative decisions, involving them in the argument by refusing to allow the narrative to endorse any one perspective. Readers are thus central to the process of defining, critiquing and generating the meaning of the text.

Bakhtin argues that chronotopes produce "the image of man" as it is the human subject's conception of the self, according to their situation in time-space that helps to determine how human subjects think, interact and "clothe themselves in discourse."[48] The self constructs a linguistic identity from the voices participating in the social milieu and produces utterances that build on or modify those that have gone before. This theory of language and discourse is crucial to Bakhtin's literary criticism. It is the centre from which all his ideas are generated and thus ought to have some bearing on how the chronotope is interpreted.[49] As ideas evolve in dialogue with each other, re-assessing, strengthening or unpacking the basis of the thought expressed, language is manipulated to overcome the rupture which exists between individuals' experience of the world. As each utterance is created, the world is in part remade and the language which is used to represent it is invested with another permutation.

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[45] Bakhtin, *DI*, 85.
[46] See Bakhtin, *PDP* Appendix 2. This is similar to the concept of the unreliable narrator; see Wayne Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago; London: Chicago UP, 1961), 158-9, 274, 295-6.
[47] Pearce, 175.
[48] Bakhtin, *PDP*, 183.
[49] See Caryl Emerson and Gary Soul Morson, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1990), 36-7.

Stevenson anticipates this philosophy in his consideration of language and the difficulties of communication, stating:

> [i]f verbal logic were sufficient, life would be as plain sailing as a piece of Euclid. But, as a matter of fact, we make a travesty of the simplest process of thought when we put it into words; for the words are all coloured and forsworn, apply inaccurately, and bring with them, from former uses, ideas of praise and blame that have nothing to do with the question in hand.[50]

In a work of fiction, the world of the narrative can only be viewed through this opaque glass. Therefore, the speech and actions of the "image of man" influences the reader's perception of the narrative's other chronotopes by dialogising the connection between them. Chapter three emphasises the dialogic relationships that exist across chronotopic types in Stevenson's fiction, and this discussion is widened in relation to the specific historical context of the *fin-de-siècle* in the second half of this thesis.

The fourth stratum of chronotopic meaning concerns the text as an object, produced in a specific historical context by an external, historically defined, author and then read by readers who inhabit their own particular chronotopic moments, which unfold and multiply through human history whenever the book is read. It is in the knowledge that we, as readers, bring our own chronotopic understanding of language and discourse to bear on a text that we undertake to navigate the fictional world presented to us. The complex factors that this involves are worked through most directly in *The Master of Ballantrae*, but are always hovering at the edge of the discussion, implied, if not specifically addressed, by Stevenson's narratives in their self-reflexivity. The master chronotope is the final sphere in which Bakhtin's theory operates and a new extension of the concept. Chapter four considers the origins and applications of this part of the theory using Stevenson's first short story, "The Pavilion on the Links," to illustrate the influence that the cultural understanding of time-space can have over the narratives its writers produce.

References to chronotope theory elsewhere in Bakhtin's oeuvre give a different account of how the concept might be applied to literary analysis. In his other works, the chronotope is often referred to in much more general terms; beyond the instances of localised chronotopes in individual texts or genres, the *master chronotope* implies the overarching themes which construct an epoch's conception of time and space in fictional narratives. The observations that arise from a chronotopic study of Stevenson's fiction have implications for the wider

[50] Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Essay on Walt Whitman; with* 'A Little Journey to the Home of Walt Whitman' *by Elbert Hubbard* (New York: East Aurora, 1900), 36. 20 June 2013 <http://www.archive.org/details/essayonwalt00stevrich>.

field of *fin-de-siècle* literary culture. Because of Stevenson's expressed determination that, for the true artist, each work ought to be viewed as "the signal for a fresh engagement of the whole forces of their mind; [assuming that] … the changing views which accompany the growth of their experience are marked by still more sweeping alterations in the manner of their art," any maturation or adjustments in his own work can be taken as representative of a shift in how he understands the world.[51] This is traceable in particular chronotopes that Stevenson returned to over the course of his career as he grappled with different expressions of romance. To note a couple of examples, David Balfour moves from the first stages of perceptual engagement with the world on Earraid to contemplating a more sophisticated synthesis of antithetical views which are represented in Scotland during his time on Bass Rock; the suppressed dialogism of "Olalla" becomes identifiably double-voiced discourse in "The Beach of Falesá."[52] This is, to an extent, representative of the way British society understood itself by the *fin-de-siècle* as moving beyond the intellectual themes that had shaped the nation since the Enlightenment. Stevenson's fiction is illustrative of a master chronotope that was emerging at the end of Hegel's Romantic period, resulting in a distinctive mode of writing produced by a change in the way people understood the world, history and their place in it.[53] The master chronotope provides a useful means of contextualising individual works according to the delineations of thought that characterise the epoch. In much the same way as Bakhtin saw Rabelais as a master craftsman writing in a new and distinctive *Renaissance* genre, the following thesis positions Stevenson as one of the pioneers of the emergent master chronotope at the *fin-de-siècle*.

Dialogic Stevenson

Stevenson's interest in the insufficiencies of language as a means of communication informs his fiction, increasing his awareness of the need to balance the relationship between the

[51] Robert Louis Stevenson, "A Note on Realism," *Essays Literary and Critical* (London: Heinemann, 1924), 72.

[52] This echoes Hegel's assessment of the universal progress of civilisation, and art as a repository for the best ideas of each age, see Hegel, *Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics*, trans. Bernard Bosanquet, introd. Michael Inwood (London: Penguin, 2004), 11.

[53] In some ways, this follows the pattern set out by Bemong and Borghart, "Introduction," 3-16. The master chronotope is perhaps a stratum above Bart Keunen's "plot-space chronotopes," embracing all *fin-de-siècle* literature in one epochal trend. See Keunen, "The Chronotopic Imagination in Literature and Film: Bakhtin, Bergson and Deleuze on Forms of Time" in Bemong and Borghart, 35-54.

narrator and the world he seeks to represent, whilst considering the reader's crucial role in deriving meaning from narrative. In view of the negotiations involved in creating the text, it seems most appropriate to evaluate Stevenson's fiction according to the dialogic interactions within and between the chronotopes he creates. The over-riding desire to defend and rework romance in an era often seen as dominated by realist and naturalist novelists stems from Stevenson's life-long belief that reading ought to be an all-consuming experience, where the mind becomes absorbed by the time-space and dialogic concerns of the narrative. Stephen Arata has pointed out that "more than most writers, Stevenson conceives of literary texts as exercises in collaboration. ... In his 1882 essay "Talk and Talkers" Stevenson contends that literature always strives (and necessarily fails) to attain the condition of conversation."[54] Many of his stylistic and formal decisions as a writer are motivated by his determination to engage his reader. The ideas contained within the romance frame were deliberately structured to provoke a response, opening a debate which would deepen the effectiveness of his narratives as dialogic acts of communication.

The dialogic inflection in Stevenson's work has been read as a product of his Scottish context, as Roderick Watson suggests:

> Bakhtin proposed that part of this dialogical, 'double-voiced' awareness arose from a sense of 'polyglossia', that is from the co-existence of (at least) two languages interacting within a single cultural system. … There are very instructive parallels to be found here in the cultural and political relationships between Scotland and England, and the respective status of the Scots and English tongues.[55]

Stevenson both revelled in and distanced himself from his national legacy. This is evident in the unresolvable conflict between his passionate love of Edinburgh: "[t]o the east you may catch at sunset the spark of the May lighthouse, where the Firth expands into the German Ocean; and away to the west, over all the carse of Stirling, you can see the first snows upon Ben Ledi," and hatred of the weather, "raw and boisterous in winter, shifty and ungenial in summer, and a downright meteorological purgatory in the spring. The delicate die early, and I, as a survivor, among bleak winds and plumping rain, have been sometimes tempted to

[54] Stephen Arata, "Stevenson's Careful Observances," *Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net* 47 (2007) 19 Feb. 2013 <http://www.erudit.org/revue/ravon/2007/v/n47/016704ar.html>.
[55] Roderick Watson, "Dialectics of 'Voice' and 'Place': Literature in Scots and English from 1700" in *Scotland: A Concise Cultural History* (Edinburgh, London: Mainstream Publishing, 1993), 103.

envy them their fate."[56] Even here, the Scottish "carse" jostles against Stevenson's otherwise perfectly English poise.[57] His continued interest in Scottish history, folklore and culture is evident in his letters, book requests and later writing projects; he often referred to his enjoyment of Polynesian culture as rooted in the similarities he saw with the Highland clan system.[58] It has been argued that it is this exposure to both English and Scottish society that enabled him to observe other cultures with sympathetic accuracy in his later South Seas writing, and to produce an authentic dialogism in his fiction, particularly in those books that take Scotland or the South Seas for their subjects.

Stevenson's dialogic nature is deeper than simply being a repercussion of his national identity. Although unquestionably shaped by his genealogy as a Scotsman, he became a citizen of the world, finding affinity (and, unusually, adoption) in America, England, France, Samoa and probably many other nations besides. It is his unending capacity to walk a mile in another man's moccasins that enables him to write dialogic fiction. His intellectual ability to appreciate how the world might be viewed by others is the same skill that allows him to create three dimensional characters who do not necessarily operate in accord with his personal sympathies. This is directly evident, for example, in the discrepancies that emerge in Stevenson's personal attitude towards François Villon and how he handles him as a fictional character by comparing his biographical essay and the short story "A Lodging for the Night."[59]

Nevertheless, Stevenson's fascination with Highland history informed his interest in the cultural conditioning of narratives, thought process and expression. The ancient structure of Highland life prompted him to imagine fictionalizing Scotland in epic form, which he was to attempt in *Kidnapped* and *Catriona*. Bakhtin's essay "Epic and Novel" discusses the difference between these eponymous genres in a broad sweep of literary history. He contends that the distinctive features between them can be reduced to differences in time, character and form. In epic writing, character was allegorical, action was the driving force of the linear plot and all the events described belonged to a complete and perfect past. In contrast, the novel brought about three major innovations, introducing the psychological complexity of character, a dialogic turn that incorporated a variety of documents, voices and

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[56] Robert Louis Stevenson, *Picturesque Notes on Edinburgh* (London: Nash and Grayson, 1926/7), 3-4.

[57] "Carse" meaning "low and fertile land" the Carse of Gowrie is also a term used to describe the dialect spoken at the mouth of the Tay.

[58] Robert Louis Stevenson, *In the South Seas* (London: Nash and Grayson, 1926/7), which is discussed in David Farrier, *Unsettled Narratives*: *The Pacific Writings of Stevenson, Ellis, Melville and London* (London: Routledge, 2007).

[59] Robert Louis Stevenson, "François Villon, Student, Poet, and Housebreaker," *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*, (London: Heinemann, 1928), 118-45; "A Lodging for the Night," *New Arabian Nights* (London: Chattos and Windus, 1920), 242-66.

narrative forms into the plot, and a future-orientation that opened discussion rather than closing it down. Narrative takes on an entirely different identity when these revolutions come about, reinvigorating the text's relationship to the reader.

Stevenson undertakes to reposition the ancient genre of romance for an emerging mass-market. This is a bold aspiration as the formula he remembers from youth, outlined in the famous preface to *Treasure Island*, was well-established and could trace its origins back to the birth of novelistic genres. Stevenson took on the challenge by giving his characters an interior existence, injecting his narratives with a dialogic openendedness and orienting the plot towards an undefined future, effectively remodelling the romance along the same lines that Bakhtin observes were occurring in the novel. This process established several identifiably Stevensonian practices: a synthesis of different types of documentation used to tell the tale, a variety of perspectives expressed by characters who speak in their own distinctive voices, and an invitation to the reader to enter the debate themselves and continue to grapple with the ideas explored through the adventure after the book has been set down. Eschewing the didactic unity which often characterised traditional boys' adventure stories assisted in setting the course for contemporary children's writers, who routinely refuse to mollycoddle or patronize their anticipated readers. Later, in *The Master*, a similar open-endedness is evident in the lack of moral resolution of the tale. Both "good" and "evil" Durie brothers end up dead; the only witness to their struggle is the partisan Mackellar whose word cannot be trusted.

The difficulties of ending, often referred to as Stevenson's weakness, can also be seen to derive from this wider project to re-invigorate romance and recapture a sense of epic in dialogised form. Rather than creating a complete, finished story, Stevenson's texts seek to outlive their material conclusion in the mind of the reader. By leaving threads loose and debates unresolved, the texts are provocatively tilted towards a future. What happens to the treasure left unclaimed on Treasure Island? Where does Silver escape to, and what does he do with his freedom? Who is the father of the Durie children?[60] Does the estate fall into total disrepair? Does Wiltshire ever find suitors for his children? What happens to Herrick? This is particularly relevant to understanding the two novels that Menikoff has argued were the unintended fruit of Stevenson's research that should have produced a factual History of Scotland. *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* both end in irresolution: David stands outside the Edinburgh Cotton Exchange, poised on the brink of his new life as Laird of the Shaws at the end of *Kidnapped*; he and Catriona move into the Shaws when *Catriona* closes, in a superficially more satisfactory conclusion. Because of their respective cultural identities, as

[60] John Sutherland, "Is Heathcliff a Murderer?" *Puzzles in Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (Oxford: OUP, 1996), 189-95.

Lowlander and Highlander, their marriage is precariously close to the margins of Scottish society. Catching up with old friends and relatives involves entertaining outlaws, and they teach their children Gaelic traditions which have no place in an anglicised Scotland. The independent Scottish spirit is kept alive at a moment of apparent reconciliation and union, which encapsulates the same dissatisfaction with which Scotland were to view their relationship to England well into the twenty-first century.[61] Even at his most "complete," then, Stevenson resists a satisfactory ending, which orients his romances towards futurity.

As a philosophical thinker, Stevenson anticipates many of Bakhtin's theories of language. His writing is characteristically dialogic: he sought to represent assorted perspectives on the "one creative and controlling thought" on which he felt a work of fiction ought to be based.[62] "Lay Morals" begins with an uncannily Bakhtinian description of the frustrations inherent in attempting to communicate through the unsatisfactory medium of language:

> Speech which goes from one to another between two natures, and, what is worse, between two experiences, is doubly relative. The speaker buries his meaning; it is for the hearer to dig it up again; and all speech, written or spoken, is in a dead language until it finds a willing and prepared hearer.[63]

Because language is only endowed with life when in dialogue with another critical subject, Stevenson's fiction repeatedly assesses ways of approaching and creating narrative in collaboration. The dialogic Stevenson is derived from his sensitivity to the distinctive voices of individual subjects, drawn from diverse cultural backgrounds, which he appropriates in imagining his characters. When these subjects enter his romance chronotopes, their perspectives are brought into contact with one another, and the reader's generic expectations. It is in this twofold encounter that meaning is generated. Stevenson never writes a character whose cause aligns perfectly with his own, but creates a series of differing perspectives which allow him to retain a certain detachment from his world, freeing the reader's response from any obligation to decipher authorial intention. It is this ability that Bakhtin finds so remarkable in Dostoevsky's work, and which led him to amend his chronotope theory to include the temporal and spatial specificity of "the image of man." This was later modified even more explicitly when he reinforced the idea of several chronotopes acting in cooperation in a single work of fiction: "[a] point of view is chronotopic, that is, it includes both the spatial and temporal aspects. Directly related to this is the valorized (hierarchical)

[61] The Scottish Vote for Independence held in 2014 is another example of the continued tensions in the partnership between Scotland and England. Duncan discusses Scott's pragmatic attitude towards Union. See Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2007), 143.
[62] Stevenson, "A Humble Remonstrance," in *MP*, 267.
[63] Robert Louis Stevenson, "Lay Morals" in *Ethical Studies* (London: Heinemann, 1924), 5.

viewpoint … The chronotope of the depicted event, the chronotope of the narrator and the chronotope of the author."[64] In terms of the chronotope, then, there are several dimensions which contribute to the dialogic potential of narrative that Stevenson's fiction exploits. His narrators are often knowingly detached from, if still dependent on, the major chronotopes they choose to construct around the events they describe. Their motivic chronotope is, in turn, artfully revealed by their author through the inconsistencies that exist between the event and the nature of the account the narrator generates.

By positing alternative perspectives of an event through a single narrator, Stevenson is able to reveal the interaction between the material chronotopes that combine to produce the text and the inherent dialogism of his double-voiced narrator. The event is left to be translated by the reader as the language of the text only ever conveys an imperfect meaning rather than the whole sense of what the thing implies. This state of inconclusiveness implicates the reader in completing the process of communication that each narrative begins. As "Talk and Talkers" goes on to explain, to convey an idea successfully is not to arrive at a neat ending:

> [C]onclusions, indeed, are not often reached by talk any more than by private thinking. That is not the profit. The profit is in the exercise, and above all in the experience; for when we reason at large on any subject, we review our state and history in life … talk becomes effective, conquering like war, widening the boundaries of knowledge like exploration.[65]

The reader is called to consider the proposal from several different perspectives and use the experience to progress in understanding themselves and the point they occupy in time and space. Subsequently, it is as a conversation, in need of active and imaginative participation from "prepared hearers," that Stevenson's fiction is most illuminatingly read.

A New Romance Aesthetic

From his earliest ventures into literary criticism, Stevenson was fully aware of the paradoxical insufficiencies and efficacy of language as a tool for communication. His essays abound with references to its suggestive power and the precarious nature of meaning. His aspiration to imitate speech in his writing derives from the distinctions he observes between the two forms of expression. Speech is more conducive to attaining reciprocal

[64] Bakhtin, "From Notes made in 1970-1" in *SG*, 132-158.
[65] Stevenson, "Talk and Talkers, 1" in *MP*, 149.

understanding: "Talk is fluid, tentative, continually 'in further search and progress;' while written words remain fixed, become idols even to the writer, found wood dogmatisms, and preserve flies in obvious error in the amber of truth."[66] Literature must capture some of the lucidity and suppleness of dialogue if it is to attain the status of art. It is through talk that each successive epoch will be illuminated; the flexibility of speech as a dialogic process of negotiation liberates words from remaining fixed by a single definition, decided upon in isolation. The dynamics of talking expose every word or idea to the scrutiny of another intellect, towards which the speech act is oriented, allowing for the possibility that the speaker's original intent could be re-evaluated and modified over the course of an animated exchange. Talk is what gives words life, as meaning is refined collaboratively according to the immediate situation. Words that "become idols" are slaves to their written condition, only useful in as far as they represent the world imagined by the solitary author. Stevenson's desire that his writing attain the condition of speech implies that he understands the process of reading as initiating a dialogue; the narrative is the articulated idea which is under scrutiny. The reader, who may be separated from the author by centuries, oceans or culture, takes the original script and reaches a fresh conclusion that stretches his understanding of his period and himself, and simultaneously contributes to the narrative's continuous reinvention.

It is through speech that two points of view (which are intrinsically chronotopic) are brought into dialogue and become invested in an event that establishes the creation of something new – an idea that is unable to be dismantled again into its constituent parts.[67] This is the result of the impact that any act of conversation has upon the self. In the moment of utterance, one is forced to articulate something which until that instant was latent, inexpressible and undefined. If the text is understood as speech, the point of view of the author and the reader collaborate in the act of reading; the distinct notes and emphases of the reader's ideas emerge from the heteroglossia of influences to which one is daily exposed.[68] Bakhtin's claim that in fiction every "image of man" is intrinsically chronotopic is a progression from his observation of how humans communicate. If an author conceives of characters as subjects with distinct viewpoints, their interactions cultivate their understanding of one another, elevating their encounter to the status of event. Importantly, these narrated events are also structured by the time-space of the wider narrative. Stevenson's desire for his fiction to resemble speech has the effect of bringing different chronotopes into dialogue.

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[66] Stevenson, *MP*, 141.

[67] The interaction between two points of view "is what Bakhtin means by 'event'" according to Emerson and Morson, 99.

[68] The creation of utterance is described as being in the moment of "receiving the word," Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," *DI*, 282.Bakhtin's circle contend that "I give myself verbal shape from another's point of view," in V. M. Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik, (New York: Seminar P, 1973), 86.

Stevensonian communication is not limited to human subjects. His theory of romance is heavily invested in another kind of collaboration. "A Gossip on Romance" emphasises the negotiations involved between place and incident in the generation of narrative, stressing that "something must have happened in such places, and perhaps ages back … I still try, just as vainly, to fit them with the proper story. Some places speak distinctly" (*MP* 239). This has unmistakeable resonance with Bakhtin's articulation of chronotopes in Goethe's writings, described in "The *Bildungsroman*", "The artist perceives ... the most complex designs of people, generations, epochs, nations. … His creative imagination is … restricted and subordinated to the *necessity* of a given locality, the iron-clad logic of its historical and geographical existence."[69] Importantly, within this "iron-clad logic" Stevenson creates the potential for the unexpected to occur, which is crucial to romance and the hero's development. The crucial romantic event is drawn out as a spontaneous negotiation between a suggestive place, the people who inhabit it and the protagonist who encounters them in pursuit of an adventure.

Genre plays a central part in this process of dialogising the event, as Stevenson knowingly exploits established literary tradition to introduce a wider chronotopic scope. He communicates his distinct romance aesthetic to his readers by alluding to previous incarnations of the form, implying his shared literary heritage with other contemporary writers of romance. In writing about conversation, he explains this phenomenon. Stevenson expected good talkers to "keep close along the lines of humanity, near the bosoms and business of men, at the level where history, fiction and experience intersect and illuminate each other."[70] Interestingly, this depth is attained through shared literary experience: "strangers who have a large common ground of reading will … come the sooner to the grapple of genuine converse if they know Othello and Napoleon, Consuelo and Clarissa Harlowe, Vautrin and Steenie Steenson, they can leave generalisations and begin at once to speak by figures."[71] This is very much the spirit in which he approached the task of writing romance; these were not artless stories for children or uncritical, unliterary readers, but texts which deserved an intelligent audience and which would deliver more than just an exciting plot and engaging characters. The ideas explored through romance-adventure could be those that found a meaningful intersection with history and the business of men, rather than providing an escapist utopia. By sharing a knowledge of his predecessors in adventure-romance, the likes of Marryat, Ballantyne and Cooper, as his jocular nod to the "hesitating purchaser" has it, Stevenson intimates that his fiction is to be read in the light of what has

[69] Bakhtin, *SG*, 25, 37.
[70] Stevenson, *MP*, 146.
[71] *Ibid*., 147.

gone before.[72] Positioning himself as writing within the same tradition emphasises the difference in the dynamics he creates between chronotopes and encourages his reader to collaborate with him in reconceiving romance.The following thesis is split into two parts. The first discusses the traditional spaces of romance that Stevenson revitalised through the dialogic interactions between chronotopes, and the second analyses the extent to which his fiction can be read as inaugurating a new master chronotope at the *fin-de-siècle*. The first three chapters set out to establish the link between the inherited chronotopes of romance fiction and Stevenson's critique of assumptions about the hero's interaction with the romance world, instead applying a self-reflexive approach to understanding the text he is in the act of producing. In this, Stevenson agitates a complex dialogue between the characters, the chronotopes of romance and the reader's expectations. Considering the function of the ship, the island and the forest, and analysing how Stevenson imagined them in relation to his characters illustrates the crux of his romance aesthetic. His vision is not limited to the incidents of narrative, but extends to the role played by the reader, whom he involved in the process of creation and intended as an active participant in realising the stories he told. The dangers of reading passively are repeatedly illustrated in his work, demonstrating that tales ought to be collaborative acts of communication, not just isolated authorial utterances.

Part two begins with chapter four which gives a detailed outline of the master chronotope, briefly alluded to here as the fifth application of Bakhtin's theory. Stevenson's short story "The Pavilion on the Links," which was published as a stand-alone piece in 1880 and later became part of the *New Arabian Nights* collection, provides an effective case study that illustrates the impact the master chronotope has on the shape of an individual narrative's representations of time-space. By drawing the discussion beyond the detailed expression of chronotopes within the narrative, this chapter establishes the wider context in which the subsequent chapters operate. Chapter five discusses the short story genre as an innovative means of reflecting the transient experience of modern urban living, tracing the formal development of fiction from the authority of the Victorian triple-decker novel to a more self-reflexive and ambivalent mode that is particularly apt for representing the complex space of the city. Chapter six assesses Stevenson's response to the estate as a threshold in *The Master of Ballantrae*, arguing that, through the novel's emphasis on the material chronotope, it demonstrates his awareness of the period as transitional. The novel's structure recognises the unstable process of interpreting language by depicting the conflict involved in the negotiative process of dialogic interaction between the text, the author and the reader, a problem with which any text is confronted, calling into question the generic distinction imposed between history and fiction. Questions about the purpose and function of narrative

[72] Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*, ed. Wendy R. Katz, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1998), i.

jostle with the reader's received understanding of the nature of truth, history and fiction and the assumed power of the reader to untangle the implied difference.

PART ONE

Chapter I: Ships

"Travel is of two kinds; and this voyage of mine across the ocean combined both. "Out of my country and myself I go," sings the old poet; and I was not only travelling out of my country in latitude and longitude, but out of myself in diet, associates, and consideration. Part of the interest and a great deal of the amusement flowed, at least to me, from this novel situation in the world."

- *The Amateur Emigrant*[1]

Ships are important emblems of romance for Stevenson; many of his adventures, both in life and fiction, begin by setting sail. His first book, *An Inland Voyage* (1878), recounts his first experience of life conducted predominantly on the water, and it was followed by a diary written while he crossed the Atlantic in 1879. This was *The Amateur Emigrant*, famously suppressed by friends and family as a gritty realist piece which could endanger his reputation as a *belle-lettrist*, and was only published much later. In keeping with these contrasting early travel experiences, the voyages undertaken by his fictional heroes span an impressive range of circumstances and instigate an array of observations and adventures over the course of their narration. The plots of *Treasure Island* (1883), *Kidnapped* (1886), "The Merry Men" (1887), "The Misadventures of John Nicholson" (1887), *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889), *The Wrecker* (1892), *Island Nights' Entertainments* (1893), *Catriona* (1893) and *The Ebb-Tide* (1894) all contain ships, but these do not necessarily all function as chronotopes. As Bakhtin explains in his final summary of the term as a critical tool, "Time becomes, in effect, palpable and visible; the chronotope makes narrative events concrete, makes them take on flesh, causes blood to flow in their veins. An event can be communicated, it becomes information, one can give precise data on the place and time of its occurrence."[2] For the emblem to become a chronotope, the ship must be a space in which temporality is imagined distinctively, causing the relationship between the hero and his world to change and for meaning to be generated in a new way by his articulation of the experience.

[1] Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Amateur Emigrant; Silverado Squatters*, (London: Heinemann, 1924), 80.
[2] Bakhtin, *DI*, 250.

This chapter sets out to establish the distinct chronotopes of the *Hispaniola*, the *Covenanter*, the *Nonesuch*, and the ships in Stevenson's later romances, *The Wrecker* and *The Ebb-Tide*, which he wrote in collaboration with Lloyd Osborne. These ships prove a unique means of bringing together a ramshackle community and observing the dynamics of human interaction within an enclosed space. The basic properties of the chronotope are relatively simple as the ship and the temporal patterns to which it is subject are tightly defined, and language is categorized according to the clipped English of sailor-speak, demonstrating its separation from land-bound culture. Individuals are thrown together as if at random, estranged from the social constraints imposed by civilization and the known past; to some extent the passengers are momentarily estranged from history. As a restricted environment, the ship tends to encourage self-reflection – there is limited entertainment available as incident is always approaching on the horizon, the potential for adventure often paradoxically resulting in an infinite tedium of waiting. This circumstance encourages philosophical questioning and prompts a more considered understanding of the true nature of self. The only alternative to such intense navel-gazing is self-destruction, which appears temptingly easy in the allure of surrendering mind and body to the sea. For instance, Herrick attempts to redeem the ocean's promise of oblivion as a response to the shame he feels in recognising that Attwater must associate him with the *Farallone* crew, only to suffer his weakness exposed to a larger extent by his failure. The detailed voyages undertaken by Stevensonian ships are a living metaphor that describes the psychological journey undertaken by each member of the crew.[3] Every sailor's character is inflected and redefined by his situation in time and space, distanced from land-bound culture.

Considering the circumstances, it is only natural that crews establish and develop close relationships. Their confined quarters are subject to the unpredictable behaviour of the ocean, which is given to dramatic changes beyond human control, a circumstance which forces mutual dependence. Conrad's *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"* expresses this bond through the crew's determination to save the despised James Wait during the storm: "though at that time we hated him more than ever – more than anything under heaven – we did not want to lose him. We had so far saved him; and it had become a personal matter between us and the sea. We meant to stick to him."[4] The desire to preserve life and maintain authority over the ocean is paramount in the crew's collective resolve, giving them a single mindedness which unifies them in the attempt to preserve one of their number. Stevenson's

[3] Stevenson's own experience of voyaging across the Atlantic in pursuit of Fanny similarly gave rise to self-examination and even prompted suicidal thoughts. See Jolly, *Robert Louis Stevenson in the Pacific*, 31, and William Gray, *Robert Louis Stevenson: A Critical Biography* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 84.

[4] Joseph Conrad, *The Nigger of the "Narcissus"*, ed. and introd. Jacques Berthoud, (Oxford, New York: OUP, 1984), 72.

sea-bound communities are seldom so united, tending instead to emphasise the difference between individuals, both in dialogue with themselves, their chronotope, and each other. In *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped* and *The Master of Ballantrae*, being at sea alters the narrator's attitude towards communication because he is forced into singular dialogic encounters with his fellow crew members, within the unfamiliar chronotopic confines of the ship.

Comparing Conrad and Stevenson's use of the sea in their romances, Natalie Jaëck asserts that "the essential formal characteristic … borrow[ed] from the transitory sea, [is] namely, its indeterminacy, its neutral quality according to Roland Barthes's definition: "J'appelle Neutre tout ce qui déjoue le paradigme" (Barthes 31), "all that eludes paradigms.""[5] This observation continues in the inherited Romantic convention of the ocean as a free space, uncomplicated by human design. Self is liberated from the restrictions imposed by civilisation over the course of the voyage. Regulation over the waters is impossible, providing numerous possibilities for self-expression and experiment. Although this is undoubtedly a large part of the ocean's appeal for Stevenson, his understanding of the seas incorporates a more sophisticated appreciation for its rhythms and laws that revises the motif he inherits. As Jenifer N. Gaynor has argued of the Southeast Asian oceans, "Whatever sea-related "unities" have appeared as natural, the seas have hardly constituted a "neutral" medium. On the contrary, they have been the terrain, as it were, of contestation."[6] Historically, oceans have been highly politicized spaces, disputed in the attempt to establish safe trade routes or fishery rights and patrolled by national navies even before nineteenth-century Empire-building began in earnest.[7]

Rather than the transitory space of the voyage being "a kind of nonspace" between encounters with hyper-politicized islands, the ship on the sea remains, to a certain extent, an extension of the cultural paradigms associated with her port of origin.[8] Her presence in certain waters could itself be interpreted as provocative. By the time he was writing his later fiction, Stevenson was only too well acquainted with the complex politicisation of the South

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[5] Natalie Jaëck, "Conrad's and Stevenson's Logbooks in "Paper Boats": Attempts in Textual Wreckage," in Arata, Drydon and Massie, 39-51. 50.

[6] Jenifer N. Gaynor, "Maritime Ideologies and Ethnic Anomalies: Sea Space and the Structure of Subalternity in the Southeast Asian Littoral" in Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal, Kären Wigen, (eds.), *Seascapes: Maritime Histories, Littoral Cultures and Transoceanic Exchanges* (Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, 2007), 53-68. 54.

[7] The 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas between Spain and Portugal and the Dutch/Portuguese disputes over the right to own sea space at all in the early seventeenth century demonstrate the politicised nature of the ocean. See Gaynor, "Maritime Ideologies and Ethnic Anomalies," in Bentley, Bridenthal and Wigen, 55-6.

[8] See Hans Conrad Von Tilburg, "Vessels of Exchange: The Global Shipwright in the Pacific," in Bentley, Bridenthal and Wigen, 38, Robbie B. H. Goh, "The Geopolitics of Criticism: The Sea as Liminal Symbol in Stevenson's The Ebb-Tide and Conrad's An Outcast of the Islands," in Arata, Drydon and Massie, 125-137. 135.

Seas and their islands.[9] As *Footnote to History* attests, ships themselves are read as fragmentary representations of national identity, sailing according to the standards that are invoked by the colours on her mast. The ship is perceived differently by individuals according to their previous experience of and relationship to both the culture the vessel was fashioned by and the politicised status of the sea itself. Such complications are problematic in *The Wrecker* and *The Ebb-Tide* which address these issues through the interaction between the captain, the vessel and her crew.

With each voyage, the experience of the ocean changes – the sea is more dynamic and restless than any other topography of romance. Generally speaking, a single vessel can have several owners, support different crews, fulfil numerous functions and travel countless trade-routes over the course of its sea-worthy career. The ship is a flexible space which can be put to a variety of uses, all of which imply changes to the means and importance of timekeeping – a cruiser is perhaps less restricted to a predetermined schedule than a commercial trader or a man-of-war.[10] A discrete voyage undertaken by a ship establishes one homogenous chronotope within which the ship will inhabit a variety of temporal experiences, dependent on oceanographic conditions. In other words, if the ship is structurally equivalent to "langue" then an individual voyage would be analogous to "parole." When the general and particular fuse, causing the narrative to focus only on the voyage described, and the past is subject to the present-time of the narration, then the ship becomes a major chronotope.[11]

The ships in *Treasure Island*, *The Master of Ballantrae* and *Kidnapped* function as motivic chronotopes. They provide a space of encounter and transition which is infused with temporal significance, much like the road, where the protagonists first come across the ideas that complicate their preconceptions about the nature of speech, text and language. This nascent intellectual development is not intrinsic to the ship chronotope itself; rather the characters' understanding of the dialogic nature of communication continue to be refined throughout the narrative, causing them to modify their knowledge of themselves and the world they inhabit beyond the voyage. In *The Wrecker* and *The Ebb-Tide*, several ships fulfil the broader scope of the minor chronotope as they enter into a direct dialogic relationship with the major chronotope of romance and interact with the established sub-genre of sea-

[9] This is evident in the letters Stevenson sent to *The Times* regarding Samoan politics. German and English governments made claims on the Islands and the seas surrounding them, while a civil war raged between indigenous tribes in the region. For example, see Robert Louis Stevenson, Letter, *The Times* 17 Nov. 1891. *The Times Digital Archive*. 12 Feb. 2014. <http://find.galegroup.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/ttda>.

[10] Having said this, Attwater's trading ship is several weeks late in *The Ebb-Tide*, and the crew of the *Currency Lass* are relaxed about the time delays in sailing for home once they have traded enough to make the voyage profitable in *The Wrecker*.

[11] This is the case in *The Nigger of the "Narcissus,"* but not in any of Stevenson's fiction; there is always another chronotope from which life on board differentiates itself.

romance. Bakhtin describes such a dialogue as "outside the world represented, although not outside the work as a whole. … [rather entering] the world of the author, of the performer, and the world of the listeners and readers."[12] This type of polychronotopic dialogism remains implicit in the narrative, and can only be constructed by an observer who occupies a position outside the text.

Both of Stevenson's collaborative maritime adventures demonstrate a self-reflexive attitude towards literary tradition. The minor chronotope of the ship resists the received temporal and spatial dimensions of sea-romance-time by establishing a dialogue with its grandiose ancestor, adventure-time, through references to the characters' boyhood reading.[13] The closed texts of their childhood provide the yardstick against which their current enterprise is measured, but the family likeness they attempt to reflect in their own narrative experience is disfigured. Between them, Stevenson's ships harbour disease that is transmitted to the islands where they lay anchor, have rotting hulls which are unwelcome legacies from previous voyages, or carry counterfeit cargo. Yet, the "suddenly" and coincidental thrust of adventure-time is discernable in islands that appear at the crucial moment, accidentally recovered objects, and chance meetings. These unstable, often sinister, minor chronotopes have a symbiotic relationship with the members of their crew, introducing the competing timescales of the ship's sea-worthy life and her captain and crew's narrated experience. The following chapter traces the relationship between these two kinds of ship chronotope and the dynamic "image of man" by examining the problematic hierarchy which is created between them and how this complicates the act of narration.

Speech Genres at Sea: Jim's Lessons in Sailor-Speak

The chronotopic centre of any ship, and therefore the central loci of all narratives generated aboard, is the captain's cabin. Here the conversations that determine the direction and nature of the voyage take place. Despite his mandate for authority over narrative, the traditional figure of the Captain has a mixed fate in boys' adventure stories, often outwitted and ridiculed by the adolescent hero-narrator but also revered as disciplinarian, leader and example.[14] Stevenson's Captain Smollett in *Treasure Island* is of a different mould. The Captain may be left "measling in the hold", but the passages where he features are crucial to

[12] Bakhtin, *DI*, 252.
[13] Bakhtin, *DI*, 86-110.
[14] See J.S. Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction* (London: Barnes and Noble, 1981), 111.

reading *Treasure Island* as a critical introduction to the ambiguity of communication and the complexity of the relationship between chronotope and language.[15] It is through exposing the unreliable nature of language as a means of self-expression that Stevenson introduces his readers to the problems associated with coming to any word passively, whether spoken or written, and instead advocates the reader's (or listener's) role in establishing meaning. This process is necessary for interpreting the dialogic relationships that exist between the chronotopes employed by the author to structure the narrative.

In the case of the ship, the cabin is a crucial hub for the dialogic engagement between contrary perspectives which are often expressed through the unfamiliar idioms of the nautical discourse of "sailor-speak," a particular speech genre.[16] Aboard the *Hispaniola* Jim has his first explicit encounter with different methods of interpreting language. Jim's experience implies that reading presents a series of issues to which consideration must be given; a lesson applicable to navigating the duplicity and ellipses of his own account. The demographic of the ship's crew provides a range of teachers who embody differing critical perspectives and spoken performances that can be brought to bear in understanding communication.[17] Within moments of setting foot on the *Hispaniola*, Smollett calls a council with Squire Trelawney, whom Jim has already observed to be loose-tongued, pompous, naive and hypocritically rapacious.[18] From the beginning of the interview, Smollett insists they "better speak plain" (*TI* 47), but despite his best efforts, he is unable to find unambiguous language to express his opinions. Beyond a broad dislike for the voyage, mistrust of the men and unsettled feelings towards Mr Arrow, he seems incapable of articulating the particulars of his concerns without resorting to the linguistic community specific to sea-faring gentlemen. His self-expression is significantly hampered by his socio-economic context; as a sailor he relies on nautical discourse to communicate, a primary speech genre which employs metaphor in a manner which proves entirely indecipherable to land lubbers.

A large proportion of the ship's officers' inability to understand one another can be reduced to the discrepancies that divide Smollett's formative experiences from those of his non-

[15] Robert Louis Stevenson "The Persons of the Tale," *Fables* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1902) 12 Feb. 2014 <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Literature.StvnsnFables>, 3.
[16] See also Herrick's plea to Captain Davis when he is instated as *Farallone*'s first mate: "For heaven's sake, tell me some of the words" (*SST* 156).
[17] Daly discusses the *fin-de-siècle* as a definitive period for romance in that it provided a means of processing the emerging specialised professional class, expressing the sense of brotherhood that this socio-economic shift created. See Nicholas Daly, *Modernism, Romance and the Fin-de-Siècle* (New York: Palgrave, 2004).
[18] Several critics note this. See Fiona McCulloch, *The Fictional Role of Childhood in Victorian and Early Twentieth-Century Children's Literature* (New York: Edwin Mellen P, 2004), 68, and Alan Sandison, *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Appearance of Modernism: A Future Feeling* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 55.

seafaring audience. Until this voyage, they have existed in divergent worlds which have shaped their expectations of language use differently. This situation is articulated by Bakhtin as a result of "each utterance [being] filled with echoes and reverberations of other utterances to which it is related by the communality of the sphere of speech communication."[19] Stevenson was aware of the cultural shift towards specialisation which was beginning to be reflected in increasingly obscure technical vocabulary, and this becomes evident in the dialogue between the different professionals gathered in the captain's cabin. With such an occupational gulf between them, communicating simple impressions of the situation on the ship becomes comically obscure, the individual assumptions they make about language are so polarised. Smollett's second objection to the voyage is that "the secret has been told to the parrot," which Trelawney intuitively understands literally as a reference to "Silver's parrot?" before the captain clarifies, "it's a way of speaking … blabbed, I mean" (*TI* 48). On the subject of Mr Arrow, the first mate, Smollett objects, "a mate should keep himself to himself, shouldn't drink with the men before the mast" which elicits the squire's shocked exclamation "Do you mean he drinks?," that is swiftly corrected: "only that he is too familiar" (*TI* 48). Through this dialogue, Stevenson emphasises the ambiguities inherent in language which frustrate the process of communication, even for a deliberate "plain speaker," indicating the interpretations which subsequently emerge regardless of the intentions of the author, and emphasising the moral responsibility of the reader or listener to incorporate the context of the utterance in their evaluation.

As Eric Griffiths puts it, "a conception of the speaker, of the kind of person he is, must influence a description of his utterance."[20] When we read these conversations, we engage in reconstructing the voices of the speakers and the spirit of their misunderstandings in order to distil meaning. In so doing, the insensitivity of the officers towards one another's point of view instructs the young reader in the precision and skill which must be utilised in the interpretation of any utterance, written or spoken. The obtuse and morally ambiguous Trelawney's blundering misinterpretations of Smollett's phraseology are heavy with latent irony. As it transpires Captain Flint, Silver's parrot, not only knows about the treasure, but is also the only living witness to its burial. Furthermore, once the *Hispaniola* sets sail, we are confronted with Mr Arrow, the perpetual inebriate, who eventually disappears one night, presumably wandering overboard in a drunken stupor. Language is ambivalent; even the speaker (or writer) cannot control the full weight of his words once they are set loose into

[19] Bakhtin, *SG*, 91.
[20] Griffiths, 33. A Bakhtinian modification to this argument runs that the imagination cannot recreate an utterance beyond the constraints of time-space, and so therefore his re-descriptions will always be tainted (or coloured) by his chronotope and the literary chronotope in which the utterance is made. This point is made by Bakhtin, *SG*, 79.

the world to be interpreted, and nor should he strive to, for it is only through the reader's collaboration in the narrative that the text lives at all.[21]

Smollett is sensitive to the threat posed by language in the attempt to communicate. He resists Dr Livesey's astute suggestion that he "fears a mutiny," carefully stating that "with no intention to take offence, I deny your right to put words in my mouth" (*TI* 49). He is alert to the fact that an utterance relies on collaboration between the speaker and the addressee for the construction of meaning; although this may be his underlying concern, Smollett is not rash or assertive enough to articulate the extremities of his anxiety. As a sailor, 'mutiny' is a loaded term, the horrors of which Livesey's land-bound experience cannot hope to reconstruct. While the Squire, Doctor and Captain interact to determine the best course of action for the voyage, Jim (and the reader) witnesses the power struggle implied by undertaking any engagement with language. The squire is an impulsive and irresponsible talker with little regard for the value of speech or the implications of his words. His questions reflect that he interprets literally and has little in the way of evaluative faculties, yet Stevenson uses Trelawney's misinformed responses to Smollett's opaque statements to generate proleptic irony. Although Livesey and Smollett offer more sophisticated models of reading and analysing language, blithely discounting the neutral dictionary definition behind an utterance is also foolish. Communication is inherently dialogic, requiring a partial retention of the straight reading whilst simultaneously entertaining an attendant imaginative sympathy for the other's perspective.[22]

Once on Treasure Island, Livesey's moral integrity and wry sensitivity to speech suffer a moment of inconsistency. When Jim is captured by Silver and taken hostage, in his brief meeting with Livesey, the Doctor attempts to persuade him to break his word. On the surface, it appears that because Treasure Island is a liminal space beyond the influence of English society, Livesey allows his standards to slip, confident that his actions are no longer being watched and assessed. To borrow a metaphor from Foucault, the guard does not need to be in the tower for the prisoners to behave as if he is; it is not his presence itself, but the prisoners' belief in his presence, that causes their good behaviour.[23] Livesey knows the island to be beyond the watchman's gaze and so he behaves with instinctive "self-

[21] See Bakhtin's theory of language as discourse, especially "Heteroglossia in the Novel," *DI*, 301-422 and "Discourse in Dostoevsky," *PDP*, 181-270.

[22] Bakhtin, "Deeds of Language" examines the responsibility of the speaker in constructing his utterance, "Bakhtin calls this model of intuition [split between the time/space organising the subject himself and the time/space attributed to other in the process of the subject's act of perception] an "architectonics of responsibility," because it is the algorithm that structures responses made from the site where subjectivity is addressed," cited by Holquist, 170,

[23] Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1982), 157.

preservation" rather than in line with his self-created public image. This clearly indicates that the ship operates as an independent chronotope in the novel; aboard the *Hispaniola*, Livesey maintains the values dictated by social convention, suggesting that he regards the cabin as an extension of his surgery or the hearthside at the Admiral Benbow. When he takes over the narrative, he describes his first trip ashore thus: "I jumped out, and came as near running as I durst, with a big silk handkerchief under my hat for coolness' sake, and a brace of pistols ready primed for safety" (*TI* 99). His hastily adjusted costume is an indication of civilised societal bonds loosening under the influence of the island.[24] One reading interprets Livesey's adoption of these traditional piratical accessories as a physical foreshadowing of his later deviation from the moral code associated with a gentleman's word. Alternatively, the change in appearance can be understood as illustrative of the different behaviour appropriate in his new *island* chronotope. Whereas the ship has palpable connections with home and nationhood, the island presents an alien space where time is experienced differently – life operates according to a different paradigm. The right course of action and the appropriate speech genre for utterance is derived from the chronotope in which the communication takes place. Livesey is adapting to his new circumstances rather than acting out of character.

During the first day in the stockade, Livesey strikes up an intimacy with Jim similar to that which Jim shared with Silver in the ship's galley, suggesting an uncomfortable parallel between doctor and pirate, but the comparison emphasises an important difference: "whenever [the Doctor] did so, he had a word for me. 'That man Smollett,' he said once, 'Is a better man than I am'" (*TI* 116). Livesey uses their increased friendship to reinforce the Captain's authority rather than as an opportunity for subterfuge, overtly countering Silver's behaviour. Additionally, Silver's catchphrase "duty is duty" implies the theory of language by which he operates. Bakhtin's assertion that words function according to a tripartite hermeneutical frame (comprised of the neutral, dictionary definition, the other's use of the term and the subject's own understanding) illuminates that Silver resists any shade of meaning gained from his social context.[25] He defines 'duty' according to his own articulation of duty, which represents an understanding garnered solely from his own loose associations with the term. In contrast, Livesey upholds the communal understanding that duty is to God, king and country.

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[24] This notion will be discussed more thoroughly in the following chapter. See Rebecca Weaver-Hightower, *Empire Islands: Castaways, Cannibals and Fantasies of Conquest* (London: U of Minneapolis P, 2007) for the degenerative freedom associated with costume on islands. For a detailed discussion of the importance of clothes in cultural exchange drawn from an examination of Victorian missionary magazines, see Ann C. Colley, "Stevenson's Pyjamas," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 30.1 (2002): 129-55.

[25] Bakhtin, *SG*, 87-8.

The doctor's speech also clarifies his awareness of his own weaknesses, elevating him as a more honest model for Jim to follow than Trelawney. His integrity reaches beyond the rigid demands of language, operating with a malleability which is sensitive to his audience and his wider chronotope. The ability to be flexible according to the circumstances without compromising personal honesty requires a greater level of maturity than Jim is able to muster, or even recognise in another. His staunch decision to abide by his word whatever the personal cost, social repercussions, or context, is evidence that he has understood the importance of retaining the value of one's speech by upholding verbal agreements, but is yet to learn the chameleon flexibility implicit in mastering communication. Having understood his core responsibility as an orator, Jim is unable to direct conversation by fulfilling his role as a responsive listener; he remains incapable of either taking the initiative or operating according to the generic demands of the situation. On the island, Jim finds himself outside the rules of engagement issued by British values.[26] Livesey's desire for Jim to break his word to a pirate, and known subversive speaker, proves to be a more intelligent, resourceful interaction with his opponent's perspective. Jim has not grasped the complex hermeneutical principles that lie behind Livesey's command, and so he equates the doctor's request that he break his word with Silver's mercurial linguistic practices.

In the space of the cabin – the nexus of the ship's world – these fundamental truths about the dialogic relationship between utterance and chronotope are first exposed to Jim. The cabin becomes the Bakhtinian space "where the knots of the narrative are tied and untied", and differing speech genres are demonstrated to be subject to the motivic chronotope of the ship. Long John Silver introduces Jim to an alternative means of employing speech that counteracts the assumptions Smollett makes in his conservative understanding of language and communication. Long John's assessment evades the ethical rationales that oblige the speaker to talk with diligent observance to their impression of the truth. Jim is introduced to Silver's parrot with an exemplary piece of play-acting which destabilises the classic associationist ideal of the stability of language as a representative sign.[27] Silver's critical

[26] In many ways, to thrive in this situation Jim needs to learn to follow the Humean principle of determining behaviour according to the social consensus of morality. Jim seems to understand a higher moral authority which is not changed by geographical location or social context: this kind of idealised behaviour stems from inexperience, but is perhaps a case where childish wisdom reinstates a clear-cut responsibility to circumstances which are endlessly debateable among adults with the benefit of a more varied knowledge of human nature. The Bible is treated as a material object rather than a spiritual artefact throughout *Treasure Island*, a detail which pertains to the master chronotope in which Stevenson is writing where the Christian narrative of the heavenly places is no longer routinely acknowledged as descriptive of a spiritual reality.

[27] Matthew D. Eddy, *The Patchwork Picture: Visualisation, Education, and the Foundations of Knowledge during the Scottish Enlightenment* 2014. TS. Chapter three "Artefacts of Reason" discusses Associationism in relation to Scottish pedagogical methods, by which Stevenson would have been taught. He cites Hannah Dawson, *Locke, Language and Early Modern Philosophy* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007).

lesson for Jim is that language can be rendered meaningless, constructed for show as a method of disguise; he believes that "discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized."[28] If discourse is the means by which humanity conveys and achieves knowledge, but is also the object of desire for which that knowledge is exercised, then discourse has the ability to define reality by inspiring action. Silver's understanding of the value of discourse allows him to legitimate and perpetuate his authority over the world around him through his mastery of language; power is located in and wielded by the effective orator who knows his audience and can manipulate their response by taking communicative control.

Silver embodies several identities: he is innkeeper, ship's cook, Capt'n Silver, Long John, Flint's quartermaster and Barbeque by turns. Described by his pirate crew as "no common man … he had good schooling" (*TI* 64), he deploys his power over language and text by subverting the very assertion on which his authority is based. Manipulating his choice of communicative mode according to his audience, he uses storytelling, register and affectation to excite different readings of his character. To Jim, he plays the innocent sea-cook, brought out of retirement to re-live the glorious adventures of his youth; with Dick, the young hand wavering over whether or not to join the pirate rebellion, he is a pirate king leading his men to gold and glory, infamous on the seven seas and feared by all; Tom, who signs up for pirate adventure only to recant, witnesses Silver transform from charismatic leader to murderous enemy with perilous speed. As a communicator, he tailors his speech to sound out his listener's weaknesses and exploit their preconceptions. In Bakhtinian terms, he is a master conversationalist, driving discussion by slipping effortlessly between speech genres which he selects according to his understanding of his audience.

Silver establishes Jim's narrative as internally dialogic because he represents a conflicting ideological perspective to the captain which is neither affirmed nor condemned. Introducing two opposing perspectives on the use of language as a means of communication and refusing to endorse one over the other infuses Stevenson's earliest and most straight-forward romance with a complexity traditionally reserved for the novel. This is a trend which evolves throughout Stevenson's fictional oeuvre. Although Silver's theory of language locates power with the speaker, he is still forced to comply with the rules of the ship during the voyage, at least in appearance. The communal system operating to structure life on the *Hispaniola* supersedes Silver's individualistic *modus operandi*. The principles determined by the captain hold sway over the ship's time-space as the importance of understanding speech

[28] Michel Foucault, "The Order of Discourse," Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh (eds.), *Modern Literary Theory* (London: Hodder, 2001), 211.

genre is exaggerated by the sequestered nature of the seafaring context. The voyage gives Jim access to a range of attitudes towards communication, allowing him to witness the extent to which different speech genres can differ between the mouths of speakers and the ears of their audience.

By the time Stevenson wrote *Kidnapped,* the substance and application of his thinking had slightly, but notably, developed. Along with absorbing or encountering other subjects' notions of how language operates, David narrates his adventures in language sensitive to his chronotope. This is best illustrated in his formative experiences at sea. When he comes round in the hold of the *Covenanter*, he finds himself in an entirely alien world which prompts a change in his mode of thinking and structuring of language. His formation of utterances is determined by the rhythmic movement of the ship – a convergence of time-space that structures his conscious engagement with the world around him.

> I came to myself in darkness, in great pain, bound hand and foot, deafened by many unfamiliar noises. There sounded in my ears a roaring of water as of a huge mill-dam, the thrashing of heavy sprays, the thundering of the sails, and the shrill cries of seamen. The whole world now heaved giddily up, and now rushed giddily downward; and so sick and hurt was I in body, and my mind so much confounded, that it took me a long while, chasing my thoughts up and down, and ever stunned again by a fresh stab of pain, to realise that I must be lying somewhere in the belly of that unlucky ship, and that the wind must have strengthened to a gale.[29]

He describes the situation in maritime terms; his utterance imitates the motion of his cell, caused by the ocean's ebb and flow in the cadence of his thoughts and the repetition of words. His phraseology lilts between crescendos and depressions, mimicking the restless sea. Each phrase is organised to place emphasis on the opening word (thrashing, thundering, shrill) before relapsing into dissipating sibilance (spray, sails, seamen). David's description of his "whole world" is characterised by childish simplicity. He strings his observations together into an unwieldy sentence, echoing the seemingly shapeless temporality to which he finds himself subject. It is no accident that this passage reads like a moment of rebirth. David is bound in the foetal position, lying in darkness, surrounded by water, in the ship's "belly," details which signify his dramatic change in circumstances and initiate a moment of intellectual reawakening.[30]

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[29] Robert Louis Stevenson, *Kidnapped*, Tusitala ed, (London: Heinemann, 1924), 41.
[30] Nemerov, 7-27.

David's imprisonment is symbolic of the pre-natal experience, making the wreckage analogous to the moment of labour.[31] He is released into the world to fend for himself, cut asunder from the body of his mother.[32] He must create a means of interpreting this unfamiliar world; a mental effort that ultimately involves working within a new speech genre. Postulating a theory of utterance which is sensitive to the role of the chronotope is central to his development. The motivic chronotope of the ship encourages a new understanding of utterance as a means of creating the self dialogically. This is equally evident in the transformative effect the voyage of the *Nonesuch* has on Mackellar in *The Master of Ballantrae*. As Norquay has elucidated, over the course of the novel Mackellar begins to operate as "the "vagabond reader," attractively free from fixity, [offering] an alternative to both mastery by the text and mastery of the text."[33] The motivic chronotope of the ship is an effective agent of change; time and space are understood and manifested differently on a voyage, loosening the bonds of land-bound duty and responsibility to allow a greater freedom of linguistic expression.

Breaking the Chain of Command

Stevenson's late work, *The Ebb-Tide*, co-authored with his step-son, Lloyd Osborne, is a more knowing and self-reflexive romance. It provides a sophisticated assessment of the relationship between time-space and speech genre as defined by the minor chronotope of the ship. Herrick is aware of "sailor-speak" from his juvenile reading, which symbolises the specialised knowledge necessary for surviving the nautical life. Knowing his inadequacy in this speech genre saps his confidence as he prepares to pass for the mate of the *Farallone*.[34] His panic betrays an underlying assumption that utterance is essentially reciprocal; only when one is speaking the right lines in the right genre is the impression of authenticity created: "even natives, he reflected, might be critics too quick for such a novice as himself; they might perceive some lapse from that precise cut-and-dry English which prevails on board a ship … and he racked his brain, and over-hauled his reminiscences of sea-romance

[31] This follows Bakhtin's principle of rebirth and death coinciding in the carnival. See M. M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, trans. Helene Iswolsky, foreword Krystyna Pomorska, prologue Michael Holquist, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1984), 420, hereafter cited as *RW*.
[32] Simon J. James, "Stevenson and Value," British Association of Victorian Studies. University of Sheffield. 31 Aug. 2012. Keynote speech. James argues that self is often re-defined through submersion in Stevenson's fiction.
[33] Norquay, 15. See chapter six of this thesis for a full discussion of the role the ship plays in recapitulating Mackellar's worldview.
[34] Bakhtin, *SG*, 79-87.

for some appropriate words."[35] Speech, for Herrick, is shaped by both the demands of context and the anticipated response of his hearers rather than the ideological beliefs of the individual who utters the words. His understanding of his utterances is analogous to a Bakhtinian chain of communications: he relies on genre fiction for seaworthy phrases that will enable him to enact the part of ship's officer.[36] He imagines and creates discourse according to the parameters set by received literary tradition, regurgitating old words into a new context. This provides a metaphor for the dulling effect that repetition can have on the mind's ability to engage with the business of the present. Thinking creatively involves moving beyond the local conditioning of birth and upbringing to determine the appropriate speech genre for entering into dialogue in each particular situation.

Even once Herrick has gained access to the captain's cabin, the language and quality of discussions that take place fail to educate him in the ways of the ship: the malaise of the past develops into an invisible moral infection which disables the chain of command. Ultimately, the space of the cabin as a centre for operations relies on the figure of the captain to inspire a corporate identity among the crew and establish the basis for effective communication. By pointedly ignoring the warnings of what has gone before, both in his own life and those of the *Farallone*'s previous officers, Captain Davis breaks the chain of related utterances. Failing to provide his crew with an adequate understanding of the ship, Davis leaves Herrick to rely on a received knowledge of sailing handed down through romance fiction. Herrick's previous experience of sea-romances causes him to relapse from critically engaging with his present circumstances. Instead, he operates according to the expectations set out by his British education: gazing into the silvery-black of an empty moonlit ocean, he is "overpowered by drowsiness" (*SST* 162); the sea operates on his mind like an anaesthetic, drawing him back to a childish dream world. Romance conventions provide an ineffectual means of engaging with the challenges and dangers of the open ocean; Herrick's reliance on an old mode of storytelling to illuminate his *fin-de-siècle* encounter with the ocean confines him in a state of inertia.

The protagonist of *The Wrecker*, also written in collaboration with Lloyd Osborne, is similarly confronted by the failures of his romantic heirs to describe with accuracy the maritime world of their adventures. Time at sea is often described as void, absent, transitory or, at best, blurred, in literary texts. So it seems at first to Loudon Dodd, aboard the *Flying Scud*:

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[35] Robert Louis Stevenson, *The South Sea Tales*, ed. Roslyn Jolly, (Oxford: OUP, 2004), 155.
[36] Bakhtin, *SG*, 69. The idea that language is loaded with inbuilt generic properties follows Tzvetan Todorov, *Genres in Discourse*, trans. Catherine Porter, (Cambridge: CUP, 1990).

> [T]he sense of our immitigable isolation from the world and from the current epoch – keeping another time, some eras old; the new day heralded by no daily paper, only by the rising sun; and the State, the churches, the peopled empires, war, and the rumours of war, and the voices of the arts, all gone silent as in the days ere they were yet invented.[37]

Seas are depicted as temporally romantic, belonging to another time, rather than conditioned by the particular specifications demanded by the novel.[38] According to Dodd's description, the sea-romance would appear to be estranged from the dialogic necessity of incorporating different primary speech genres and alternative perspectives on events. Yet, in Stevenson's own experience, the maritime life was far from disconnected from the rest of civilisation. His travel notes from the *S.S. Devonia*, which became *The Amateur Emigrant*, record something of these intricacies; as Noble and Gray note, the ship provided "a microcosm of late Victorian society" while affording Stevenson the opportunity to assume an alternative identity and observe the differences in others' reactions to his presence by virtue of his dress.[39]

In reality, ships operate according to a carefully organised timetable imposed by the captain, reflecting the patriarchal structures upheld in wider cultural paradigms. This is echoed in the method by which the spatial position of the ship was determined. By tracing the moon's progress through the stars, it was possible to establish the degree of longitude by comparing the ship's local time to the fixed point of Greenwich. As Maurice Michael explains,

> in the course of a day [the moon] moves approximately 12 degrees in the sky … [t]he sky is thus the face of a clock, … and that clock shows the same time all over the world … if I see from the position of the moon that the time is 12 o'clock in Greenwich [according to the nautical almanac], but here the sun shows that it is already an hour after midday, then I must be one hour, or 15 degrees of longitude, east of Greenwich.[40]

By calculating their position according to their current distance in time from the absolute measure of GMT, a tangible link with London society is maintained, but depending on the captain, there is great flexibility in how this influences life on board because of their physical distance. This constant reference back to England in order to deduce the position of

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[37] Robert Louis Stevenson and Samuel Lloyd Osborne, *The Wrecker* (London: Heinemann, 1924), 231-2.
[38] See Bakhtin, *DI*, 3-40.
[39] See Gray, *Critical Biography*, 80, and Robert Louis Stevenson, *From Clyde to California: Robert Louis Stevenson's Emigrant Adventures*, ed. and introd. Andrew Noble, (Aberdeen: Aberdeen UP, 1985), 21.
[40] Maurice Michael, *A History of Marine Navigation* (London: Batsford, 1954), 134-5.

the ship echoes the importance of relativizing one's notion of self in relation to the wider community of seafarers.

As he observes the captain about this work, Dodd expresses the ship's chronotopic distinction from land, east London and society: "Noon was made; and the captain dined on his day's work, and I on watching him, and our place was entered on the chart with a meticulous precision which seemed to me half pitiful and half absurd, since the next eye to behold that sheet of paper might be the eye of an exploring fish." (*TW* 192) While at sea, the *Norah Creina* functions according to a different record of time, which is determined by their movement through space. The fusion of time and space is literalised in the longitudinal measurements which allow marine navigators to map their location with accuracy, beyond visible reference points provided by land.[41] Dodd is also aware of the particularity of the ship's record; the importance of making a legible and accurate reading at a precise time; and the ultimate precariousness and unpredictability of the maritime world – despite the captain's best efforts to control his environment through close scientific observation, the seas remain capricious and unknowable.[42] Yet the person of the captain provides the chronotopic centre for the voyage as his commands order life for the rest of the crew, and it is through him that the various components of the calculations necessary to describe the ship's coordinates are synthesised into a single reference.[43] His log book determines the narrative of the journey, in terms of both what he chooses to write down and the route he intentionally plots. Thus the captain is keeper of ship time, space and narrative; all the discourses generated by the voyage are subject to his influence and answerable to his authority.

Likewise, Conrad depicts Captain Allistoun as "the ruler of that minute world, who seldom descended from the Olympian heights of his poop;" the ship is a complete and independent sphere in which the captain's word is law, shaping the atmosphere on deck but seldom partaking in day to day duties, after the fashion of a laissez-faire classical deity.[44] Stevensonian captains rarely remain aloof, often fostering a more paternal relationship or friendship with the narrator which causes ambiguity about the peripheries of power,

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[41] See John Malham, *Navigation Made Easy and Familiar to the Most Common Capacity: Or the Young Sailor's Sure Guide*, (London, 1790). PDF file. 3 Jan. 2013 <http://find.galegroup.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/ecco/retrieve>.

[42] This fact is playfully acknowledged by Stevenson in his many instances of characters who have seen or deny the existence of islands – Uncle Ned in *The Ebb-Tide*; Mac in *The Wrecker*, Long John Silver in *Treasure Island* – and impart a knowledge which exceeds the reliability of maps and charts. Even experience is unreliable as a source of accurate knowledge when it comes to navigating the ocean. "The Isle of Voices" relies on the impossibility of discovering the island twice without the necessary enchantments.

[43] The captain is a motivic chronotope. Here, the motivic chronotope exercises control over the minor chronotope.

[44] Conrad, *NN*, 31.

particularly in relation to telling the tale. This is evident in a number of the captaincies described across Stevenson's corpus. Captain Smollett keeps the ship's log, but Jim controls the narrative, establishing a hierarchy of influence: Smollett's rules help to determine the ship's chronotope which Jim's account then seeks to describe from his own perspective. Similarly, the *Covenanter*'s captain, Ebenezer, reluctantly becomes David Balfour's guardian and is intent on selling him as a slave in the Carolinas until a storm removes David from his custody. Captain Davis gives Robert Herrick a chance to escape the beachcombing life as mate on the *Farallone* but his authority is in name only once he allows drink to get the better of him. Teach is over-familiar with his men and is easily deposed by James and the Chevalier; Dodd is friendly with Captain Nares and Carthew funds his captain's brig, complicating the dynamics of their relationship. The exception is the captain of the *Nonesuch* who remains silent throughout the voyage to America, refusing to mingle with his passengers and retaining complete, but absent, control even in the throes of a violent storm.

Despite maintaining a constant mediation with the mainland, at sea, the ship becomes a complete world in itself, leading to frequent references to the greater personal freedoms allowed beyond the constraints of societal norms; on the *Flying Scud*, Goddedaal is described as "like some old, honest countrywoman in her farm (*TW* 371)" in his attentions to the Captain's table; a mildly disturbing and unexpected simile considering his size.[45] In the absence of women, men are assigned traditionally feminine roles as caterers, cleaners and seamstresses, indicating the fluidity of customary cultural constructions practiced aboard. Rather than resulting in increased freedom from the restrictions involved in living on land, Stevensonian voyages often emphasise the familial bonds that exist between a captain and his crew in terms of the familiar Victorian values of responsibility, discipline and loyalty.

If the ship's role in adventure-romance is to provide domestic space in alien territory, logic dictates that the captain assumes a patriarchal role. *The Ebb-Tide* scrutinises the captain's natural and moral mandate to control the ship through Davis's behaviour on the *Farallone*. The Tahitian authorities issue Davis's commission because they can garner no other interest; the risk of contracting an infection from a recently diseased vessel is perceived to be too great by men in a position to have a choice. Buckton establishes that at the *fin-de-siècle* the spread of disease was understood to be miasmic, which would suggest that the *Farallone*'s recent smallpox contagion continues to linger, implying serious repercussions for any future crew.[46] Davis's captaincy relies on Herrick and Huish's cooperation in replacing the dead

[45] See Anthea Trodd, "Collaborating in Open Boats: Dickens, Collins, Franklin and Bligh," *Victorian Studies* 42 (2000): 201-22. Goh points out "the often barely seaworthy ships that transport these characters from place to place … often function as their domestic space or territory." Goh, 129.
[46] Oliver Buckton, *Cruising with Robert Louis Stevenson* (Athens: Ohio UP, 2007), 257.

'Kanaka' hands, rendering his authority vulnerable, given their recent common status as beachcombers. There is a sharp change in Davis's attitude as he sets foot on the *Farallone*. Moments before, he negotiated with Herrick: "If you'll back me up, I'll stake my life I carry it through" (*SST* 148); once aboard, his speech genre shifts and he speaks in imperatives, refusing to justify his commands. When Huish attempts to shirk orders Davis storms: "I'm captain, and I'm going to be it. One thing of three. First, you take my orders here as cabin steward, in which case you mess with us. Or second, you refuse, and I pack you forward – as quick as the word's said. Or, third and last, I'll signal that man-of-war and send you ashore under arrest for mutiny" (*SST* 154). On his ship, the Captain's word is synonymous with the act, and authorities on land are complicit in recognising his jurisdiction. Davis's appeal to the island authorities reiterates the ship's dependence on the land for legitimacy, but also determines its distinction as a chronotope.[47]

As with any Victorian patriarchal position worth holding, the captain's power is shackled to administrative responsibility, and the cabin resembles that centre of domestic administration: the study. All the documents associated with the running of the ship, the instruments enabling navigation, itineraries of the stores and cargo, and the meetings that determine the activity of the crew, are held in this room. Around the captain's table, instruments are consulted that identify the exact position, speed and trajectory of the ship's course and log books are kept to record the daily state of affairs. Interestingly, the chronometer (widely in use from the early nineteenth century, but first invented in 1761) and sextant, necessary for determining longitude and latitude precisely enough to navigate with accuracy, were extremely sensitive to temperature, humidity and motion. They were stored in the most stable, dry and protected room of the ship to avoid any unnecessary inaccuracies or disruptions to their performance as measures. The cabin provided an insulated space removed from the elements where the captain could determine the ship's independent course and establish her precise geographical location based on her local time. The log book was a repository for all this intelligence. It was also used as a means of communicating any unusual or remarkable instances, weather conditions or temperatures, allowing experience to provide a hermeneutical tool for interpreting both the rest of the journey and any subsequent voyages.[48] Captain Bones of *Treasure Island* even uses the margins of his log to keep financial accounts of the gold looted by the crew of the *Walrus*, itemising his share of the pirates' income. The log here imagines the progress of the voyage in gold, plotting the ship's

[47] This circumstance establishes the ship as a minor chronotope: time-space is always implicitly subject to a wider authority, which emanates from its connections on shore.

[48] Michael notes that it was through the collation of ordinary captains' sea logs that Matthew Fontaine Maury compiled his oceanographic charts, publishing his book, *Physical Geography of the Sea* in 1855. Michael, 152.

journey in terms of monitory gain from each port; every figure signifies a series of muggings and robberies from which Jim's account is otherwise sanitised. Navigation allegorises Bakhtin's theory of the utterance. One's position is only determined by an accurate understanding of one's situation in relation to others. By mediating the difference, a reading or approximate inference can be made. Captains who are good navigators tend to be successful communicators.

Stevenson's ship chronotopes share many material similarities with land-bound estates. Dodd's cabin is particularly useful for illustrating this as the interior of his ship at the beginning of *The Wrecker* reflects his personality and taste in a museum of artefacts that he has gathered around him as an external record of his continuous wanderings. Dodd explains the décor of his cabin to his old friend Havens,

> The black walnut bookshelves are Old English; the books all mine, - mostly Renaissance French. You should see how the beachcombers wilt away when they go round them looking for a change of Seaside Library novels. The mirrors are genuine Venice; that's a good piece in the corner. The daubs are mine – and his; the mudding mine. … These bronzes, … I began life as a sculptor. (*TW* 7)

The space is imagined as a cluttered Victorian interior, reminiscent of the catalogue of exotic curios in a realist domestic novel. Dodd's floating home is furnished with an assortment of objects invested with personal memories and representative of various significant periods of his life. His personal history, as he would wish it to be related, is latent in the artefacts he houses around him. The cabin's furnishings half-articulate his circumstances and attitude towards life, from the solid presence of a bust of his financial backer, to the French novels that denote his commitment to culture, and bronzes he crafted as a student in Paris, suggestive of aesthetic sensibility. The contents of his cabin are displayed like a signature, accrediting his right to be identified as a man of cultural taste, a genuine aesthete despite the commercial circumstances of his employment.[49]

Dodd uses these items as stimuli for recalling different memories – markers that signify epochs of his life beyond the sea, inverting the topos of the young gentleman collecting antiques on his Grand Tour to individualise the dusty inheritance of his leather-and-mahogany study. In conversation, he momentarily organises these memorabilia into a coherent narrative which glimmers for a moment under the sympathetic gaze of his

[49] The ambivalent relationship between art for art's sake and commercialism is thoroughly discussed by William Gray, *Life, Art and Fantasy: George Macdonald, Robert Louis Stevenson and other Fantasy Writers* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholar P, 2011).

companion, and then ceases to exist as he lapses into silence. These autobiographical tales are reflective of the ephemeral nature of the self, the maritime home he occupies and the nature of storytelling. Each retelling configures the objects in a modified order, adds colour and emphasis to a different ornament or draws out a specific aspect of his personality as it is denoted by the collection – tailored to the audience and the occasion. Like incidents in a narrative, the random group of artefacts are given coherence and invested with a relational purpose imposed on them by the storyteller and the listener in a momentary collaboration before each goes his separate way, and the whole declines once more into mere abstracted parts.

The flexibility which characterises Dodd's succinct autobiography is exactly what sea-romance-time naturally inspires; his is a life shaped by the circumstance of being at sea. Ships sail through deserted oceans on journeys which only gain definition through occasional encounters with random objects; those aboard must collaborate in generating a coherent tale from these experiences if they are to resist nihilism or existential crisis. *The Ebb-Tide* is similarly concerned with how objects inspire narrative. It is in defiance of encroaching silence and self-fragmentation that Herrick acts when he chalks graffiti on the wall of his temporary accommodation on the Tahitian beach. Feeling deprived of a suitable collaborator from among his companions he scrawls bars of Beethoven and a line from Virgil's *Aeneid*. In contrast to Dodd's collected ornaments, Herrick's etchings describe the extent to which his imagination is bound by his past, deepening the reader's awareness of his current failure to respond to the world before him. Despite his degraded situation as a beachcomber, he is determined to be remembered for being cultured, a state to which he ascribes an innate value. His understanding of what refinement entails is tied to his privileged education: "they will know that I loved music and had classical tastes" (*SST* 144).[50] He is motivated by the idea of leaving a mark that will establish him as a gentleman for any who subsequently try to reconstruct the life behind the inscription. Herrick's analogy between classical literature and the modern gentleman exposes the root of his present dissipation. Without fostering a dialogic response to experience, he cannot hope to discover anything more about the world than what has already been revealed to him by the insights of others.

Relying on his boyish engagement with ancient literature as a means of self-elegy causes Herrick to forfeit the opportunity to revitalise his reading of the text, and thus to access a more profound insight into his own time and space. The copy only remains in his possession

[50] Buckton's reading of Herrick's blush on arrival at New Island as a consequence of having to acknowledge his acquaintance with Davis and Huish to Attwater is further evidence of this engrained class snobbery and social pride. Buckton, 260.

because he cannot sell it for food, and it is not an appreciation for the beauty of the words themselves that brings him comfort, but rather through "seeking favourite passages … [with] the association of remembrance" (*SST* 124) as "a phrase of Virgil speaks not so much of Mantua or Augustus, but of English places and the student's own irrevocable youth" (*SST* 125). Both writer and reader have been displaced in his interpretation; Latin is given an English accent, Herrick is transported, not to Dido's palace or Hades' underworld, but back into the classroom. His relapse into cultural and personal memory in place of expressing his present self is indicative of his lack of interest in life. He refuses to allow his exotic location to translate into the active production of a new romance. He is unwilling to denounce the standards inherent in his cultural heritage and find an independent means of becoming the hero of his own narrative, in dialogue with his fellow beachcombers and their environment.[51] Herrick begins by enforcing outmoded paradigms of thought and speech onto the chronotope he inhabits rather than allowing the chronotope to determine his narrative response. All this achieves is a reiteration of self-loathing and failure.

Virgil does not help Herrick to understand his situation in the South Seas because he allows his point of view to be overwhelmed by that imposed by the text. When Herrick goes ashore after experiencing his own nautical adventure, his understanding of maritime artefacts is transformed. As he gazes at the figurehead on the beach he experiences "feelings of curiosity and romance, and suffered his mind to travel to and fro in her life-history. So long she had been the blind conductress of a ship among the waves; so long had she stood here idle in the violent sun … and was even this the end of so many adventures" (*SST* 200)? This episode is followed by the discovery of a storeroom which "seized on the mind of Herrick with its multiplicity and disorder of romantic things … it seemed to him as if the two ships' companies were there on guard, and he heard the tread of feet and whisperings, and saw with the tail of his eye the commonplace ghosts of sailor men" (*SST* 201). He embellishes the fragmentary history communicated by the objects to form a coherent narrative of shipwreck and disaster, as if he has overheard the mutterings of the affected crew. This exercise in imagination is mocked by Attwater, who interrupts his reverie, "Junk, … only old junk! And does Mr Hay find a parable?" (*SST* 201) Attwater is, of course, committed to upholding traditional modes of creating narrative, as it is under Imperial discourse and muscular Christianity that his pearl-farm has been established.[52] Now Herrick has survived a suicide

[51] Farrier describes Stevenson's care to establish cultural reciprocity when he went about writing *In the South Seas*. Farrier, 15-71.

[52] For a collection of essays that discusses the secular "re-enchantment" of the world through romance *inter alia* after God is widely rejected in culture see Joshua Landy and Michael Saler (eds.), *The Re-enchantment of the Modern World: Secular Magic in a Modern Age* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2009).

attempt, he begins to lose his creative apathy and find a voice to articulate his imaginative response.

Through Herrick's increasing capacity for imaginative engagement with his chronotope, Stevenson invites his readers to generate different narrative possibilities that challenge attitudes towards the divisions between real experience and fictionality.[53] Taking the spirit of sea-romance and allowing it to inform his perspective develops Herrick's ability to see beyond both his suppositions about the structure of the world and the materiality of things, and to start to compose a more sophisticated, individual response to circumstances. Rather than responding to the world through expectations generated by preconceptions, he begins to construct a collaborative relationship with the South Seas. This change is as a result of his experiences aboard the *Farallone*. The ship functions as an independent entity rather than being forced into the mould Herrick has encountered on the pages of boys' adventure fiction, and her previous life which eschews the romance-expectations of her crew.

Shipwrecked: Recuperating a Collaborative Tale

Following the archetypal pattern of how captain and vessel interact in juvenile sea-romances, Captain Smollett maintained order over the *Hispaniola*, but in the later romances *The Wrecker* and *The Ebb-Tide*, the narrative is generated by the primacy of the ship chronotope. Discrepancies exist between the assumptions made by the crew about their vessel and the cold facts of her recent history, subverting traditional hierarchies of power by giving the ship chronotope some influence over the fate of her crew. The ship chronotope conforms to Romance tradition by evoking a strong connection to the past. Stevenson's mechanisms for his protagonists' survival at sea often depended on attributing the imagination with the power to transform the immediate constraints of the ship and rewrite their experience accordingly. Failure to establish this kind of creative engagement with the present causes disaster. For example, when Captain Davis boards the *Farallone*, he adopts the same attitude as when last he put to sea. His preconceptions cause him to slip into traditional sea-romance-time; by vividly evoking memories of previous voyages, the experience of putting to sea prompts a regression into the past. Until the moment of challenge arrives, until something different or unexpected happens, the self conforms to the habitual routine established long ago in similar circumstances, which appears to collapse the

[53] For a discussion of the Victorian literary culture created by Dickens that Stevenson was trying to break away from in formal, material and conceptual terms see Ian Duncan, *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel: the Gothic, Scott and Dickens* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992).

present into a timeless repetition. Sea-romance-time on Stevenson's ships resists this gravitation towards immutability, rather grounding the narrative in the immediate experience of the crew by disrupting their expectations through introducing crises through the resurgence of the ship's past. Although Davis and Herrick are seduced by the conventional romance implied by a cruise, the *Farallone* functions independently; her previous experiences begin to undermine the expectations of her crew.

Davis knows the skeleton facts surrounding the fate of the *Farallone*'s last owners and her condition hints towards her destructive past:

> No litter, no sign of life remained; for the effects of the dead men had been disinfected and conveyed on shore. Only on the table, in a saucer, some sulphur burned, and the fumes set them coughing as they entered. The captain peered into the starboard stateroom, where the bed-clothes still lay tumbled in the bunk, the blanket flung back as they had flung it back from the disfigured corpse before its burial. (*SST* 153)

The traces of disaster left behind are more eloquent for their lack of detail, inviting a wider frame of interpretation than might otherwise be appropriate. Burning sulphur connotes the "fire and brimstone" brand of Christian teaching on damnation, establishing the novella's concern with wider existential questions, rendering the beachcombers' coughs symptomatic of the spiritual and moral disorder that the events of the voyage gradually expose. The scene presents a temporal hiatus, suspended in memorial to the last earthly struggle of the dead crew. As the new captain peers in on an abandoned world, the dead are dehumanised to the sum of the ghostly panic that their corpses inspired, at least in his mental reconstruction of events. The *Farallone* has been sanitised of her old crew, expunging their memory from the ship, and allowing life to roll on as before without reference to her grisly past. The absences emphasised by the unsettled scene contextualise sea-romance-time in a wider master chronotope that implies a redaction of the old-world paradigms of redeeming historical memory and a religious afterlife. Although white-washed and ship-shape in appearance, the *Farallone* is still sailing on borrowed time: the symptoms might be masked, but the disease lingers on, unchecked.

Stevenson's darker sea-romances are dialogically engaged with the anachronistic survival of adventure-time as the past impinges on the present by leaving the traces of a troubling inheritance, passed on from one crew to another in the ship's cargo, or even the structure of

the vessel herself.[54] The resulting rupture between the timescales according to which a captain and his ship function reinforces the precarious nature of the nautical life. Their chronotopes imperfectly coincide for the duration of the voyage but are never synonymous. These differing temporal frames of existence are brought into conflict as the past experience of man and vessel drive the narrative forward in a complex and insecure sequence of becoming. Events are unpredictable because the social structures and psychological developments that characterise life aboard are temporary. Because of this instability, the straightforward voyage from one port to another is frequently diverted or prematurely aborted by the ships that traverse the seas in Stevenson's later tales.[55] The *Covenanter* is shipwrecked before leaving the coastline of its country of origin; the *Farallone* is diverted to New Island when stores run dangerously low; the *Currency Lass* is left mastless, bobbing around the open ocean while her displaced crew row for Midway Island. The independent pasts of captains and their vessels redirect the narrative as history directs the present in a gothic inflection of the traditional, formulaic sea-voyages that sought out treasures from abroad and depended on the exoticism of their destination for the driving impetus of plot.[56] Focusing on the liminal nature of the space of the ship, these texts operate apart from the traditional loci of adventure-romance, as Eric Massie has noted of *The Ebb-Tide*: "the standards of consensus, societal authority, and textual authority [disintegrate] to individualized, phenomenological responses in which certainty is removed and meaning is located in individual experience."[57] And yet these individualized responses are bound to the rest of the crew and their ship, dependent on collaboration and the establishment of effective communication for their very existence.

If "[t]he suggestion of Bakhtin's total oeuvre, conceived as a single utterance, is that our ultimate act of authorship results in the text which we call our self," then that self is compiled through exposure to the heteroglossic wealth of the world.[58] Stevenson and Osborne's tale constantly springs surprises to regenerate the plot: ships arrive, abnormalities reveal themselves and islands appear. These shocks of encounter with the other, both in environmental and cultural terms, inform the process of self-definition by generating the "events" which, synthesised into "text," produce personality and identity. Once off the beach

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[54] Emerson and Morson dismiss adventure-time as "a rather primitive way to understand human action, but it continues to thrive in dime-store novels." Emerson and Morson, 371.
[55] See Buckton, 252.
[56] Tyler's view that the past was unknowable and, therefore, threatening was influential and indicative of the anxiety *fin-de-siècle* writers had towards the past. This theme is discussed in more detail in chapter four where the master chronotope is fully explained. Edward B. Tyler, *Primitive Culture* 2 vols. (New York: Harper, 1958).
[57] Eric Massie, "Stevenson and Conrad: *The Ebb-Tide* and *Victory* Revisited," in Arata, Drydon and Massie, 30-38. 38.
[58] Michael Holquist, "Answering as Authoring: Mikhail Bakhtin's Trans-Linguistics," in Morson, 67.

and on the *Farallone*, Davis quickly slackens his impeccable performance as captain which won him the commission, rallied Herrick and Huish, and discharged his first moments in office:

> In the drooping, unbuttoned figure that sprawled all day upon the lockers, tippling and reading novels; in the fool who made of the evening watch a public carouse on the quarter-deck, it would have been hard to recognize the vigorous seaman of Papeete roads. He kept himself reasonably in hand till he had taken the sun and yawned and blotted through his calculations; but from the moment he rolled up the chart, his hours were passed in slavish self-indulgence or in hoggish slumber. (*SST* 165)

While on the island, Davis is "the vigorous seaman" masquerading as the ideal officer he knows he ought to be. The stories he told of his past appeared to be generated from regret and self-loathing, inflected with a repentant attitude that foreswore a determination never to shirk responsibility again. Now the biblical language employed refers to the "slavish" obedience to self-desire rather than practicing righteousness. There are also allusions to degeneration which provide an alternative means of analysing Davis's behaviour. His chief occupations, reading novels and drinking to excess, are both pastimes stereotypically associated with decadence in nineteenth-century culture.[59] Ornate literature and alcohol provided the means of achieving a temporary dissolution of the self by surrendering consciousness to be transported beyond the ennui of daily life for an exquisite moment of pleasure.[60] Reading passively, or uncritically, was equated with involuntarily allowing the self to be subsumed into the ideas of the novel, removing any ability to discern a distinction between the fictional world and reality.[61] Here, Davis's desire to bury his identity is emphasised through a parodic engagement in both activities. His personal degeneration is darkly magnified in the coincidence of the words "sun" and "blotted", creating a suggestive

[59] See Kirsten MacLeod, *Fictions of British Decadence: High Art, Popular Writing, and the Fin-de-Siècle* (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), "Introduction," which traces the development of British Decadence from the French novelists of the mid-nineteenth century to its emergence at the Wilde trials.

[60] The transformation of Jekyll into Hyde has been described as an allegory for inebriation. Thomas L. Reed, *The Transforming Draft: Jekyll and Hyde, Robert Louis Stevenson and the Victorian Alcohol Debate* (London: Macfarland and Company, 2006).

[61] Many of the conservative fears over sensational fiction and the gutter press originate from this belief. See chapter two for a more detailed discussion of this context in relation to the publication of *Treasure Island*. This provides an interesting point of contrast to the "new romancers" who followed Stevenson – Conan Doyle was particularly fascinated by the connection between romance and imagination, and felt that one ought to allow one's self to be consumed by the reading experience, "It is good to have the magic door shut behind us." See Arthur Conan Doyle, *Through the Magic Door* (New York: McClure 1908), 187.

echo of the popularised theory of entropy which played on the *fin-de-siècle* fear of decline.[62] Once Davis returns to sea, his Victorian resolve for self-improvement is forgotten, and he resumes the habits of his old seafaring self, revealing his base nature as if hypnotised by the motion of the decks.

Davis's undisciplined behaviour implicates the entire working of the ship; she becomes an external picture of the captain's slovenliness in an uncanny return to her recent past. The *Farallone* is used to sailing under sloppy direction, days intermingling and even disappearing from the officers' consciousnesses according to the narratives of the kanaka-crew, recounted by Herrick: "They lay here howling and groaning, drunk and dying, all in one. They didn't know where they were, and they didn't care" (*SST* 179). A ship without cogent leadership drifts into chaos both literally and symbolically, whether in the guise of disease or through shipwreck; losing the ability to define one's self chronotopically is tantamount to the disintegration of consciousness, which is ultimately realised in death.[63] Without discipline and effort, it is impossible to bring one's will to bear on the environment, resulting in a lapse of self-creation as dialogue ceases. Davis's failure to remain alert to his responsibility as captain - or even instruct Herrick according to the particulars of an officer's duty - sabotages their original plans; the threat to his identity is paralleled in spatial terms by the *Farallone*'s floundering course.

In the voyage of the *Currency Lass*, recounted to Dodd by his future business partner, Carthew, the gothic return is located in the fabric of the ship herself. When Captain Wicks employs Mac, "an expert and careful sailor" (*W* 351), after their successful trading at Butaritari, and sets sail for San Francisco, it doesn't take long for Mac's experienced and critical eye to unmask the *Lass*'s past, implicating Wicks as deliberately evading the truth:

> "Don't you get looking at these sticks," the captain said, "or you'll have a fit and fall overboard."
>
> Mac turned towards the speaker with rather a wild eye. "Why, I see what looks like a patch of dry rot up yonder, that I bet I could stick my fist into," said he.
>
> "Looks as if a fellow could stick his head into it, don't it?" returned Wicks. "But there's no good prying into things that can't be mended."

[62] Jolly, *Stevenson in the Pacific*, has established the link between Fleeming Jenkins and the theory of entropy. Stevenson's friendship with Jenkins is well documented in his writing. See Robert Louis Stevenson, *Fleeming Jenkins: the Life of an Engineer* (London: Tusitala, 1924).

[63] Also of relevance is Captain Davis's previous history of shipwreck where he lost six lives in a storm that overtook the ship he was captaining because he attempted to command the decks when drunk.

> "I think I was a *Currency Ass* to come on board of her!" reflected Mac.
>
> "Well, I never said she was seaworthy," replied the captain: "I only said she could show her blooming heels to anything afloat. And besides, I don't know that it's dry rot; I kind of sometimes hope it isn't. Here; turn to and heave the log; that'll cheer you up."
>
> "Well, there's no denying it, you're a holy captain," said Mac.
>
> And from that day on, he made but the one reference to the ship's condition; and that was whenever Tommy drew upon his cellar. "Here's to the junk trade!" he would say, as he held out his can of sherry.
>
> "Why do you always say that?" asked Tommy.
>
> "I had an uncle in the business," replied Mac, and launched at once into a yarn, in which an incredible number of the characters were "laid out as nice as you would want to see," and the oaths made up about two-fifths of every conversation. (*W* 352)

Mac's response that he is a "holy" captain employs the full semantic reach of the word, punning on the holey ship, as well as intimating Wicks' singular attitude and unflinching optimism. The various implications of the disease that will permeate the *Farallone* are literalised in the rotten hold of the *Currency Lass*.[64] The foolishness implicit in wilfully failing to attend to their ship's hold, declining to engage with the evidence before them in preference of listening to their own fabrications, is ultimately exposed by the storm.

The *Currency Lass*'s diseased hold is evidence of her status as the unscrupulous result of an insurance scam, all too typical of the nineteenth-century South Pacific shipping industry. Patching up a wreck, changing her name and sending her out to sea again was not a rare practice, despite the obvious risk to human life.[65] The precarious nature of the South Seas environment made safety regulations impossible to enforce and the frequent storms and shipping disasters that occurred legitimately made scandals easy to disguise.[66] Wicks does not hesitate in abandoning his ship once the mast snaps, but his trust in the restorative power of land is misplaced; he fails to understand the *Currency Lass* according to her chronotope: "[t]he boat … was yet eloquent of the hands of men, a thing alone indeed upon the sea but

[64] The different implications that flow from the metaphor of disease in terms of how it relates to empire, trade, morality and colonial issues is discussed in Buckton, 257-9.
[65] Alan L. Karras, "Transgressive Exchange: Circumventing Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Commercial Restrictions, or the Discount of Monte Cristo," in Bentley, Bridenthal and Wigen, 112.
[66] *Ibid*., 112.

yet in itself all human" (*TW* 357). Design and craftsmanship give each vessel an unbreakable connection with humanity which is exaggerated by the desert of ocean that surrounds her. The narrative embedded in each ship describes something of the cultural circumstances that produced and commissioned her. The rotten hull of the *Currency Lass* is a metaphor of the commercially hollow investment Dodd and Pinkerton make in the *Flying Scud*, which is caused by the *Lass*'s unfortunate encounter with Midway Island. The *Flying Scud*'s secret is the absence of treasure; the bidding war in San Francisco was prompted by desperation to cover up murder rather than to gain fraudulently from the valuable cargo of a wreck. Dodd and Pinkerton's business decisions are based on an interpretation of an isolated glimpse into their rivals' affairs. Without the ability to locate Wickes's activity at the auction in a wider chain of events and determine the specific circumstances in which he credits the wreck of the *Scud* with value, their deductions backfire. Just as Wickes's decision to abandon ship for the traditionally more accommodating environment of the desert island fails to provide an obvious solution to their predicament, Dodd and Pinkerton's choice to allow supposition and the appearance of things to dictate their actions leads them into financial disaster, but is simultaneously generative of their further adventures.

Despite Carthew's efforts to erase Captain Trent and his crew from history, the wreck retains an eloquence of its own, revealing discrepancies from maritime practice and inconsistencies with the story told by her alleged crew that exposes the missing links in their fabrications. It is in the mundane details that their fraud is detected: Captain Nares immediately notes "this painter's been cut? A sailor always seizes a rope's end, but this is sliced short off with the cold steel" (*TW* 204). Paying close attention to the material circumstances leads Nares to believe that, although all events are somehow rationally linked, without the full evidence, meaning is irretrievable: "It would be different if we understood the operation; but we don't, you see: there's a lot of queer corners in life; and my vote is to let the blame' thing lie" (*TW* 230). He is aware that his perspective on the situation inherently limits the quality of his interpretation. Yet he doesn't fear the wagging tongues of their half-enlightened crew for similar reasons: "if it's only one lone old shell-back, it's the usual yarn" (*TW* 230); a partially factual account touched by abnormality simply confirms the incredulity with which maritime tales are generally regarded.[67] This conveniently polarised distinction between the speech genres of fact and fiction in the collective imagination is bolstered by the popular success of sea-romances, but Nares acknowledges the troubling ambiguity that their current adventure exposes: "dime novels are right enough … only that things happen thicker than

[67] Sailors' tales are often mistrusted thanks to their reputation on land for creating myths and, partially, because of their orality. Stevenson is with Nares: every narrative requires "the invention (yes, invention) and preservation of a certain key in dialogue," *MP*, 263.

they do in life, and the practical seamanship is off-colour" (*TW* 230). The weight of banal detail provides the only distinction between life and art in his experience.

Yet, it is in this banal detail that the extraordinary lurks; the only proof that might break the spell commonly cast to transform sailors' histories into myth is the wreck herself:

> I know there's nothing in her; but somehow I'm afraid of someone else – it's the last thing you'd expect, so it's just the first thing that'll happen – someone dropping into this God-forgotten island where nobody drops in, waltzing into that wreck that we've grown old with searching, stooping straight down, and picking right up the very thing that tells the story. (*TW* 231)

There is no doubt in Nares's systematic mind that the ship conceals a yarn; his own narrative folds the realities of conducting their search into the unmistakeable rhythm of fairytale-time, expressing experience through the speech genre of fiction. It is as if he knows he is a character in a romance, he predicts an unexpected coincidence will trigger the discovery of the 'key' to the mystery. Their current search is thwarted because they can only read part of the plot; the events that comprise the narrative are there, it is just a matter of organising the right evidence into a coherent order.

Conclusions

Rather than adhering to the incidental role ascribed by traditional adventure-romance, the Stevensonian ship takes on an original and increasingly complex temporality that fuses the romanticised past with an unpredictable future. The exotic shores that it sails towards are not necessarily the end of the story, and the means of establishing a narrative are exposed as a series of negotiations between different points of view, rather than a straight-forward biography of adventures. The ship plays a crucial part in constructing the identities of the men who inhabit her, and is a protective keeper of their secrets, but also a precarious shelter from the destructive powers of nature and the implications of the laws that define civilisation. In Stevenson's earlier fiction, the ship functions as a motivic chronotope, providing a dynamic space in which time is experienced in distinction to the wider narrative, functioning as a portal onto an alternative perspective. *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped* and *The Master of Ballentrae* all use the device to challenge the characters' preconceptions of language and the act of narration by establishing the interdependent relationship between

chronotope and utterance. Jim's experience of the confusion aboard the *Hispaniola* leads him to recognise the different theories of language used by individuals in the attempt to claim agency over their chronotope and to manipulate the other members of the crew. As he comes to realise, in order to establish a useful dialogue, conversations ought to be entered into responsibly, paying due attention to any influence the circumstances of the utterance might have on conveying meaning.

Utterance in Stevenson's later romance rarely involves the attempt to exchange ideas frankly. *The Wrecker* probes the hidden connections between the *Currency Lass*, *The Flying Scud* and Loudon Dodd, revealed in part by the *Scud*'s wreck itself, but dependent on Carthew's narrative to exegete these inert clues with accurate cogency. This painstaking process of discovery emphasises the importance of the relationship which exists between chronotope and utterance. *The Ebb-Tide*'s *Farallone* advances the influence of the chronotope one step further by causing her crew to reassess their lives and personal loyalties according to events as they take place in an unpredictable universe. Individual characters are in a constant state of evolution, repeatedly modifying the stories and narratives that help to shape the self in a perpetual mediation between the past and their present situation in time and space. The hidden story here pertains to the ship as well as the individual members of her crew, placing the vessel in a chain of different owners who each leave their mark. This minor chronotope is a dialogic creation, distorted through time as individuals play out their brief scenes upon the deck and leave indelible, if spectral, traces behind. Herrick is reliant on the paradigms created by a world lodged in his memory to gain favour and friendship in a modern "paradise." He doesn't recognise the value in storytelling as a means of animating and exploring present day situations. Stevenson thinks in historical terms, but although he mourns the loss involved in progress, it is never a hopeless elegy. There is always something from the past which can only be retrieved and valued through an original engagement from the contemporary moment. The writer identifies this retrospectively recognised truth and places it before his audience in order that they might benefit from the insight.

Chapter II: Island

Except for the Casco lying outside, and a crane or two, and the ever-busy wind and sea, the face of the world was of a pre-historic emptiness; life appeared to stand stockstill, and the sense of isolation was profound and refreshing.

- *In the South Seas*[1]

[A] passion or a character is so much the better depicted as it rises clearer from material circumstance.

- *"A Humble Remonstrance"*[2]

Since Daniel Defoe marooned Crusoe in 1719, islands have had a strong purchase on the imaginations of readers and writers alike. Throughout Stevenson's career, islands retained a powerful hold over him, and he frequently returned to their shores as an evocative romance setting which would agitate his characters into contemplating selfhood. As with any space that has been frequently colonized for literature, the island had acquired a set of chronotopic and generic connotations by the time Stevenson created Treasure Island. Graham Tulloch helpfully observes that "If Jim… rejects expectations about islands that are raised by literature, those literary expectations nevertheless remain embedded in the text, offering the reader a combination of allusions to both real and literary islands."[3] This was no virgin territory, and it was part of Stevenson's intention to position his island adventures in dialogue with literary tradition. There are several conceptions of time-space that Stevenson particularly engages with in his island writing which reimagine the dialogic scope of the island chronotope. Within the major chronotope of adventure-romance, the island was predominantly conceived of as a minor chronotope which remained utopian, beyond the immediacy of "eventness" and the intervention of human history. In the work of his immediate forbears, the island functions as a space of escape, free from the conventions of domestic-time, where British boys can function as adults and establish a microcosmic dominion. *The Coral Island* (1857) and *Masterman Ready* (1841) use the island as a monologic environment which reinforces the book's didactic purpose; the author's voice is the one to which all characters submit and conform. The notion of the island as an uncomplicated space of enchantment, wish-fulfilment and escape influences fiction as late as

[1] Stevenson, *ISS*, 25-6.
[2] Stevenson, *MP*, 279.
[3] Graham Tulloch, "Stevenson and Islands: Scotland and the South Pacific," in William B. Jones (ed.), *Robert Louis Stevenson Reconsidered: New Critical Perspectives* (Jefferson: Macfarland, 2003), 74.

Peter and Wendy (1911). The island generates a particular secondary speech genre which "must be fully mastered in order to be manipulated."[4] This existing formula is what Tulloch identifies Stevenson to be writing against, and hence mastering, in *Treasure Island*.

Like the ship chronotope, the island is not restricted to being representative of one chronotopic type. In *Treasure Island* it functions as a minor chronotope which relates dialogically to the time-space of both the ship and the mainland. This interaction is useful in the consideration of the relationship between the text, the reader and the author in the production of meaning. As a work of children's literature, this conversation introduced his juvenile readers to the principle of reading critically, a crucial skill to acquire in the burgeoning marketplace of print culture. The first section of this chapter will discuss how Stevenson's characters in *Treasure Island* repeatedly transcend genre-expectations and interact creatively in the world as they explore. Islands are not "settings" but chronotopes, brought to life in dialogic opposition to the explorer, who must be prepared to change his opinions and ideas – originally generated from textual representations or fantasies of the island – in response to the dynamic environment he encounters. The second part of the chapter assesses Stevenson's use of the island as a motivic chronotope in David Balfour's adventures. Earraid and Bass Rock provide crucial structural parallels in *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* which enable David to recognise the unrepeatability of his adventures. He reassesses his motivations for action from the isolated perspective of the island, removed from the cultural pressures that impinge on his sense of self on the mainland.

The discussion moves on to consider the difference when Stevenson writes with the island as his major chronotope. Here, he is most interested in the island's ability to bring diverse cultural perspectives together. "The Merry Men" illustrates this potential in a Scottish context, examining the hybridity of the Scottish national identity through the voices of the parochial islanders observed from the position of the quasi-outsider, Charles, who is a lowlander. The Pacific island chronotope of Stevenson's later fiction functions in a similar way but on an international scale. Islands provide a nexus for the different speech genres brought into dialogue through the island chronotope, becoming the complex, liminal meeting houses for various cultures. Ignoring the opportunity to communicate with the islanders is depicted as the most serious of all ethical crimes. The arrival of the ship perpetrates a specific threat as a cultural carrier that does not necessarily seek to engage dialogically with the islanders, but can intend to consume and overwrite their beliefs. By imagining the island as the major chronotope, Stevenson asserts the value of an often marginalized culture, both in its own right, as a vibrant and complex community, and as a space in time for the outsider

[4] Bakhtin, *SG*, 80.

to enter into dialogue with any number of others, and thus enrich his understanding of himself and his position in the world.

Spoiling all the fun: Island Nightmares

Placing Stevenson's first novel in the context of its material chronotope provides a useful perspective from which to evaluate its internal dialogics as a polychronotopic narrative. Stevenson wrote *Treasure Island* at a time when the publishing industry was intentionally targeting a recently established demographic of readers: the literate youth, product of the chain of education reforms triggered by the 1870 Education Act, whose newly acquired skills were bolstered by legally guarded leisure time.[5] Banned from the factory floor outside school hours, they provided a commercial (and pedagogical) opportunity that generated a variety of journals and magazines written specifically for the juvenile market. [6] There was, however, passionate debate about the nature of these young readers, who typified the most vulnerable of the ""raw, unkindled masses," [who it was widely feared] would … misinterpret even the safest books and put them to culture-subverting uses."[7] Consequently, the type of material to which young minds ought to be exposed was scrutinised by writers, publishers, politicians and middle-class parents alike. Brantlinger's influential study, *The Reading Lesson*, outlines "the many ways in which, from the 1790s to the 1890s, novels and novel-reading were viewed, especially by novelists themselves, as both causes and symptoms of the rotting of minds and the decay of culture and society."[8] He describes a literary culture rife with controversy regarding the production and consumption of fiction. During the nineteenth century, novels had a reputation for being sensational, poisonous and threatening to civil society. The deviant properties of the printed word became synonymous with the prolific and popular Penny Dreadfuls that published bloodcurdling thriller writing, laced with violence and intrigue.[9] An increasingly ephemeral attitude towards print, promoted by the disposable nature of the penny press, corroded the traditional perspective

[5] Boyd argues that this was even truer for boys, as girls often had chores to do around the home, which may explain the particular surge in adventure-romance fiction. Kelly Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper in Britain: A Cultural History 1855-1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).
[6] Marjory Lang puts the number at one hundred in her paper, "Childhood's Champions: Mid-Victorian Periodicals and the Critic's Authors," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 13 (1980): 17-31.
[7] Patrick Brantlinger, *The Reading Lesson: The Threat of Mass Literacy in Nineteenth Century British Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1998).
[8] *Ibid*., 24.
[9] The specific connection between romance and anxieties over popularity, sexual deviance or dalliance is explored in Frye, *Secular Scripture*, 24-6.

on its reliability, acknowledging language as a subversive force, subject to change and open to interpretation and dispute.

By the *fin-de-siècle*, paranoia had set in concerning "the problematic of literacy which involves a "Gothic of reading," … in which novels are figured as not merely "parasitic," but "vampiric,""[10] radicalising impressionable readers and potentially inciting revolution.[11] This fear was not entirely baseless; Jonathan Rose's seminal work, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, uncovers compelling evidence that, because of an exclusive exposure to religious texts, which were taught as fact, many naïve readers struggled to separate fictional worlds from reality.[12] This notion was reinforced by the associationist principles on which the Scottish education system was founded, where the blank tablet of the mind was ordered and inscribed according to the printed word.[13] Conservative opinion, both religious and secular, argued that didactic, wholesome stories were required to elevate rather than warp the morality of the next generation.[14] In *Treasure Island*, Stevenson responds to this cultural and political anxiety with an attempt to educate juvenile readers in the art of reading itself, complicating an over-simplified theory of language and preparing their minds for the work of critically analysing texts; enabling them to navigate the often dubious content of popular literary culture responsibly, by becoming collaborators in the production

[10] Brantlinger, *The Reading Lesson*, 192.

[11] Samuel Beeton's *Boy's Own Magazine* ran as an industry experiment into the market and, on discovering that a boys' readership existed and was ready to purchase papers, other editors and publishers were quick to begin producing content and competitive periodicals (see Boyd). Lang records that James Greenwood, in "Penny Packets of Poison," fulminated against the dreadfuls, to his mind, the certain cause of the moral ruin and criminality of juvenile delinquents. Later, Harmsworth continued the battle into the twentieth century, explicitly stating the aim of his new magazine: "'The Half Penny Marvel' Library is produced to offer to the public, at a small sum, good, healthy literature by well-known authors, and to counteract the harm done by the "penny dreadfuls." If we can rid the world of even one of these vile publications, our efforts have not been in vain," "The Editor Speaks," *Halfpenny Marvel* no. 1 (30 September 1893): 37.

[12] Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (Yale: YUP, 2002), 94.

[13] Alan Richardson, *Literature, Education and Romanticism* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), 13-15, 174-6.

[14] For further reading on Victorian social panic, see John Gillis, "The Evolution of Juvenile Delinquency in England, 1890-1914," *Past and Present* 67 (1975): 96-126, Jennifer Davis, "The London Garrotting Panic of 1862: A Moral Panic and the Question of the Criminal Class in mid-Victorian England," V. A. C. Gatrell, Bruce Lenman and Geoffry Parker (eds.), *Crime and the Law: the Social History of Crime in Western Europe* (London: Europa, 1980), 190-213, and Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late Victorian London* (London: Virago, 1992). Alexander Strahan's *Good Words for the Young*, Rev Clarke's *Chatterbox* and Mrs Gatty's *Aunt Judy* all aimed at providing wholesome, informative literature for the younger generation. Also the publishing houses "SPCK" and Religious Tract Society were established to combat the influence of the dreadfuls with such publications as *Child's Companion; or Sunday Scholar's Reward* or the more successful *Boys Own Paper* and the Anglican *Children's Friend*. This connection between morality and reading is also alluded to in associationist psychology, which remained the basis for university teaching in Scotland for the duration of the nineteenth century. See Walter J. Ong, "Psyche and the Geometers: Associationist Critical Theory," Walter J. Ong (ed.), *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology: Studies in the Interaction of Expression and Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1971), 213-36.

of meaning. Reading becomes a dialogised act of communication rather than a matter of passively imbibing the author's ideas.[15]

Disguised as a romance-adventure story, so as to charm the reading public, *Treasure Island* proceeds to give a reading lesson in no uncertain terms, through both the conventional social "role models," Squire, Doctor and Captain, and the subversive Pirate Kings, Silver and Bones. Rather than mollycoddling the adolescent mind, Stevenson sought to demonstrate to his young audience the means by which they could grasp interpretative power.[16] As McCulloch notes, "*Treasure Island* demands that its readers do not eagerly digest the tall tales told in childhood and beyond … thereby engag[ing] in its moment of socio-historical production by responding to and often subverting assumed discursive ideological truisms."[17] Presenting different attitudes to the use of language, in both spoken and written modes, encourages readers to ponder the wider implications of their personal responses to encountering different speech genres, as discussed in the previous chapter. Several critics have remarked on *Treasure Island*'s distinctiveness as a boys' adventure story. It evades categorisation as one of Joseph Bristow's formulaic edenic island adventures which were characteristic of the nineteenth century, and resists Jacqueline Rose's evaluation of late Victorian juvenile fiction which continues to follow a predominantly didactic tradition.[18]

Walter Allen describes *Treasure Island* as bringing to "a story for boys all the care, craftsmanship and conscientiousness, in a word the seriousness, that a novelist like Thackeray brought to the writing of novels like *Vanity Fair*."[19] This observation helps to distinguish the small but important difference between chronotope and genre, as the "craftsmanship and conscientiousness" involved in creating the time-space of *Treasure Island* is akin to the level of attention that discriminates nineteenth-century novels of "domestic-time" (like *Vanity Fair*) from the rest of literary history, and is an observation of

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[15] For more on the relationship between the author's vision and the reader's interpretation, see Tzvetan Todorov, "Reading as Construction," *Genres in Discourse*, 39-49. 42. For a theoretical discussion of how narrative operates as communication see Didier Coste, *Narrative as Communication* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1989).

[16] Holt demonstrates how the press helped to establish a profile of the adolescent and worked to sustain this limiting picture in terms of controlling how an adolescent would read and respond to a text, searching for one ultimate truth rather than evaluating and accepting a variety of readings. As her reading takes into account publications from 1901, it can be suggested that the more feisty readers she refers to are the very generation who grew up with *Treasure Island*. Jenny Holt, "The Textual Formations of Adolescence in Turn-of-the-Century Youth Periodicals: The *Boy's Own Paper* and Eton College Ephemeral Magazines," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 35 (2002): 63-88.

[17] McCulloch, 77.

[18] Joseph Bristow, *Empire Boys* (London: HarperCollins Academic, 1991), and Jacqueline Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan*, 2nd ed, (Philadelphia: UPP, 1993), 79-80.

[19] Walter Allen, *Six Great Novelists* (London: Hamilton, 1935), 146.

the text's connection to its historical moment.[20] Stevenson might be writing with a similar conscientiousness towards the arrangement of *time-space* in articulating meaning, but he is firmly committed to producing a romance. The precision of time grafted onto space made possible by accurate clocks, and pressed into cultural necessity by the advent of rail travel and the need for a standardised railway time, is indicative of Stevenson's historical context; the provision of frequent spontaneous incidents and the corresponding diversity of events drawn into dialogue mark his writing as operating in a modernized interpretation of adventure-time. [21] The spaces of the text belong to a romance tradition; the temporal character inscribed onto them is attended to with the seriousness of a realist writer, but still embedded with "suddenly" and a hint of the miraculous which betrays its literary tradition. Genre is self-referential, usually determined by form, style and the nature of event, as Northrop Frye puts it, "in the criticism of romance we are led very quickly from what the individual work says to what the entire convention it belongs to is saying through the work."[22] "Chronotope" has a broader application, always generating connections with the historical context of the author and the reader in addition to literary history. These two components will often mirror each other in literary works and at times appear indistinguishable, particularly when considering the major chronotope or its more localised forms.

Treasure Island's storyline follows its planned itinerary meticulously (as Mann and Hardesty have demonstrated) but the plot, focalised for the majority through Jim, is complicated by being an act of autobiography. [23] There is, however, a deducible moment where Jim's report becomes more directly concerned with his interior development. This shift is illustrative of the narrative's bias towards the study of the emerging self. Although Jim's story is still framed by the domestic-time of Britain, 175-, there is a lack of concrete detail in his immediate account. The island forms a distinct chronotope, but the change in Jim's imaginative perception occurs prior to his arrival on its shores, indicating that although his self-knowledge develops by engaging with the external world, he forms a motivic chronotope which operates distinctively from the structural hierarchy of the text. In other words, although he is *in* the chronotopes of the island and the ship, he resists being defined

[20] Many theorists do not accept this difference, and if there is a distinction as I contend, it is a very minimal one.
[21] Freeman makes particular reference to Lawrence's depiction of "the tyranny of railway time" as a modern imposition which was formalised by law in 1880, although had been practiced since 1840. See Michael Freeman, "The Railway under Modernism: Time and Space in D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*," Beaumont and Freeman, 85-100. 90. For a definition of "adventure-time" see Bakhtin, *DI*, 86-110.
[22] Frye, *Secular Scripture*, 60.
[23] Hardesty and Mann, "Historical Reality and Fictional Daydream," *The Journal of Narrative Technique*, 7 (1977): 94-103.

by them. His is the point of view in time-space through which the events of the narrative unfold; the different chronotopes he enters provoke distinctive dialogic responses in him as they challenge the nature of his perspective. The transformative break from the mundane occurs as Jim inherits a romantic quest from Billy Bones, signified by the map, which fuels his imaginative travels; the mere representation of the island chronotope exerting an influence over his mind. As narrator, his motivic chronotope is transcendent of the major chronotope of the event he describes, and yet there is obviously an inextricable connection between the two. Jim demonstrates a steady progression in his attitude towards reading the world around him which gives a chronological irreversibility to the plot; instead of vanishing into a limitless series of discrete events equivalent to Bakhtin's Greek-adventure-time, the island chronotope retains its specificity.[24]

It is not particularly innovative to claim *Treasure Island* as an anti-adventure romance. Gubar assesses the agency adults exert over Jim undermining him as the child-hero, Sandison explores the psychological implications of the loss of innocence on the island, and McCulloch describes the inherent duplicities multiplied by Jim's self-conscious account of his childhood adventures.[25] Gubar's reading of the novel casts Jim as "a helpless parrot, whose pained passivity incites child readers to act as artful dodgers – to see through the seductive propaganda of books that urge them to take part in the project of imperialist expansion."[26] Through the subtext of Jim's narrative design, which introduces several readerly types and competing theories of the utterance, Stevenson alerts his readers to the subversive nature of words and literary tradition. This project encourages readers to re-establish agency over utterance and to discern between fact and fiction across a variety of speech genres, especially regarding the stories adults tell them and those that they read for themselves.[27]

By writing Jim's personal testimony of *becoming* within a specific historical decade, Stevenson directly engages with the traditional formula of the secondary speech genre, boys' adventure-fiction. His focus on Jim's emergent personality in relation to differing chronotopic situations grants his protagonist at least a certain agency over the narrative. This

[24] For a discussion of irreversibility in Bakhtinian thought see Emerson and Morson, 47, 388.
[25] Marah Gubar, *Artful Dodgers: Reconceiving the Golden Age of Children's Literature* (Oxford: OUP, 2009), 71, Sandison, *Future Feeling*, 48-81, McCulloch, 69-89.
[26] Gubar, 71.
[27] Stevenson, *Fables*, 1-8. This collection includes a chapter, "The Persons of the Tale," which emphasises one of the crucial elements in which Stevenson re-invigorated the romance: eliminating the intrusive moralizing of his predecessors. Imagining a conversation between Long John Silver and Captain Smollett, Stevenson has his characters philosophize over the nature of good and evil in fiction, the relationship between language and truth, the role (or even existence) of the author, and the extent to which fiction is or can sustain reality, thus substantiating my assertion that the novel has a subtext designed to introduce different types of reading and approaches to language. These issues moralise the process of reading itself.

creative choice "originates what is commonly called human time, where the standing-for the past in history is united with the imaginative variations of fiction," making Jim's context the knowable past of the mid-eighteenth century, but recounted through the specificity of private recollection.[28] Restricting the narrative to human-time, or Bakhtin's "image of man," brings the action of adventure into the immediate experience of the reader; one encounters a living world undergirded by historicity which is interwoven with Jim's developmental experiences.[29] Joseph Bristow argues that in setting his tale in a distant past, Stevenson is "making it, by curious turns, all the more contemporary to nineteenth-century Britain."[30] This is not an ordinary escapist adventure-romance; positioning himself outside the material chronotope in which he writes, Stevenson is able to see the surplus which must be missed by the insider, and this reading deepens his understanding of his own historical moment. The reader enters Jim's world and becomes complicit in his dialogic creation of the image of man through his experiences, which provide a template for their own conscious development of a distinct self in relation to the text.

Initially, Jim is naïve in his approach to language as a means for communication. He reads the treasure map and, subsequently, the island, according to a framework of pre-determined genre-expectations and established patterns of speech genre.[31] This response is a critical reflection on the nature of traditional romances, which relied heavily on reader-recognition of historically accepted "types" for characterization. Part of Stevenson's originality is evident in his creation of a space which twists conventional formulas without losing the generic spirit of imagination and adventure.[32] The problems associated with this kind of superficial reading are undermined by Jim's misreadings that result from allowing his pre-conditioned expectations to cloud his interpretative faculties; McCulloch demonstrates this in the novel's disruption of the "fixed binarism of criminality and colonialism, identifying both as expressions of mercantile self-interest" and "the unreliability of discourses … he has been misled by 'true' accounts of piracy."[33] So when Jim is first introduced to Silver, he is unable to break out of the expectations set by the literary speech genre of piracy, and generate meaning for himself.

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[28] Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 3, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer, (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988), 192.
[29] Emerson and Morson translate *obraz cheleveka* as "image-of-person" or "image-of-man". Emerson and Morson, 370.
[30] Bristow, 112.
[31] Todorov, *Genres in Discourse*, 18.
[32] Beer argues this point, specifically in relation to Gothic Romance. Gillian Beer, *The Romance* (London: Methuan, 1970), 57.
[33] McCulloch, 78-9, 75.

> Now, to tell you the truth, from the very first mention of Long John in Squire Trelawney's letter I had taken a fear in my mind that he might prove to be the very one-legged sailor whom I had watched for so long at the old Benbow. But one look at the man before me was enough. I had seen the captain, and Black Dog, and the blind man, Pew, and I thought I knew what a buccaneer was like--a very different creature, according to me, from this clean and pleasant-tempered landlord. (*TI* 44)

Despite carrying the monumental disadvantage of a missing limb, Silver's artifice in constructing his appearance and careful discursive delivery entirely baffles the naïve reader, Jim. Abandoning the convictions of his initial observations, Jim ruefully recounts his own deception which is conceived entirely according to Silver's deviation from the genre-laws concerning pirates in his tone, manner and discourse. Knowing the discursive structures that construct both conventional and piratical society, Silver effortlessly undermines Jim's intuition by eschewing the acknowledged utterances associated with playing the pirate. A similar default is evident in Jim's initial description of Ben Gunn, "of all the beggar-men that I had seen or fancied, he was the chief for raggedness" (*TI* 92). His experience is read through the lens of imaginative episodes, presumably inspired by storytelling and the cultural discourse surrounding specific romance figures, blurring the distinction between fantasy and reality. When he is first tracked by Gunn, his reflex is to "recall what I had heard of cannibals" (*TI* 91), as this is the behaviour romance-adventure stories lead their readers to expect from islanders.

This formulaic reading practice relates back to Jim's first perusal of the map in Squire Trelawney's study, which prompts "the most charming anticipations of strange islands and adventures … I approached the island in my fancy from every possible direction; I explored every acre of its surface; I climbed a thousand times to that tall hill they call Spy-glass, and from the top enjoyed the most wonderful and changing prospects" (*TI* 46). His innocent, imaginative delight is derivative of the expectations of adventure engendered by "Kingston, or Ballantyne the brave, / Or Cooper of the wood and wave" (*TI* ix). Nathalie Jaëck has identified the map itself as prolific, "a multidimensional text-surface that will in turn generate two more texts, Jim's and the Doctor's manuscripts;" it is unstable in itself because the spaces, ambiguous marks and nomenclature ascribed by Flint remain equivocal.[34] The island in Jim's narrative appears just as he is undeceived of Long John's duplicitous nature, "buried in fog … sharp and conical" (*TI* 73), his gothic first impression exposes the error of

[34] Nathalie Jaëck, "The Greenhouse vs. the Glasshouse: Stevenson's Stories as Textual Matrices," in Ambrosini and Dury, *Writer of Boundaries*, 48-59. 56.

his simplistic romance reading; he is again betrayed by genre in his misconception of the island.

Silver provides an ambivalent reading of the situation, assuring Jim that "You'll bathe, and you'll climb trees, and you'll hunt goats, you will; and you'll get aloft on them hills like a goat yourself" (*TI* 76). Jim does all these things, but in a desperate bid to survive; he is soaked in the coracle while cutting loose the *Hispaniola*, "my heart fluttering like a bird" (*TI* 150), crouched behind the trees he watches Silver murder Tom for refusing to join the pirates, and Ben Gunn chases him through the woods in an uneasy echo of Robinson Crusoe stalking goats.[35] The reality of each experience induces terror in Jim rather than remaining an emblem of innocent child's play, linking his narrative to the disturbing yarns told by Billy Bones, that "frightened [people] at the time, but on looking back they rather liked it" (*TI* 14). Although the island resists adhering to the original fantasies Jim imagined from the map's suggestive outlines, he vicariously mirrors Bones' audience's response now he is experiencing a piratical tale; he might be terrified during the event, but he takes pleasure in periodically relaying his adventures to the adults around him. These accounts fortify the lost oral tales of pirate culture in a printed text, collapsing the qualitative distinction between spoken and written testimonies, as both ought to aim to produce the same effect in their audience.[36] These moments provide episodic points of reflection that chart Jim's character development as he consolidates his sense of self. By entering into dialogue with those around him, he generates a unique text from his experience, spatialising the process of becoming.

Jim's increasing flexibility as a reader and writer of narrative models an imaginative interaction with the text and its chronotope rather than curbing the reader's pleasure by destroying innocence with the hopelessness of realism, as Conrad's *Almayer's Folly* (1895) was to do a decade later.[37] Any simplistic understanding of the relationship between the utterance and its context is undermined by the various degrees of accuracy a reading of the map produces. Jim uses his knowledge gained from the map to navigate the *Hispaniola* to the North Inlet with Israel Hands and find his way back to the block-house: "I remembered that the most easterly of the rivers which drain into Captain Kidd's anchorage ran from the two-peaked hills upon my left; and I bent my course in that direction that I might pass the

[35] Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (Oxford: OUP, 2002).
[36] It's not the main point here, but this conscious link between oral tales and written narratives could generate anxiety over Jim's honesty as a narrator, following Stevenson's ambivalent attitude towards Scott's decision to publish the Boarder Ballads – he believed print culture contributed to the disappearance of much distinctly Scottish culture. See Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller," *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zorn, (London: Pimlico, 1999), 83-107.
[37] Linda Dryden, *Joseph Conrad and the Imperial Romance* (New York: Palgrave, 2000) see particularly chapter three.

stream while it was small" (*TI* 170). By the latter stages of his adventures, he has learned to apply his textual knowledge discerningly in order to negotiate the island. Just as it seems the lesson has been learned, Jim stumbles into the pirate camp, now housed in the stockade, and is forced to join their treasure hunt. Whereas the printed image of the island is fixed, the reality that it seeks to represent evolves in time, resulting in a persistent distinction between sign and signified which must be taken into account by the interpreter.

Likewise, when they arrive at the island in the first instance, Silver's previous experience supplements the information held by the map: "There's a strong current that runs along the south, and then away nor'ard up the west coast" (*TI* 71); without his recollections to add practical advice, the map's markings would prove insufficient for the ship's crew to land safely. The representative power of the written word is shadowed by an inherent lack, even if time does not evince a discernible change on that which it seeks to replicate. On the treasure hunt, Jim realises the inadequacies of Flint's directions because of the reader's inability to inhabit the cartographer's precise perspective, both in time-space and in terms of perception: "A tall tree was the principle mark. … The top of the plateau was dotted thickly with pine trees of varying height. Every here and there, one of a different species rose … clear above its neighbours … every man on board the boats had picked a favourite of his own." (*TI* 201) It is only with the aid of a strategically positioned skeleton that the pirates are able to distinguish Flint's "tall tree" from the others that fulfil the description from where they are standing. The map has one final lesson to teach Jim about the chronotopic variables of reading which not only impresses upon him the need for interpretative caution, but effectively delivers him from Silver's dispassionate avariciousness: "the *cache* had been found and rifled; the seven hundred thousand pounds were gone" (*TI* 211). Ancient documents describe the world as it once was, and just as utterances are unfixable, island-romance-time is far from static, existing beyond Jim's experience of it. Islands are notoriously unstable, "[t]he coral reef, with its wide, often shallow, warm, calm interior, can be seen as a physical expression of the blurred margins of the sea and land in the Oceanic world. The boundaries of the islands are porous and shifting, advancing and retreating each day with the tide. Sea and land become interchangeable."[38] Every demarcation of surface change weakens the signifying power of the map, as befits a fixed iteration of a dynamic chronotope. Jim's disrupted desires and subverted expectations force him to reassess his evaluation of the island. Imagination can be an asset to a reader, but only when deployed in a sensitive response to the text.

[38] Edmund, 6.

This insight into the influence a chronotope exerts over speech genre illuminates another notable parallel between different characters' approaches to interpretation. It is not only the characters representing the establishment who discuss and champion methods of reading and approaching language. The pirates are in the middle of a leadership coup which is entirely dependent on interpreting documents. Pirate Law includes a specific method for bringing grievances to the attention of the leader: the black spot. At any time, the crew are permitted to administer a spot to their chief and demand action be taken according to its content, which can range from deposing to assassinating a Captain. In the domestic-time of the Admiral Benbow, out-going Pirate King, Billy Bones, is presented with the Black Spot. His method of interpretation is old fashioned, limited and weak; he unquestioningly reads the text as fact, allowing it to dictate his response, and he ends up dead.[39] Silver is given a similar document to interpret in the island-romance-time of Treasure Island, and rather than submit unhesitatingly to the word in his hand, he resists and argues with the authors, testing their purpose in writing the text, and eventually achieving an annulment. Each pirate's chronotope is suggestive of his theoretical approach to reading. Billy Bones inhabits the domestic-time associated with the realistic portrayal of the Admiral Benbow on the Devonshire coast in the mid-eighteenth century. His response to receiving the spot provides a critique of the reader who approaches the text as mimetic, surrendering their imaginative response to words on the page. By domesticating the most romantic of memos through the prosaic logic of cause and effect, even providing a legitimate medical explanation for Bones's death, Stevenson parodies the genre-expectations of the realist novel reader in the captain's approach to the text. Beyond the influence of domestic-time, on the island, Silver brings a creative energy to the process of generating meaning from the spot, implying that the reader of romance is required to enter into the world with a spirit of imagination and thus reading as an activity adopts a new focus. Treating the text as a suggestive element in a wider act of communication encourages the reader to move further from the obvious interpretation of the words in front of them.

Understanding the complex process of interpretation allows Silver to manipulate speech genre in accordance with his audience. His superior acting allows him to influence others, but at the cost of failing to achieve meaningful self-knowledge which, for Stevenson, is crucial to behaving ethically.[40] Both Jim's animalistic descriptions of his movements as monkey-like and serpentine, and the primeval hunting methods he echoes in bringing Tom

[39] Parkes points out that Bones' administrative skills and neat ledger books distinguish him from his care-free companions, helping to raise him to head office, after the pattern of the emerging middle-class civil servants of the nineteenth-century. Christopher Parkes, "*Treasure Island* and the Romance of the Civil Service," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 31 (2006): 332-45. 338.
[40] Stevenson, "Lay Morals," *ES*, 5.

to the ground with his crutch before moving in for the kill, provoke associations with degeneration theory and primitive determinism. These schools of thought understood behaviour as purely derivative of a biological survival instinct, and therefore entirely devoid of any ethical process.[41] His amorality is further evinced in the speed with which he changes allegiance, vowing to protect Jim, shooting him "murderous glances" (*TI* 210) as they near the treasure, "find[ing] his temper, and chang[ing] his plan" (*TI* 212) within moments of realising the gold has gone. He is consistent in his theory of language as a subversive reader and writer of texts, but this literary stance resists the desire to communicate authentically. Ultimately, Silver's attitude towards language isolates him from the wider community, preventing him from entering into meaningful dialogue with any manifestation of the other; a situation which prevents him from developing with the full dynamism of becoming.[42] Silver's method of reading undermines text as authoritative and enduring even as he constructs his personal power on the widely held assumption of bookish dependability.

At the centre of this contestation over the nature of utterance and interpretation, Stevenson introduces a provocative Biblical text. Written on the reverse of the crudely fashioned Spot, the verse – "without are dogs and murderers" (*TI* 188) – is not only pertinent to the situation, but also survives the pirate's defacement, perhaps suggesting that some truths might both be communicated successfully by language and accumulate a deeper meaning through history. Jim takes their Spot as a souvenir, but by the close of his memoirs the scrap barely retains a thumb-nail impression, let alone a legible word. This artefact's quasi-survival serves to undermine the more complicated epistemology Silver embodies regarding the nature of truth and meaning. Rather than superseding the Biblical text, the pirates' word "depposed" gives the verse a new context, indicating that it should be read *into*, not as a replacement for, the original printed verse. As it is written in ash, the pirates' inscription is fated to transience, but Jim's retelling preserves the layered meaning of the faded parchment in his more enduring narrative.

Treasure Island is imagined according to a complex series of temporal and spatial concepts which pertain to the question of agency over events that occur in the world. Jim and all the characters speak in a speech genre coloured by a Christian understanding of predestination, redemption and eternity. Yet this view is held in tension with a more capricious notion of fate and superstition, the active role played by various characters in fashioning events, and

[41] For a deeper analysis of the primitive in *Treasure Island* and Stevenson's wider writing, see Reid, 15-30, 35-37; for a general discussion of degeneration theory at the *fin-de-siècle*, see Stephen Arata, *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin-de-Siècle* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), 11-32.

[42] In Bakhtinian terms, this is the ultimate mark of irresponsibility and antisocial existence. He has monologized his existence by pre-determining his voice according to the requirements of personal gain.

Jim's narratorial authority over how things are remembered – albeit under the editorial eye of Captain, Squire and Doctor. The Bible as a document is read in different ways by various readers. Jim trusts its teachings unequivocally, boldly stating "you can kill the body, Mr Hands, but not the spirit; you must know that already" (*TI* 158), aghast that others might not treat scripture with similar reverence. In the same scene, Israel Hands attempts to dupe Jim using his naivety as leverage: "the coxswain's hesitation seemed unnatural; and as for the notion of his preferring wine to brandy, I entirely disbelieved it. The whole story was a pretext. He wanted me to leave the deck – so much was plain; but with what purpose I could in no way imagine." (*TI* 159) Hands imposes too far on Jim's credulity. Although his innocent mind keeps him ignorant of his enemy's purpose, Jim discerns the insincere inflection in the utterance and knows enough of Hands to understand the implication of *those* words, uttered in *that* tone and issuing from *his* mouth. Juxtaposing Jim's religious faith with his sophisticated response to Hands' trickery prevents any simplistic reduction of the relationship between belief and atheism to a binary of childish gullibility and experienced scepticism.

Silver manipulates piratical superstitions surrounding Christianity, objecting to the Black Spot "look here, now: this ain't lucky! You've gone and cut this out a Bible. What fool's cut a Bible?" he explains "A Bible with a bit cut out! … It don't bind any more'n a ballad-book" (*TI* 188). Rather than a text to be read, it is seen as a talisman symbolising and embodying the ancient truth synonymous with the gospel word. Once it has been defaced, its mythical power is drained and it is reduced to the same humdrum existence as any other printed object. Dick's joyful response, "Don't it? … Well I reckon that's worth having too!" indicates the extent to which this superstitious belief pervades society; yet his glee at the prospect of possessing a counterfeit betrays a personal investment in the beliefs he seeks to exploit. Redruth, faithful man-servant to Trelawney, confirms this vague trust in a higher authority on his deathbed. His dying wish, Livesey records, is that "somebody might read a prayer. "It's the custom"" (*TI* 109). Religion and a token belief in the assumption of scripture's absolute authority are traditional: society locates any power implied by the Bible in convention. All the adult characters collude in this practice, and it is the inadvisability of allowing a text such uncritical supremacy that appears most objectionable. Beyond scripture, others who attribute too much authority to documents meet unsavoury ends. Bones is killed by the shock of receiving the Spot; his faith in its power deems it true. His reign as Pirate King is verified by a false document because it is believed to be accurate. Alternatively, adopting a hermeneutics of suspicion goes rewarded. Silver takes a legally binding document and undermines its veracity, fabricating a new state of affairs by generating a discourse that describes recent events according to a different perspective.

Silver is not, however, depicted as a paradigm of responsible reading; he takes his interpretative freedom too far, at the cost of conversing effectively. His liberal attitude to communicating disregards the chronotope's role in shaping utterance, which should be taken into account if documents are to be read accurately. He is not immune to his own trick, falling prey to the assumption that the treasure map has remained a true representation of the island despite the lapse of time since Flint authored it. Presenting Silver, ruthless murderer and avaricious treasure-hunter, as a subversive manipulator of language calls the ethical responsibility of such an extreme reading practice into question, but refuses to deny its effectiveness. Instead, the morally credible Captain Smollett's chronotopically sensitive approach to speech and text as communicative tools, rather than ends in themselves, upholds the value of attempting to achieve perspicuity by engaging responsibly with any utterance. The island affords Jim the opportunity to make his own critical judgements. He learns it is wise to consider others' use of language according to their character, situation and always with regard to the specific *dialogic* context for which the utterance is formed. As a talker, Jim realises that it is most honourable to speak with integrity; to resist this practice is to undermine the fragile attempt to communicate from one's localised position, sabotaging the process of authoring self.

Jim comes back from Treasure Island changed by the experience, and unable to re-enter the historical context to which he once belonged. He has recovered a new understanding from encountering the island chronotope which cannot be shaken off, for it reveals his present circumstances in a different light. This knowledge is not the charming memory of an exotic land and a heroic tale where he first proved his extraordinary valour and capability, but the nightmarish squawk of a materialistic parrot and the sinister enduring boom of surf crashing to shore that remind him of the brutality in human nature and the communicative failure uncovered by the island. In its role as the motivic chronotope, the *Hispaniola* maintains the link between the "realist" historical backdrop to Jim's *Bildungsroman* adventure and the minor chronotope of Treasure Island. Rather than providing the major chronotope from which there is a brief escape into the time-space of Romance, synonymous with the island, England 175- proves subordinate to Jim's experiences on Treasure Island. It is according to the discoveries Jim makes through his adventure in the minor island chronotope that he interacts with the world on his return.[43] He, therefore, writes his account through the major chronotope of romance, as the influence of his piratical adventure is never erased.

[43] Frye discusses this as being a distinctive feature of romance literature, that "The improbable, desiring, erotic, and violent world of romance reminds us that we are not awake when we have abolished the dream world: we are awake only when we have absorbed it again." Frye, *Secular Scripture*, 61.

Islands as Motivic Chronotopes

Stevenson's islands are consistently represented as existing beyond objective knowledge by inspiring contradictory reports, acting as a figure for the text in the process of reading.[44] As space, they are often unpredictable and shifting, resistant to absolute knowledge or understanding. David's island is only an island until low tide, New Island is avoided by traders and omitted from maps, Treasure Island exists but resists human knowledge, the Isle of Voices changes depending on how you arrive on its shores.[45] Human experience adjusts within the island's sphere of influence in an acknowledgement of the close relationship that exists between self and chronotope in Stevenson's fiction. When islands behave as motivic chronotopes, sequestered from the major chronotope of the text, they serve to illuminate the tensions which exist between the protagonist's identity and their cultural context. This helps to deepen the characters' understanding of their development as readers of their situation in time and space, which is tantamount to documenting their changing personalities. Stevenson's motivic island chronotopes often act as a hiatus in the narrative, whereas the island as a minor chronotope is essential to the progression of the plot. Comparing David's brief sojourns on Earraid and Bass Rock, both islands off the coast of Scotland, illustrates this point: how he reads the motivic island chronotope is indicative of his progression as a character.

When he finally leaves Bass Rock, David watches it recede from view and reflects on the future that awaits the Highlanders he and Andie have left marooned. His comment provides a summary of the features common to both his experiences of islands.

> To what terrors they endured upon the rock, where they were now deserted without the countenance of any civilized person or so much as the protection of a Bible, no limit can be set; nor had they any brandy left to be their consolation, for even in the haste and secrecy of our departure Andie had managed to remove it.[46]

Suffering plays a large part in David's island confinements. During his time on Bass Rock, he considers "I passed in such misery of mind as I can scarce recall to have endured, save

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[44] Even as recently as January 2013 there have been discoveries of that islands have been misrepresented on sea charts despite cartographic records stretching back across the centuries.

[45] See Rod Edmund and Vanessa Smith (eds.), *Islands in History and Representation* (London: Routledge, 2003) particularly "Introduction," 1-18, which provides an excellent summary of the ambivalence of islands, and Gillian Beer, "Island Bounds," 32-42, which discusses the permeability of island boundaries.

[46] Robert Louis Stevenson, *Catriona* (London: Cassell, 1893), 183.

perhaps upon Isle Earraid only" (*C* 179). On Earraid, his complaints focused on the physical discomfort of surviving such harsh, inhospitable conditions. Consuming the fish of the island, which can be read as a symbolic attempt to dissolve the boundaries between self and environment, only succeeds in making David violently ill, without allowing him to "distinguish what particular fish it was that hurt me" (*K* 92). The unpredictable consequences of his actions refuse to yield to a discernible pattern which results in his loss of agency. This inevitably leads David to frustrated self-pity, but is most remarkable in demonstrating the distinct lack of fusion between self and landscape; Earraid resists David's desire to write himself into its topography; the opposite of Goethe's 'unfolding' characters from their lands.[47]

Conversely, on Bass Rock, David suffers mental anguish caused by the complex demands of conscience and the anxiety of anticipating how one's actions will influence the suffering of others. Whereas on Earraid David's sole responsibility had been to himself, he is now focused on the ethical problem of his participation in national events. The two island experiences demonstrate the creation and progression of a dialogic relationship between the hero's sense of self, his actions and his social responsibility. On Earraid, David is in the early stages of establishing these channels of communication. This manifests itself in his basic attempts to order and tame the environment, and connect with the slender evidence of human activity that presents itself; initially, in the smoke rising from chimneys on the horizon, and then more concretely, in the highland fishermen. He is in search of another consciousness with which he can communicate, for he recognises that it is by the creative act of dialogic engagement that the self is constructed. Each dialogue reproduces the image of man in a perpetuation of becoming.

David remembers Earraid with such gloom because his suffering was compounded by his isolation from society. He repeatedly refers to Earraid as "a place so desert-like and lonesome" (*K* 90) that it leaves him with "a sense of horror … whenever I was quite alone with dead rocks, and fowls, and the rain, and the cold sea" (*K* 93). As Tulloch has noted, Stevenson's islands "are either linguistically silent when uninhabited or linguistically alien when inhabited."[48] The highlanders' alien status provides a metaphor for Bakhtin's theory of surplus; it is only from a position *outside* that it is possible to understand the self entirely, according to its context.[49] From the boat, and using their local knowledge, the fishermen see David standing on a tidal islet. From the islet, David assumes himself to be permanently stranded. The islet provides an externalised chronotopic expression of David's psychological

[47] Bakhtin, *SG*, 53.
[48] Tulloch, 74.
[49] See Bakhtin, *SG*, 80.

state.[50] David's isolation is illusory, derived from his reliance on secondary speech genres to articulate and understand experience. His distress is, in part, due to the anti-climax of arriving in a situation similar to those he has read about, only to find a crucial difference: characters "have either their pockets full of tools, or a chest of things would be thrown on the beach along with them, as if on purpose. My case was very different" (*K* 92). The formulaic reproduction of others' speech literally degenerates into a monologic existence. By defining himself against existing voices, David begins to engage in dialogue with the resistant Earraid, and finally his experiments in communicating with the highlanders allow him to leave the islet.

By the time he is taken to Bass Rock, David's perception of island chronotopes has become more sophisticated. On first approach, the unrepeatability of events is articulated by David himself, despite the superficial similarities of the case.[51] Finding himself at sea under duress once again, he explains, "If I were to be exposed a second time to that same former danger of the plantations, I judged it must turn ill with me; there was no second Alan, and no second shipwreck and spare yard to be expected now" (*C* 151). His first sight of the Bass echoes Gillian Beer's sense of the commercial potential implied by the island, "It is just the one crag of rock, as everybody knows, but great enough to carve a city from," but his imaginative grasp of this vast colonizing potential quickly diminishes when he realises he is to be held there, '"But none dwells there now," I cried; "the place is long a ruin (*C* 152)."'[52] Far from deserted, the island "was a place full of history, both human and divine," contrasting the eloquent ruins of ecclesiastical buildings with mementoes of individual soldiers who had shed "broken tobacco-pipes … [and] metal buttons" (*C* 156). He is wary of his distance from the mainland, but this knowledge elicits a variety of emotional and intellectual responses:

> It seemed to me a safe place, as though I was escaped there out of my troubles. No harm was to be offered me; a material impossibility, rock and the deep sea, prevented me from fresh attempts; I felt I had my life safe and my honour safe, and there were times when I allowed myself to gloat on them like stolen waters. (*C* 157)

As Roslyn Jolly elucidates, David's pressure to intervene in James Stewart's trial comes from a sense of ethical duty. His "internal debate about his motivation is a good example of such dialogism working within as well as between characters; the argument for justice is presented as only one of a number of contending voices within the mind of the first-person

[50] See Weaver-Hightower, 43-90.
[51] Bakhtin, *SG*, 25-54.
[52] Beer, "Island Bounds," 33.

narrator, who has possibly been seduced by the glamour of such 'a fine word'."[53] Crucially, it is from his context as a prisoner marooned on the island chronotope of Bass Rock that he wrestles with these contrary theoretical positions. From his vantage point *outside* the mainland chronotope, he is incapable of participating in the events unfolding in James Stewart's trial, which allows him to evaluate his involvement from a disinterested perspective. His isolation from the action results in an ethical decision based on reasoning through his conflicting loyalties as conceived in the eyes of others. Andie's criticism of the Highlanders' unselfconscious behaviour: "If God would give you the grace to see yoursel' the way others see ye" (*C* 178), provides a telling inversion of David's weakness. His propensity to accommodate others' perspectives often leads him to dalliance and indecision. For the process of self-creation to be effective, one must enter into dialogic engagement with society whilst maintaining a certain critical distance in order to prevent the self from being consumed by the cacophony of opinion. One must learn to discriminate between the voices. David's time on Bass Rock introduces distance between himself and his formative influences, allowing him to make the decision to continue to Inverary and attempt to intervene for the sake of justice on his own terms.

The final difference between these two island interludes is the supernatural associations of each environment. Earraid is described in terms of divine deliverance which brought him to shore after the shipwreck, but the substance of his suffering is generated from the material world, and his liberation is gained through local knowledge of the area. While David indulges in philosophizing, nothing in his engagement with the island suggests spiritual powers at work. The Bass by contrast is teeming with ghosts – both from material traces of previous inhabitants, and a palpable folkloric culture. Andie's "Tale of Tod Lapraik" relays his eyewitness testimony to a "bogle" dancing on the Bass, with:

> [T]he joy o' hell, I daursay: joy whatever. Mony a time I have askit mysel', why witches and warlocks should sell their sauls (whilk are their maist dear possessions) and be auld, duddy, wrunkl't wives or auld, feckless, doddered men; and then I mind upon Tod Lapraik, dancing a' they hours by his lane in the black glory of his heart. (*C* 173)

The tale shares similarities with highland lore, causing a fight over its definitive origins. The same highlander who is piqued by a dispute over the particulars of a folk story is reduced to "a progression of unease … his face blenching, his hands clutched, a man strung like a bow" (*C* 163) by stories "of a terrifying strain" (*C* 162). The atmosphere of the islet inclines inhabitants towards musing and restlessness alike, David remarks, "it's not experienced by

[53] Jolly, *Stevenson in the Pacific*, 122.

Highland men only, as I several times experimented on myself" (*C* 163). The island exerts a powerful hold over its inhabitants' imaginations, inculcating sensitivity to the past which is sublimated into present horror. David cannot describe the sensation in English, and relies on the Scottish phrase used repeatedly by Andie, "*it's an unco place, the Bass*" (*C* 163). In David's narrative it takes possession of every thought, "It was an unco place by night, unco by day; and these were unco sounds of the calling of the solans, and the plash of the sea and the rock echoes, that hung continually in our ears" (*C* 163). Whereas Earraid's barrenness forced David to scrutinize his creation of self through communicating with others, Bass Rock requires him to contextualize his present internal struggle according to a deeper, national past.

David's experience of the motivic island chronotope demonstrates a complete break from the central properties of abstraction which characterise the major chronotope of adventure-time, producing instead a historicised account of eighteenth-century Scotland. David's personality palpably "unfolds" from the mainland landscape around him over the course of his travels, but because his encounters with people and places never entirely fit his preconceptions, his development retains an important instantaneousness which is based on an underlying process of negotiation.[54] The islands provide spaces that resist human habitation, allowing David to process his recent experiences authentically, a step removed from the influence of societal expectations. Storytelling remains central to the activity of the island chronotope, providing a sense of purpose for the present and reanimating the past. Both instances give David a new perspective on the struggles of his country as well as allowing him to identify his personal motivations, apart from the influence of national identity. Rather than provide the traditional solace of escape from reality, these Scottish islands are havens for self-reflection and recalibration before returning to the heat of developing historical events. The tale of Bass Rock brought to life by Black Andie who "was gifted … so that the people seemed to speak and the things to be done before your face" (*C* 157), imitates Stevenson's achievement in producing his historical Scottish narrative through David's story.

Meeting of Minds: Emergent Islands

[54] The idea that David's preconceptions are challenged by his encounters on the road is not new, see Jenni Calder, "Figures in a Landscape: Scott, Stevenson and Routes to the Past," in Ambrosini and Dury, 121-32.

When Stevenson uses the island as a major chronotope, he continues to resist its traditional application as a space of escape or utopia, on the edge of history. Islands retain their historical situatedness and provide a nexus for different value systems to be brought into dialogue. They foster the process of becoming by providing a liminal space of encounter that sustains a diverse and transient collection of people, drawn together for a period and then dispersed. It is easy to perceive a commonality between the Scottish islands of Stevenson's early fiction and those of his Pacific writings, which were inspired by his travels in the South Seas during the 1890s. Although the islands which stimulated his fictional worlds are hemispheres apart, their chronotopic characteristics bear a notable resemblance. Each provides a context for communication that encourages a continual process of emergence, affords a greater depth of "temporal literacy" to be written onto the island spaces, and reflects the liminality of their physical situation. The fluidity of the island community ensures that a variety of cultural paradigms are observed on its shores at any particular moment. Writing from the perspective of an outsider, Stevenson examines the influence that the island exerts over the imagination of those who inhabit it, and the interaction which occurs between the representatives from different tribes and tongues who land on its beaches.

Stevenson experiments with the island chronotope in three principal ways which stretch across the geographical divide. He renders the traditional relationship between "the outsider" and the islander problematic; he is concerned with the influence the island exerts over the inhabitant; and he examines the distinction between different conceptions of deep time, including the Bakhtinian notion of *finalizability*.[55] Stevenson disrupts the island's traditional juxtaposition with the mainland chronotope through his portrayal of Charles Darnaway. In romance fiction, the mainland tends to be synonymous with historical reality and the everyday-time of contemporary experience, while the island takes on the characteristics of a utopian or adventure time-space, abstracted from the main flow of history, and is associated with wish-fulfilment, treasure quests, and uncivilised indigenes. Charles approaches Aros and opens his narrative with just this paradigm in mind. He establishes a degree of separation between his lineage and those of the "wild tribes" from the highlands who occupy the islet, declaring "I was far from being a native of these parts, springing as I did from an unmixed lowland stock," and making it clear his connection is by marriage.[56] He describes the islet according to its Gaelic nomenclature, which he regards with aesthetic appreciation, "holy and beautiful" (*MM* 7), and respect, "it is well named" (*MM* 4), while retaining a clear anxiety over its otherness. To land on Aros is to step back in time to a world where language

[55] See Emerson and Morson, 39-40, 419.
[56] Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Merry Men and Other Tales,* (London: Heinemann, 1924), 3.

is itself a relic of an older Scotland. The words closely resemble the character of the land, originating in close proximity to the natural processes around which the community has been structured through the generations. He uses such phrases as: "I have heard it said", "they have got the name, in these parts" (*MM* 6), "I have heard the natives call it" (*MM* 5) to qualify his translations and separate his voice as distinct from that of the indigenous population.

When he wrote "The Bottle Imp", Stevenson was consciously writing for a "Polynesian audience," and he uses his nuanced understanding of island cultures to construct the formal components of his tale.[57] The voice Stevenson constructs for the storyteller is native to Hawaii, evincing his natural agility to see the world from another's perspective:

> There was a man of the Island of Hawaii, whom I shall call Keawe; for the truth is, he still lives, and his name must be kept secret; but the place of his birth was not far from Honaunau, where the bones of Keawe the Great lie hidden in a cave. This man was poor, brave, and active; he could read and write like a schoolmaster; he was a first-rate mariner besides, sailed for some time in the island steamers, and steered a whaleboat on the Hamakua coast. (*SST* 73)

He describes places beyond the islands in terms that can be easily visualised from an islander's experience. San Francisco becomes "a fine town, with a fine harbour, and rich people uncountable" (*SST* 73). The narrator speaks in similes and metaphors gleaned from island life: "Keawe could see him as you see a fish in a pool upon the reef" (*SST* 73), "the streets … were clean as ships' decks" (*SST* 81), "sweat streamed on his face as thick as rain and as cold as the well water" (*SST* 100); and uses local terminology and nomenclature to add detail and specificity to his narrative. The storyteller's voice is styled as a native, who wryly observes the "Haoles" and their "customs" as anthropological curiosities who are astonished by the commonplaces of the tropics.[58] Although all is bright, vivid and natural, there is an undercurrent of danger that lingers in repeated references to the "tombs of the kings" (*SST* 71), warning against assessing the islands as a superficial paradise, bustling in a two-dimensional present. Yet despite adopting this Hawaiian perspective, Claire Harman calls the story "very northern, Scottish," and Stevenson confesses to having borrowed the tale from the English stage, although the true source is widely recognised as being the brothers Grimm, *Spiritus Familiaris*.[59] Its dialogism arises in the nature of the tale being told, rather than the narrator's voice employed to do the telling; the form belies the content,

[57] Robert Louis Stevenson, "The Bottle Imp," *SST*, 72.
[58] Haoles is Polynesian for "whites."
[59] Claire Harman, *Robert Louis Stevenson: A Biography* (London: Harper Perennial, 2005), 415.

unsettling Western anxieties over the importance of maintaining clear cultural divisions. A German tale sounds authentic when transcribed onto Hawaiian culture.[60]

Charles is similarly eager to establish his essential difference from the island of Aros and their folk tales, which he regards as a lesser mode of storytelling to his current autobiographical act.[61] He is resigned to a summer "so far from all society and comfort, between the codfish and the moorcocks" (*MM* 4) where nature provides the only source of interest. Accentuating this distance in the description of his dangerous journey, he reflects it "makes me particularly welcome the works now going forward to set lights upon the headlands [of these] inhospitable islands" (*MM* 7), aligning himself with the enlightened mainland culture which was bringing technology and progress to these isolated communities. The "old wives stories" (*MM* 7) which hold purchase over the islanders' collective imagination, despite the efforts of various Christian missionaries, are the narrative manifestation of their primitive traditions which the university-educated Charles treats as a quaint survival of old Scotland. His account begins to undermine the carefully constructed "otherness" with which he views local myth: "there was one story which I was inclined to hear with more credulity" (*MM* 7), relating to the *Espirito Santo*. According to local legend, the wreck lies off the coast at Sandag Bay, on his Uncle's land. His claim that the islanders "told [it] … with more detail and gravity … [and] the name … of the ship was still remembered, and sounded, in my ears, Spanishly" (*MM* 8) seems rather weak, considering his dismissal of other folklore, despite its Gaelic resonance.

As it transpires, the manner in which the islanders communicate this legend seems barely different to the way they tell their other tales. Rather, Charles has already collected documentary evidence of his own, which suggests their story is credible. With the sudden promise of discovering a hoard of Spanish treasure, Charles commits himself to "taking *our* island tradition together with this note of old King Jamie's perquisites after wealth" (*MM* 8), happy to exploit his island ties and their local knowledge where it suits him. Any self-consciously constructed distinction between Charles and the islanders wanes throughout the narrative, beginning as he crosses to the islet. Rorie's anxiety about "a great feesh" (*MM* 10) begins to infect him with "a measure of uneasiness" (*MM* 10) that marks the beginning of his revised attitude towards the islanders and their culture. He arrives for the summer to plunder Aros of its gold and seek his cousin's hand in marriage: despite establishing his scepticism towards island myth and legend, he is already embroiled in one and seeking to

[60] This idea of universalism is also found in Andrew Lang, *Custom and Myth* (Oosterhout: Anthropological Publications, 1970) and Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 83-107, which provides a cross-cultural discussion of the origins of storytelling.

[61] For the link between "myth" and "romance", and in turn, their distinctions from "folklore" see Frye, *Secular Scripture*, 6-9.

create another. During his time on Aros, he encounters a new way of seeing the world and his perspective alters to accommodate the change.

Such a change of perspective is forced on Keola in "The Isle of Voices" over the course of his two visits to the eponymous island. When he first arrives as a tourist in the company of his father-in-law, he finds the isle "tall and fresh and beautiful" (*SST* 105) in contrast to the familiar landscape of Molokai. Despite revelling in the sensory magic of the unfamiliar, Keola experiences a "pang … like death" (*SST* 105) which is both a prolepsis of his next visit, and immediately related to his realisation that their presence on the beach is an invasion of an existing tribe's territory. Kalamake's attitude that "all this is like a dream and shadows. All will disappear and be forgotten" (*SST* 107), bears an uncomfortable relation to philosophies of empire, and any stranger profiting from the resources of a foreign land.[62] When Keola returns as a permanent inhabitant, this utterance takes on an uncomfortable new meaning. The isle literally consumes him, foreshadowing the cannibalistic habits of the nomadic tribe whom it sustains:

> A little way before him the trees stopped; there was a break in the line of the land like the mouth of a harbour; and the tide, which was then flowing, took him up and carried him through. One minute he was without, and the next within: had floated there in a wide shallow water, bright with ten thousand stars, and all about him was the ring of the land, with its string of palm trees. And he was amazed, because this was the kind of island he had never heard of. (*SST* 114)

He has passed into "dream and shadows" as far as the outside world is concerned. The alien environment does not retain the glamour of novelty for long; his recognition of the beach "went sore against his inclination" (*SST* 114). As an islander, he will be unable to interact with the visiting wizards who plunder the beaches; their concern is for profit rather than exchange. He is marooned in silence; no longer experiencing time according to mathematical units as Molokai's Westernised culture does, but relationally, reinstating a more ancient tradition. The arrival of the native tribe signals a change in "period" of Keola's island confinement. The tribe bring a "disturbance of silence by the word [which] is personalistic [*sic*] and intelligible: it is an entirely different world."[63] The creation of this new epoch of island-time allows him to listen eagerly to their stories about the island, but he ultimately withdraws to think "with himself" (*SST* 116). He cannot communicate meaningfully with the tribe; as an outsider he is "never so sure of his new friends" (*SST*

[62] For a discussion of the imperial themes explored in "Isle of Voices," see Buckton, 216-25, and Edmund, 186-92.
[63] Bakhtin, *SG*, 133.

115), even before he knows them to be man-eaters. He imparts his ideas about conquering the "invisible devils" (*SST* 116) as a decree rather than a discussion, maintaining an authoritative distance. He might have unwittingly adopted their island chronotope, but he cannot fully attain a tribal perspective.

The notion that island chronotopes exist beyond the influence of national history, nurtured by Kalamake's dismissive attitude towards the Isle of Voices, is rendered problematic by Charles's experience of returning to Aros. He records "outside and inside there were many changes" (*MM* 11) – a point he chooses to illustrate by noting that the kitchen is littered with baubles from a recent wreck, a tradition which Mary and Charles both find repellent. The objects that adorn the farmhouse are incongruous with their surroundings; they are not the historicized relics of gothic-castle-time, nor do they deepen the bond between the family and the land of the estate.[64] Their presence causes Mary visible distress, giving her a sense of displacement and causing her to lament that it has "broken my heart to have these braws" which symbolise "sin upon this house and trouble" (*MM* 37). These "braws" exert a palpable energy over the house and its inhabitants. Coming from foreign ships, wrecked on the Merry Men, they are invested with connotations of other cultures, other tribes, other histories almost silenced through their dislocation. Whereas in the South Sea islands relics are a source of pride for locals – Keawe specifically requests Bright House be furnished with 'knick-knacks … from all corners of the world" (*SST* 80) – on Aros these curiosities are eloquent of maritime disaster and the mythic power of the ocean. Before he knows about his uncle's act of murder, Charles finds it written in his countenance: "the whites of his eyes were yellow, like old stained ivory, or the bones of the dead" (*MM* 12). Charles's description echoes the relics of the wreck in a ghoulish turn of phrase that resonates with Rorie and Gordon's utterances of the sea as "a muckle yett to hell" (*MM* 15), teeming with fish, bogles, draygons and human corpses taken in judgement. Charles's observations of the changes on Aros, and in his Uncle's health, are contingent with the past as it is written into space, and involved in the process of creating the present, which in turn implies some participation in the future.

Similarly, the Hawaiian Islands are not suspended in a temporal vacuum. "The Bottle Imp"'s opening reference to "Honaunau, where the bones of Keawe the Great lie hidden in a cave" (*SST* 72) establishes the complex history from which the island's contemporaneous diversity has emerged. As Jolly states in her notes on the text, this burial site is not Keawe's original resting place. His bones were moved to a secret cave by locals when the Western authorities destroyed the sacred "Hale-o-Keawe" "as part of a push to modernize and Christianize the

[64] Bakhtin, *DI*, 246.

country."[65] Keawe's name evokes the quasi-legendary Hawaiian ruler and the rituals that shaped the indigenous population before the West began to build their empires. When Keawe imports the Bottle Imp from San Francisco, he builds his house and meets his wife in the shadow of the lava caves, which still exercise a morbid dread over locals. The bottle is a symbol of the mythologized Christianity which the natives have grafted on to their existing superstitions and traditions. As Lopaka goes out into the night with his purchase, Keawe "watched the lantern go … along the cliff of caves where the old dead are buried; and all the time he … prayed for his friend, and gave glory to God that he himself was escaped out of that trouble" (*SST* 82). Bakhtin argues that,

> A man must educate or re-educate himself for life in a world that is, from his point of view, enormous and foreign; he must make it his own, domesticate it. In Hegel's definition, the novel must educate man for life in bourgeois society. This educative process is connected with a severing of all previous ties with the idyllic, that is, it has to do with man's *expatriation*. Here the process of a man's re-education is interwoven with the process of society's breakdown and reconstruction, that is, with historic process.[66]

In just this spirit, the Islands do not exchange one system of belief for another, but absorb different customs that are brought to their shores, including them alongside their national legends. Their spaces become stratified with meaning which has accumulated over centuries as different systems of thought are inscribed onto the land; the old dead are of another epoch, before other ideas of construing time and space arrived. It is this flexibility that characterises Stevenson's vision of the island in contradistinction to the "idyllic" patterns attributed to it in the past.

The Bottle's promise of impending spiritual disaster behaves in a similar way to the "braws" Gordon has collected from ships wrecked off the coast of Aros. Outside the house when he is removed from the immediate vicinity of these objects, Gordon appears to occupy a different frame of mind, becoming more "rational and tranquil" (*MM* 18) than before. Charles's narrative reflects this. Hallmarks of the idyllic chronotope are traceable in the rest of the story, but remain subordinate to the island and the master chronotope of the *fin-de-siècle*. Bakhtin describes the trends which connect the various stages of the idyllic chronotope's development as:

> [T]he special relationship that time has to space in the idyll: an organic fastening-down, a grafting of life and its events to a place, to a familiar

[65] Jolly, "Notes," *SST*, 270-1.
[66] Bakhtin, *DI*, 234.

> territory with all its nooks and crannies, its familiar mountains, valleys, fields, rivers and forests, and one's own home. Idyllic life and its events are inseparable from this concrete, spatial corner of the world where the fathers and grandfathers lived and where one's children and their children will live. This spatial world is limited and sufficient unto itself, not linked in any intrinsic way with other places, with the rest of the world. But in this little spatially limited world a sequence of generations is localized that is potentially without limit.[67]

On this "hot and quiet" afternoon, the two generations of Darnaway are suggestively fused together as they "repose in nature" (*MM* 18), on land owned by their ancestors. Charles falls "in[to] a sort of trance" (*MM* 18) in synchrony with his uncle's mood. Their meditations on lost ships and treasure coincide, only distinguishable by the centuries that separate the incidents, which emphasises the potential limitlessness of their occupancy. Charles refers to his own boyhood on the island, closely affiliating the scene with the localized generations of the Bakhtinian idyll, but beyond this moment the comparison proves unsustainable.

The island chronotope's manifestation of pastoral-time is undermined by the influence of the *fin-de-siècle*'s master chronotope, evident in the decline of the family line, Charles's desire to leave Aros with Mary and settle elsewhere, and the unhealthy effects of being cut off from "other places" that continue to develop in Gordon's increasing instability, brought on by the wild dancing of the Merry Men. When Charles and Gordon indulge in the folkloric tradition of reading the "strange, indecipherable marks – sea-runes, as we may name them" (*MM* 18) which appear around the roost during periods of calm, the dissonance of their perspectives is accentuated.[68] The sea-runes' connotations of magic and prophecy are, to a varying extent, sustained by both men's response. Charles sees signs of his marriage written in nature, reading *C* and *M* as lovers' initials full of future promise, whereas Gordon's degenerative ruminations on the past are exposed in his interpretation of the letters as representative of *Christ-Anna* and Murder. As well as indicating the disparity between their temporal orientations, their responses alert Charles to another hermeneutic danger: "we were each following our own train of thought to the exclusion of the other's" (*MM* 19). The problem with slipping into the closed-mindedness of monologic thought is twofold. Cut off from interacting with others, the self becomes fixed and development is arrested.[69] Bakhtin finds this kind of protagonist in the "trial" literature of early biography and adventure-romance,

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[67] Bakhtin, *DI*, 225.
[68] Bakhtin notes the idyllic chronotope's potential for "restoring the ancient complex and for restoring folkloric time." Bakhtin, *DI*, 224.
[69] Madness is described by Holquist as a refusal to respond to societal norms of temporality which introduces a hiatus exists between individual and communal time. See Holquist, 137-140.

but by the nineteenth century, an awareness of psychological processes made this type of characterization rare.[70] A more wide-spread cause of monologism in the novel was to be seen in the known future, shaped by a deterministic understanding of the past. When Charles's reflections lead him to uncover the origins of his uncle's guilt, the word "murder," borrowed from Gordon's unuttered thoughts, clashes against the rest of his account, which is joyful in the heart-felt confession of his love for Mary. Despite his obsessive meditations on his guilt, Gordon has enough awareness of the present to warn Charles against revealing his secret to Mary, but otherwise he remains locked in the past, enslaved to the chaotic rhythms of the sea.

This discrepancy between attitudes towards the future is central to Bakhtin's definition of the authentic dialogic imagination. If a novel or short story is written according to a predetermined future, then it can only ever be monologic because the world in which the recorded events occur is only capable of delivering one, fixed outcome. This eradicates the possibility of creativity and reduces the extent to which character can evolve. If an event is already known to take place, then the hero's decision to act is emptied of both efficacy and ethical responsibility. Dialogism, as Morson and Emerson explain, implies *unfinalizability* which is typified in temporal terms by Goethe, whose "unfinalizability was prosaic; bounded by constraints as well as endowed with potentials, people change through the slow process of accumulated small decisions."[71] The world around Goethe was only one of several possible states that could have emerged, given the conditions of history and location, depending on how the people responded to those determining factors; nothing about the future can be definitely foreknown.

"The Bottle Imp" upholds this perspective on the *finalizability* of eschatological time. When Keawe contracts the Chinese Evil and his love for Kokua prompts him to buy the bottle back for a cent, he finds himself trapped by destiny, "bound to the bottle for time and for eternity, and no better hope but to be a cinder for ever in the flames of hell" (*SST* 90). This belief reconfigures the world so that "darkness fell upon light" (*SST* 90), extinguishing Keawe's hope for the future. His spiral of depression eventually engulfs Kokua, until she extracts a confession from him. Her dynamism sees a way out of this imposed future in the equivalent values of the Tahitian centime and the Hawaiian dollar, but she eventually buys the bottle herself when a genuine customer fails to materialise. After the transaction, "all that she had

[70] During the nineteenth century, psychology emerged as a distinct branch of knowledge. See Thomas Brown, *Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind* (Edinburgh: Tate, 1820), Alexander Bain, *The Senses And The Intellect* (London: Longman Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, 1864), William James, *The Principles of Psychology* (New York: Holt, 1890). For the impact on Victorian culture, see Rick Rylance, *Victorian Psychology and British Culture 1850-1880* (Oxford: OUP, 2000).
[71] Emerson and Morson, 419.

heard of hell came back to her; she saw the flames blaze, and she smelt the smoke, and her flesh withered on the coals" (*SST* 96). In this description, the future seems so certain that she already feels its effects. Their understanding of the consequences represented by possessing the Bottle Imp eradicate the possibility of creating, or even imagining, a future outside its power. The multiplicity of Hawaiian culture is their salvation; the sheer variety of human life that washes up on the Islands' shores provides a buyer and Keawe and Kokua are liberated from their fear of damnation. Although the plot upholds a finalised end to the world, the narrative resists it: something unexpected always turns up.

"The Merry Men" presents more of a problem in this respect. Charles has a devout Christian faith; he recites Psalms, is careful to avoid heretical implications in his speech, and becomes prayerful in moments of fear. This, according to Morson and Emerson, places him under the predeterminism of an eschatological understanding of history. Yet, he is also acutely aware of his own agency in creating situations and his necessary participation in the process of determining the outcome of events, which gives him an unfinalized perspective. These conflicting responses to time are typical of the problem Bakhtin exposes in his description of Goethe's historical *unfolding*, where each moment is a creative decision that is tantamount to determining the future. The future cannot be predictable or knowable if the subject is to behave with independence. Although Charles writes according to a predetermined frame, looking towards the day when the "trumpet sounded" (*MM* 25) announcing the Second Coming of Christ, he retains an acute awareness of the uncertainty of his position in time, in terms of relating to the historical future. Morson argues that a Christian belief system is synonymous with a "finalized" perspective, but Charles's everyday acts are determined out of sensitivity to several possible pasts or futures, espousing a more balanced consideration of the relationship between the master chronotope and the prosaic detail of life.[72]

Charles's perspective is constructed around an ultimate paradigm of deep time, but he still responds to the world around him with an immediacy that sustains an on-going dialogue with the island chronotope. This is evident when his treasure hunt is cut short because he can read the coming storm in the weather and is wary of being caught in it: his knowledge of the local climate system is derived from observing the thickening mists around Ben Kyaw which he surmises "must make [vapour clouds] for itself" (*MM* 4). His extrapolations from the atmospheric conditions parallel Bakhtin's notes on the contrasting meteorological perspectives of plainsmen and mountain people: "[i]n crossing the Alps, [a man] observes the movement of the clouds and the atmosphere around the mountains, and he creates his own theory of the emergence of weather. Plainsmen have good or bad weather in ready-

[72] Gary Saul Morson, "The Chronotope of Humanness: Bakhtin and Dostoevsky," in Bemong and Borghart, 93-110.

made form, but in the mountains people are present at its emergence." [73] Islanders also live in an evolving climate, and Charles shares their ability to see space in terms of the developmental character of an emergent universe. The organising influence of his faith coincides with this understanding of the changeable climate. In Christian theology, God controls all things without communicating the details of his plan to individual believers, just as gathering mists indicate a burgeoning storm without explaining the specifics. In coming to terms with Gordon's death, Charles can comfort himself that "all was vain, for it was written otherwise" (*MM* 56), but he was obviously unable to see that his efforts to protect his uncle would fail. It is only in retrospect that God's plans can be seen to be evident from man's perspective.[74] Up until the event occurs, Charles is unaware of how things will unfold, and he still acts in the attempt to influence the outcome, unable to know whether or not his actions will have the desired effect.

In addition to the distinct perspectives man and God have over history, Charles demonstrates the Goethean ability to "see time" in heterochronomy. The most vivid example of this is when he dives for treasure. The indeterminacy of the submerged world acts as a metaphor for the process of perceiving time in space. It is described as a "complexity of forms, all swaying together in the current, things were hard to distinguish" (*MM* 27). The layers of history which have settled on the seabed construct an unrecognisable conglomeration which is no longer separable into individual components. The island accumulates traces of the past with a similar intricacy – all remain, but some are submerged beyond plain sight.[75] Charles retrieves a "human shoe buckle" which prompts him to imagine "its owner … His weather-beaten face, his sailor's hands, his sea-voice hoarse with singing at the capstan, the very foot that had once worn that buckle and trod so much upon the swerving decks – the whole human fact of him, as a creature like myself, with hair and blood and seeing eyes, haunted me in that sunny, solitary place, not like a spectre, but like some friend whom I had basely injured" (*MM* 28). The shoe buckle fleshes out the particulars of the past in human terms. Charles's second thought shows prudence, "was this shoe-buckle bought the other day …?" (*MM* 28) but his less romantic response is over-ruled by "my uncle's words: 'the dead are down there'" (*MM* 28), encouraging him to see the bay with local eyes. The bone he recovers justifies his romance reading of a long-vanished past into the presence of the rusting buckle.

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[73] Bakhtin, *SG*, 29.
[74] See Frye, *Secular Scripture*, 16-17.
[75] See the opening passage to *Heathercat* in which layers of history are vividly transposed onto the heath. Robert Louis Stevenson, *Weir of Hermiston/Some Unfinished Stories* (London: Heinemann, 1924), 143.

Gordon and Charles both see the island according to "congealed time," inseparable from the stories of the local community and human history that has unfolded on or against its shores.[76] Their Christian faith is lived out by each to radically different effect. Charles prays in moments of perturbed mind and finds "the horror, at least, lifted" (*MM* 30), whereas Gordon cannot shake off the burden of a guilty conscience, and his thoughts, words and deeds are ultimately determined by it. He appears "finalized" under the shadow of what he perceives to be an unforgiveable sin, doomed to find a "bogle" in every intruder and to be drawn to drunken celebration over the lives lost at sea in every storm. He sees the dead in every look and, despite his protests, is drawn into reading the supernatural signs of disaster which are enshrined in local folklore. Gordon's self-flagellating brand of Calvinism resonates with Rory's proliferation of folktales and, as with the Hawaiian peoples, he absorbs them into his belief system, "listening with uneasy interest" (*MM* 18). On one hand, the spectral future written on his face when Charles arrives resists dialogic possibility. On the other, his acceptance of the figures of folklore demonstrates the efficacy of these tales in the present, as they trouble his mind. Stevenson's use of Scottish folklore integrates the legends of the past with the thoughts and designs of the present. Space is continually being reconnected with localized historical time, and given a new expression which resists a simple dichotomy from emerging between *finalized* eschatological time and *unfinalizable* dialogised time.

The hybridity of the Scottish national identity, externalised in a land caught between so many temporal strata, enabled Stevenson to explore the nuances of the island chronotope in terms of its juxtaposition with mainland culture. When he immigrated to the South Seas, he found himself struck afresh by the fragility of the island, particularly in lieu of any "mainland" presence to define itself against. One of his first responses to the environment was that "the archipelago refuses to be read, appearing insubstantial and in flux: "they were of 'such stuff as dreams are made on,' and vanished at a wink, only to reappear in other places; and by and by not only islands, but refulgent and revolving lights began to stud the darkness; light-houses of the mind or of the wearied optic nerve, solemnly shining and winking as we passed.""[77] The constant movement of the tides unsettles the island landscapes, playing tricks with the casual witnesses who sail by. Farrier's compelling account of Stevenson's desire for reciprocity in his relationships with the islanders, also evident in his self-appointed role as advocate for the Polynesian interest during their civil war, extends to his fiction.[78] The collection of short stories, *The Island Nights Entertainments*, is particularly indicative of this desire. Stevenson expressed his impatience

[76] Bakhtin, *SG*, 72.
[77] Stevenson, *ISS*, 99.
[78] Farrier, 15-71.

with his publishers for collating such disparate narratives in one volume in his letters to Baxter.[79] This protest casts light on his determination to capture the heterogeneous composition of the indigenous population of the islands. Separate peoples generate different narratives, and this singularity is reflected in the rich formal variations that exist between the voices he chooses to tell each island tale. As Jolly and Farrier's work suggests, Stevenson was sensitive to his position as an outsider in his approach to island chronotopes, both in Scotland and Polynesia. He was determined that this difference would lead to reciprocal relationships of intellectual, material and emotional exchange, and develop an effective means of communicating that negotiated the difference with respect. The fragility of the islands reflected in the decline of Aros and the absorbent tribal cultures of the South Seas is testament to the complex but delicate balance of tribal folklore, custom and habit that has been influenced by so many external nations and ideologies. Stevenson's anxiety over collating his South Sea Tales is rooted in his belief that such an exercise would compromise the important clan differences and homogenise island identity in the untrained eyes of the West.[80] Stevenson had met with this kind of simplified understanding before. His response is recorded in the essay "The Foreigner at Home:" "ignorance of his neighbours is the character of the typical John Bull. His is a domineering nature, steady in fight, imperious to command, but neither curious nor quick about the life of others."[81] A failure to be curious or sympathetic towards others is, to Stevenson's mind, to live a poorer, less vividly imagined, life.

[79] Stevenson, *Letters*, vol. 7, 350.

[80] See Farrier, 24-5, Jolly, *Stevenson in the Pacific*, 156-8, and Edmund, 192-3. Stevenson's contemporaries, Gosse, Colvin and Wilde, all separately despaired at the uncommon interest he took in the peoples of Polynesia. Wilde famously lamented that, having moved to a romantic paradise, Stevenson was only able to write "grubby little letters to *The Times*" and Colvin was unimpressed that his friend became so quickly absorbed in the interests of the "chocolates," foregoing involvement in Western news and culture.

[81] "The Foreigner at Home" was first published in *Cornhill Magazine*, May 1882, just a month before "The Merry Men" appeared in the same journal.

Chapter III: Forests

Out of unknown thickets comes forth the soft, secret, aromatic odour of the woods, not like a smell of the free heaven, but as though court ladies, who had known these paths in ages long gone by, still walked in the summer evenings, and shed from their brocades a breath of musk or bergamot upon the woodland winds. One side of the long avenues is still kindled with the sun the other is plunged in transparent shadow.

\- *"Idle Hours," On the Forest*[1]

Time has been inscribed onto the forest with diverse, often contrary, approaches since humankind began to establish a literary culture. All manner of possibilities are sustained by humanity's historical relationship with the woods: the past seems tangibly present, time appears suspended or bewitched, the future can be made visible. The forest is also spatially deceptive. Sound is distorted, undermining the perception of distance. Different types of sylvan environments invite a variety of narrative representations according to their geographical location and their imaginative function within the civilisation against which they are defined. Woodland provided the earliest manifestation of otherness, "outside civilisation and society, one was in the forest."[2] European woodland changes dramatically according to the seasons whereas in tropical jungle, decay, flowering and new growth are simultaneously in evidence and dawn and dusk are the most active times of day. Human activity, the sounds of nature, and silence can animate forest groves and thickets; the artist takes refuge from the world to think in a bower; aristocrats congregate to socialise and pursue game; lumberjacks and foresters work the land. It is a space of recreation, labour, contemplation and rest, "a place where the logic of distinction goes astray. Or where our subjective categories are confounded."[3]

In her seminal work, *The Forest of Medieval Romance*, Corinne Saunders explicates the variety of purposes for which the motif of the forest has been appropriated by writers working in classical, biblical, medieval and romance traditions.[4] Stevenson inherits a rich romance topos, modified and exploited by several Romantic and early nineteenth-century

[1] Stevenson, *PNE*, 135.
[2] Robert Pogue Harrison, *Forests: The Shadow of Civilisation* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992), 61.
[3] Harrison, x.
[4] Corinne Saunders, *The Forest of Medieval Romance: Avernus, Broceliande, Arden* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1993).

authors, but it remains a conventional space invested with the chivalric ideals that were first enshrined in Arthurian romance: a place where one could reconnect with nature and escape history, even if the experience proved generative of a deeper sense of disconnection with nature and the past.[5] Perhaps most significantly for Stevenson, Scott has been credited with bringing a degree of "realism" and historical interest to the idealised world of romance, particularly in *Ivanhoe*'s woodland scenes.[6] This chapter considers Stevenson's evolution of the temporal characteristics of chivalric romance, as defined by Bakhtin, and how these variations influence his image of the hero, in the increasingly dialogised narratives of his forest romances.[7]

According to Bakhtin's definition of the chivalric romance chronotope, which emphasises the nature of time rather than space employed by the form, the most prominent and distinctive features are testing the hero; normalising "suddenly" so that all is miraculous; allowing the heroic deed, or glorification of the hero, to structure the narrative; removing any degree of separation between the hero and the world he inhabits; and experiencing time with increasing subjectivity.[8] It is instructive to identify survivals of this major chronotope in Stevenson's various evocations of the forest, as this often reveals the parodic spirit with which his narratives operate. Rather than upholding the traditional model adhered to by Tristan, Lancelot and Yvain, where the forest provides the arena for civilised knights to confront shadowy self-doubt and return, empowered, to court life, Stevenson's heroes seldom transcend the failure that is exposed by their wanderings.[9] The glorious deed, which is fundamental to achieving this elevation from mortal knight to legendary hero, is shown to be corrupt. Stevenson equivocates over whether failure to attain a mythical status is to be met with despair. For the hero is only pursuing glorification in the first place because of the convention he has inherited, and the world with which he is confronted. To fail and remain in the forest, to reject the systems for success or failure imposed by civilisation, is an ambivalent choice which allows the image of man to be fashioned according to the individual's will, but refuses him the opportunity to participate in history. This is an

[5] See Sir Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe*, ed. Graham Tulloch, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1997) for a historicised romance forest which has elements of realism in some of its characterisation, modifying the ideal. See Ann Radcliffe, *Romance of the Forest*, ed. and introd. Chloe Chard, (Oxford: OUP, 1986) for a more conventional usage from the earlier nineteenth-century.

[6] For a reading of the relationship between Scott and representations of history in fiction, see James Kerr, *Fiction Against History: Scott as Storyteller* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007). *Cambridge Books Online*. 6 Sept. 2012 <http://ebooks.cambridge.org/>.

[7] This is a departure from considering the forest as a romance motif, used in a genre defined according to plot rather than chronotope, as upheld in Northrope Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957).

[8] Bakhtin, *DI*, 151-4.

[9] Harrison, 66-8.

important redefinition of both the hero and the arena in which he is expected to perform, separating subjective time from the historicised event.

One can observe a developing sensitivity to the implications of dialogical engagement in Stevenson's work as his use of the forest chronotope becomes more detailed and specific. The first section of this chapter will consider how the temporal nature of the forest in the longer romances, *Prince Otto* (1885) and *The Black Arrow* (1888), disrupt Bakhtin's prescription for the major chronotope of chivalric romance. Then, using "Will o' t' Mill" (1878) as a starting point, the discussion continues by assessing how these works introduce an internal dialogism through the road, which Bakhtin describes as providing a spatialised metaphor for historical time unfolding through random, unpredictable encounters and partings, initiating the dialogues that encourage the hero's self-definition. The road's presence compromises the traditional separation between historical time and the forest. Plunging into the forest no longer allows the hero to escape history, but marks him as historicised. Furthermore, the nature of revelation is future-oriented, and often emphasises the disconnection between the hero and his world. The future certainty provided by the Christianised nature of redemption, which defined the chivalric romance chronotope, is absent from the Stevensonian forest, a void replaced by human love which must be nurtured in an unsettled universe that is reflected in these romances' endings.

The chapter goes on to consider "The Treasure of Franchard" (1883) and "Olalla" (1885), which each introduce a more fully dialogised forest chronotope where the "double-word" of the forest-dweller is imagined through individual studies of characters who resist dialogic engagement with the world. Finally, "The Beach of Falesá" (1892) fuses the techniques of *skaz*, "orientated toward the idiosyncrasies of oral speech," and parody, to create Wiltshire's narrative which draws on the process Bakhtin describes as "double-voiced words" where "the author's thought no longer oppressively dominates the other's thought, discourse loses its composure and confidence, becomes agitated, internally undecided and two-faced."[10] Stevenson arrives at this sophisticated construction of dialogism in a first person narrative through the process of trial and error, experimenting with the dialogic implications that are inherent to the forest chronotope, inscribed over many centuries of aesthetic engagement with the woodland environment.

[10] Emerson and Morson, 153, and Bakhtin, *PDP*, 198.

"And yet the forest has been civilised throughout": Historicising the Hero[11]

As a major chronotope, the chivalric romance is one of the most complex and varied that Bakhtin fleshes out. It incorporates the miraculous and unexpected into everyday life and presents adventure as something which occurs "as if it were [the hero's] native element … by his very nature he can live only in this world of miraculous chance, for only it preserves his identity."[12] Heroic deeds are "the feature that sharply distinguishes the chivalric romance from a Greek one, and brings it closer to an *epic adventure*. *Glory* and *glorification* are features completely alien to the Greek romance."[13] Bakhtin associates the hero simultaneously with individuality and symbolism, in agreement with Beer's observation that the hero of medieval romance is both a character and a type.[14] If, as Bakhtin argues elsewhere, "Once he has chosen a hero and the dominant of his hero's representation, the author is already bound by the inner logic of what he has chosen, and he must reveal it in his representation," the hero of the chivalric romance provides a particularly rich paradigm for dialogic engagement because he is a double folded image.[15] Stevenson is sensitive to the "inner logic" dictated by the literary tradition in which he seeks to place his work; he writes deliberately within and against particular styles, genres and chronotopes that imply a paradigm for his hero, and the world he inhabits. It is in his self-proclaimed role as a contemporary romancier that Stevenson imagines the forest and intentionally enters into dialogue with the past uses of the form.

In their temporal arrangement, *Prince Otto* and *The Black Arrow* both remain true to the most distinctive trait of chivalric romance: privileging the miraculous and the unexpected. What is of more interest are the threefold means by which Stevenson reworks this idealised world. The glorification of the hero is undermined by the substance of his adventures; the increasingly subjective experience of time-space dismantles the dichotomy between what is classified as good and evil, thereby destabilising the nature of ethical responsibility; the presence of the road compromises the hero's ability to enter into synchrony with the forest, which in turn further deepens the subjectivity of experience. These latter two modifications are evidence of the new master chronotope which is emerging as Stevenson writes, a concept which will be fully addressed in the next chapter.

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[11] Stevenson, "Fontainebleau," *An Apology for Idlers* (London: Penguin, 2009), 71.
[12] Bakhtin, *DI*, 151-167.
[13] *Ibid*., 153.
[14] Beer, *Romance*, 57.
[15] Bakhtin, *PDP*, 65.

Saunders' study considers the forest as an historic, culturally significant space which, through its representation in literature, forces a dialogue between the real and the symbolic. One of the chief expressions of this interplay is found in the actual and imagined role of the hunt: "the concept of the forest as a separate and privileged world, governed by its own laws, and providing delight and recreation to the court, is to be reflected in the literary tradition of the Middle Ages and adopted as the special territory of the romanciers."[16] Hunting the stag provides a collision of these two worlds: the elegance of courtly game and the brutal reality of nature, red in tooth and claw. As it was a genteel pursuit, knights could complement their record of heroic deeds by successfully vanquishing quarry. It is, therefore, interesting that both *The Black Arrow* and *Prince Otto* open with a variation on the hunt: *Prince Otto* undermines the hunt's role as a means of bringing about the *glorification* of the hero; *The Black Arrow*, set in England during the Wars of the Roses, uses the hunt as a means of critiquing the social communities supported by the woods.[17]

Initially, *Prince Otto* appears to adhere to the ancient trope of the hunt. Otto's royal status is reflected in the majestic "horns [which] continued all day long." Before the quarry can be slaughtered, the narrator interjects "you shall seek in vain upon the map of Europe for the bygone state of Grünewald" and "the precise year of grace in which this tale begins shall be left to … conjecture."[18] Locating the tale in a foreign nation, already consigned to history, renders the chronotope purely ideal, yet the hero is drawn in unflatteringly close detail. The triumphal note of the hunt is drowned out by the news of the kingdom's collapse; rather than depicting the forest as the arena in which knightly deeds are performed, inscribing meaning into the pageantry of court, Otto's miscomprehension of state politics is reflected in his commitment to the trivial hunt. Stevenson parodies the successful hunting parties of Perceval or Arthur, incorporating decadent images into his narrative that diminish the hero's conventional exaltation. The sun, Shakespearean metaphor for kingship, is setting and "the glory of its going down was somewhat pale" (*PO* 5), in a bathetic prolepsis of the imminent revolution.[19] Rather than a trope establishing kingly power and authority over the land, Otto's hunt allows his subjects, frustrated to republicanism by his irresponsible rule, the chance to voice their discontent – "a disgrace! Hereditary prince, hereditary fool!" (*PO* 5-6)[20] Prince Otto retreats into courtly game, rather than demonstrating strong leadership in his

[16] Saunders, 10.
[17] For a reading that suggests this is an attempt at realism, see Eiger, 53-63.
[18] Robert Louis Stevenson, *Prince Otto: A Romance*, (London: Heinemann, 1924), 3-5.
[19] I am particularly thinking of *The Tragedy of King Richard the Second* where Richard, with typical poetic dexterity, describes himself as the Sun. "See us rising in our throne, the east" *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, eds. Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett, William Montgomery, 2nd ed., (Oxford: Clarendon P, 2005), 3.2, p. 354.
[20] Harrison, 69, traces the etymology of "forest" to its origins as a specific term for a royal game preserve in Charlemagne's time.

management of the political reality; like Shakespeare's Richard II, he is enamoured with the aesthetics of power, not the opportunity to prove himself worthy of office by performing glorious acts or involving himself in making decisions.[21] Rather than provide the space for testing and challenge, the forest appears to be Otto's retreat from the bewilderment of the urbane politics that characterize court life.

The Black Arrow draws a disturbing analogue between the natural object of the hunt, the deer, and the circumstances in which man becomes the target, immediately parodying the hero by introducing him as a helpless victim: "a bewildered deer ran out into the open, stood for a second on three feet, with nose in air, and then plunged again into the thicket. Selden still ran, bounding; ever and again an arrow followed him, but still would miss. … an arrow struck him and he fell."[22] His "bounding" escape is juxtaposed with the directionless flight of a deer to emphasise both his incapacity to react to the situation, and the mercilessness of the invisible army pursuing him. The brutality and persistence of his assailants' efforts disfigures the echo of the refined courtly hunt, complicating the Greenwood Company's more positive connotations with the Robin Hood myth of "Merry England." Outlawed by a tyrannical landlord, their ethically defensible decision to commit petty felonies in a bid to survive is undermined by this display of ruthless violence. Dick is also tainted by their anti-heroic bloodlust when he stabs a member of their band; Joan's rebuke, "tis as brave to kill a kitten as a man that not defends himself" (*BA* 74), condemns rather than glorifies his act.[23] The "delight and recreation" of the medieval hunt in the forest is transformed into a senseless manhunt where the proof of masculine heroism seems to coincide with murder; the glorification of the hero belongs to a forgotten age. The Greenwood Company challenge Rousseau's insight that the forest reveals man's original savage, but pure, self, and rejects the Shakespearean notion that the outlawed community is essentially comic, by portraying the underlying cruelty and pitilessness of their actions.[24] Yet Stevenson avoids didactic judgement. The text retains a dialogic balance that promises resolution only through the reader's interpretation. In this, the romance enters a distinctive *fin-de-siècle* forest chronotope which seeks to chart the growth of heroic deeds in an everyday, dialogised

[21] Eiger, 57, reads Prince Otto as a sceptic, robbed of the power to act, who regards his toy kingdom as unworthy of his attentions which he is unwilling, in any case, to bestow.
[22] Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Black Arrow* (London: Penguin, 1995), 69-70.
[23] Velma Bourgeois Richmond notes "The outlaw or subversive figure fills a significant place in literature both to acknowledge the inevitability of adversity and as the locus for protest against injustice; since the suffering is often not merited, lawlessness becomes a sign of heroism and advocacy for social change, and an occasion of violence." Here, Stevenson is purposefully ambivalent about the extent to which the rebels are justified, although the tyranny under which they live in the unpopular figure of Sir Daniel is unequivocal. Velma Bourgeois Richmond, *Shakespeare, Catholicism and Romance* (London: Continuum, 2000), 130.
[24] See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality*, trans. Morris Cranston, (London: Penguin, 1984).

subject rather than a "glorified" monologic protagonist. Dick converses with the other forest-dwellers, entering into debates regarding the nature of their differences, rather than insisting that they conform to pre-determined courtly rules.[25]

The hidden communities subsisting in the forest provided the opportunity for miraculous encounters and romantic trysts in the chivalric romance chronotope. As Otto rides through the woods, "the auster [*sic*] face of nature, the uncertain issue of his course, the open sky and the free air, delighted him like wine" (*PO* 7). Yet, confronted by the road and the glimmer of lights suggesting domesticity, he concedes to more practical concerns, breaking from the expectation that "the hero of chivalric romances … plunges headfirst into adventures."[26] Having forfeited the adventurous promise of the open road in favour of a bed for the night, he assumes he has achieved rest in a pastoral idyll. Instead he finds simmering political activism that illuminates his perceived character: "we think … poorly of this Prince Otto. There's such a thing as a man being pious and honest in the private way; and there's such a thing, sir, as a public virtue; but when a man has neither, the Lord lighten him" (*PO* 14). If pursuing the heroic deeds of adventure is a means of proving and defining oneself, Otto's resistance to attaining such knowledge by seeking accommodation ironically forces him to confront his reflection in the eyes of others.

Remaining incognito prompts an emasculating encounter in the wood with the farmer's daughter. The romantic setting, pondering life in the seclusion of early morning, is undercut by a prosaic metaphor: "golden lights and flitting shadows fell upon the marble surface of that seething pot" (*PO* 17). The domestic "pot" casts a parodic shadow across the scene.[27] Ottilia hotly rebukes the languishing prince, taking the initiative in their exchange and sustaining her authority: "I wouldn't take a fault at another person's hands, no not if I had it on my forehead. … I should think you were ashamed of yourself" (*PO* 19). The impression is completed with the wry observation: "They made a loverly [*sic*] looking couple; only the heavy pouring of that horse-tail of water made them raise their voices above lover's pitch" (*PO* 20). Ottilia is attracted to the illusion of Otto's Princely status, terrified but emboldened by the notion that he might decide to take the lives of her revolutionary lover and outspoken father; he enjoys the reminder of his status, something generally repressed in favour of substituting power for the pursuit of pleasure. Events at River Farm disrupt Otto's daydream view of his place in the world, emasculating him as an adventurer, political leader and

[25] Medieval Romance operated within a tightly defined set of rules and genre practices, as noted by Helen Cooper, 11, 16. For the didactic nature of children's literature see n15, chapter one of this thesis and Bratton, 20.
[26] Bakhtin, *DI*, 152.
[27] There are echoes of "Fontainebleau: The Village Communities of Painters" which contains the phrase "the watering-pot cascade in Cernay Valley," suggesting Fontainebleau as the inspiration for the woods in *Prince Otto*. Stevenson, *AI*, 65.

romantic hero. His portrayal as an aesthetic dandy rewrites the forest chronotope according to the *fin-de-siècle* zeitgeist of decadent degeneration.

The Black Arrow's forest also proves a testing ground for gender relations, exercising the trope of cross-dressing to further a proto-feminist modification of the manly romance world. In male attire, Joan proves herself equal to undertaking a traditionally masculine role in the adventure, fully deceiving Dick. This circumstance is doubly revelatory as, after a ferryman sees through Joan's disguise immediately, Dick's obtuseness continues to be parodied in his moments of near-perception. He refuses to comprehend the world dialogically, preferring to make judgements according to the objectified word, read flat. He is happy to accept Joan as male because that is how she describes herself. The metalinguistic evidence of her "large eyes and … thin weary face" (*BA* 75), frequent physical exhaustion, and presumably higher vocal pitch, fail to alert him to her true identity. The acts Joan performs while in costume directly critique *fin-de-siècle* gender stereotypes.[28] Joan *physically* saves Dick's life, dragging him from the water with her riding crop, repaying her debt to him almost instantaneously. She engages with him as an equal by debating the moral implications of his violent act towards the archer, and proves herself capable of logic and reasoning when she divines Sir Daniel's hand in Dick's father's death.[29] Furthermore, she is the architect of Dick's escape from Moat House. Her attendant, Alicia, is equally resourceful. She saves Dick from detection when he breaks in to Sir Daniel's town house, and holds him to ransom in the forest as they pursue Sir Daniel and the kidnapped Joan, refusing to eat unless he does. This act of will undermines the implicit belief that the male body is more robust for survival and holds sway over female behaviour. Her conduct redefines power as mutually available to the sexes, and they engage as equals rather than conforming to presumed masculine superiority. Instead of gaining a portfolio of remarkable heroic acts, Dick's time in the forest emphasises his reliance on others to achieve success.

The second purely temporal feature of the chivalric romance is the "subjective playing with time, an emotional and lyrical stretching and compressing of it … whole events disappear as if they'd never been."[30] This sensation is distinct from the temporal distortions generated by dreams and visions, which were particularly ubiquitous in medieval literature, and were later echoed by the Romantics. Under the influence of such temporal non-events, space is transformed according to a similarly emotional and subjective representation, which moves

[28] This is not, however, sustainable beyond the events described in the narrative. The adventure-romance and New Woman genres cannot be said to converge here in any satisfactory sense.
[29] Showalter reads Jack the Ripper myths as a warning to women about the danger of challenging male control beyond the domestic sphere. Elaine Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin-de-Siècle* (London: Virago, 1992), 118-43.
[30] Bakhtin, *DI*, 155.

towards symbolism. In *Prince Otto*, the most directly recorded incident of this nature is Seraphina's encounter with the woodman once revolution has begun. The forest environs appear transfigured in her distress. A latent threat hovers close to the surface; light in the wood is not golden but "plain and garish" (*PO* 157), the sun, "victorious over his competitors, continued slowly and royally to mount" (*PO* 157), mocking Seraphina's fallen House. Rather than offer repose, "the shrill joy of the woodland [derides] her," "the hot eye of day" (*PO* 157) fixes the crown princess uncomfortably with its stare, and "the woods began to irk and daunt her" (*PO* 158). The woods seem to harbour the watching eyes of those who might seek to impose judgement on her and finalize her state of being, instead of offering consolation or sanctuary.[31]

The woodman she encounters embodies a very real threat to her safety, "his hand stretched forth as if to arrest her, and his unsteady eyes wandering to his axe" (*PO* 160). At this point of impending crisis, he shrinks from the Princess "as from something elfin" (*PO* 159), transfixed by the waning influence of an old belief in magic; the miraculous still governs the forest chronotope, but his suspended animation is only temporary for the power of illusion is on the wane. The subjective temporal glitch which turns their meeting into a non-event, and once defined chivalric romance, is now a trick of the miraculous, an underused chronotopic residue. Seraphina "bewitch[es] time itself," in the woodman's experience, but his impeded perception of time passing is not sustained long in the narrative and the moment quickly passes.[32]

This fading spirit of bewitchment translates from the subjective time of encounter into the nature of the hero's relationship to the world he inhabits. For as long as romance has been a tradition within English Literature, forests have formed a crucial part of the landscape in which the hero undergoes "trials" or "testing" to prove his character. Bakhtin asserts that genre "lives in the present, but always *remembers* its past, its beginning. Genre is a representative of creative memory in the process of literary development."[33] One of the characteristics major chronotopes share with genre is their diachronic behaviour. By the nineteenth century, the forest had absorbed so much historical, literary, political and socio-economic significance apart from the chivalric romance that it functions as an independent chronotope which nevertheless retains important memories of its origins. Stevenson's forests borrow heavily from the "miraculous world in adventure-time" native to chivalric romance, but there is both a realistic element, derived from the forest's greater historicity, and an

[31] Bakhtin, *PDP*, 59-63.
[32] Bakhtin, *DI*, 154.
[33] Bakhtin, *PDP*, 106.

uncertainty in the hero's interaction with time-space which critiques his predecessors' fidelity to the idealised knight.

Stevenson reinterprets the historical romance genre by positioning the chronotope of the forest in dialogic engagement with the chronotope of the road, which has the effect of undermining traditional distinctions between understanding the world as historical or miraculous.[34] In these different contexts, the hero's developing self-consciousness is thoroughly examined in relation to his heroine and their joint responsibility to act in the world. As has already been discussed, Stevenson was acutely conscious of the role played by language in sustaining both character and the created world. He lamented of Scott that: "At times his characters will speak with something far beyond propriety with a true heroic note; but on the next page they will be wading wearily forward with an ungrammatical and undramatic rigmarole of words."[35] To extend the "true heroic note" involves bringing the hero's consciousness into sharper definition through his dialogic relationship with his chronotope. History enters the forest through the heroic subject who is reminded of his historicised status by his encounter with the road.

Although often portrayed positively, the dialogic potential of the forest chronotope is not always beneficial. *Prince Otto* dramatizes the paralysis caused by over-thinking action, a problem emphasised by the suggestive parallels critics have identified between Hamlet and Otto.[36] "Will o' the Mill", set in an alpine forest, addresses this danger of over-philosophising to the point of inaction. Entrapped in perpetual thought, he longs for a life of adventure but when love appears he passes up the opportunity to enter marriage because he equivocates.[37] His motionlessness is accentuated by the constant traffic rumbling passed his inn on the mountain's only thoroughfare. The road chronotope provides him with a connection to historical events; travellers' narratives of their journeys sustain his imaginative interest in the world of possibility that exists beyond the mill. Will's tragedy is that he is paralysed by the ideal of adventure, an illusion collated from the many sources mined by his intellectual curiosity until the weight of expectation and the risk of disappointment or failure renders action impossible. Ultimately, by the time he entertains Death unawares, he has dissipated personal time out of reverence to the sublime promise of history. The arena of

[34] Harrison, 13, records "Humanity is in its very essence is a historical, that is extraforestial, phenomenon for Vico. To be human means to dwell in the openness of time, in defiance of the oblivion of nature, and hence to be governed by memory, which maintains the temporal coherence between past and future."
[35] Stevenson, *MP*, 234-58.
[36] Eigner, 62, traces the link through the "Otto type" Charles of Orleans (in Stevenson's essay of 1876). See also Sandison's discussion of stillness and motion in relation to Otto's manliness, Sandison, *Future Feeling*, 168-9.
[37] Stevenson, *MM*, 59-86.

action for the chivalric romance chronotope has degenerated into inconsequential conversation. Will revels in others' narratives rather than becoming the hero of his own.

Despite suffering from a similar resistance to action, Otto finds a little more momentum. He actively seeks travel on the road, and consults those he encounters to diagnose the political mood of the nation. Importantly, when he first embarks on the journey, Otto is indivisible from his romance context, but "gradually the spell of pleasure relaxed; his own thoughts returned, like stinging insects, in a cloud; and the talk of the night before, like a shower of buffets, fell upon his memory" (*PO* 29). The forest exercises an influence over his psyche that he gradually resists from his historicised position on the road. Sandison remarks that the roads of Grünewald are mysteriously, even eerily, empty, indicating the socio-economic paralysis of the nation, but Otto manages to gather a sizeable cloud of witnesses, and his growth in self-awareness and conviction induce him to act with more authority than has hitherto been in evidence.[38] This decision places Otto in the category of chivalric romance heroes who inevitably "set out on a road. … [which] is profoundly, intensely etched by the flow of historical time, by the traces and signs of time's passage … the *sociohistorical heterogeneity* of one's own country … is revealed and depicted."[39] In the palace, Otto's self-perception is distorted by flatterers and gossips who merely reinforce his misconceptions or exacerbate his existing delusions. By contrast, his exchanges with the miller, the philosopher and the woodmen on the road bring him into contact with authentic speech, allowing him to engage with reality for the first time. On the road, Otto begins to construct his own identity in relation to his true socio-historic moment through the process of authentic dialogic interaction. This leads to his articulation of an undistorted representation of self. Before he sets out on the road alone, his senior politicians organise his life to turn on spectacle, designing palace routine to reflect chivalric romance convention in a deception which prevents him from grasping the seriousness of either political or personal crisis.

The wood in *The Black Arrow* is equally bound to history; unstable in its dynamism, it reflects the political upheaval caused by the Wars of the Roses and expresses a conservative anxiety over change. Again, history invades the traditional timelessness of the forest by means of the road chronotope. Sweeping through the trees, it forms an uncanny reminder of the price of war. Destroyed armies limp along it in search of shelter, wounded and displaced civilians struggle to traverse its parameters, outlaws perch above it, randomly picking off their exposed enemies. This constant traffic is eloquent of a nation displaced by conflict, exposing an historical seriousness behind the seemingly light-hearted adventure. It is a strange echo of the sensations provoked in Stevenson while he was resident in

[38] Sandison, *Future Feeling*, 154.
[39] Bakhtin, *DI*, 245.

Fontainebleau. The young Stevenson was sensitive to the historical importance of the road in the "dream-land" of the forest, observing how "the broad white causeway of the Paris road runs in an avenue: a road conceived for pageantry and for triumphal marches, an avenue for an army; but, its days of glory over, it now lies grilling in the sun between cool groves."[40] Several years later, *The Black Arrow* modifies this conception of the road as a means of proclaiming historic victories to the isolated communities of the woods, preventing the dubious ethical decisions taken in war, or under the shadow of the forest's canopy, from being conveniently forgotten. The dream spaces in Stevenson's accurately historicised wood are darkened by hostility; crimes perpetrated in the forest must have their consequences.

Although the narrative leaves Joan and Dick looking "with ever-growing affection in each other's eyes", the price for married bliss is disengagement from politics: "Thenceforth the dust and blood of that unruly epoch past them by. They dwelt apart from alarms in the green forest where their love began" (*BA* 284). The wood has transformed from the arena of action into a dream-like medieval romance forest; to remain there is to fail to reintegrate into society. The illusion of comfort and protection is problematic because of the historical situation, represented by the road. The hero's conventional union with his lover is juxtaposed with the wider political context which remains turbulent and unresolved, yet the knight will play no further part. In the final sentences, the narrator casually mentions Arblaster, whom Dick has wronged by stealing and destroying his ship, creating the circumstances in which his mate, Tom, is killed. Recalling these unflattering past events to the reader's attention encourages a prevarication over the substance of Dick's honour. The narrative continues to undermine strict moral dichotomies through the reappearance of Lawless, the intractably dishonest but personally loyal outlaw. These two men disrupt simplistic ethical readings, resisting the cyclical redemptive and regenerative archetype of the forest. Not all knightly deeds are heroic: it is not always possible to receive absolution for sin as the consequences of actions can be too far reaching; some characters are beyond restoration in Stevenson's world.[41]

Stevenson's forest resists a return to Dante's master chronotope where individuals are stretched "along the vertical axis," weighed by their spiritual progress and devoid of historicity.[42] A temporal reality is inscribed into the forest chronotope by the inner tensions of the hero extrapolated in historical time, recognised in Furnas's observation that "Louis

[40] Stevenson, *AI*, 69, 70.
[41] See J.C. Furnas, *Voyage to Windward: The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson* (London: Faber, 1952), 200.
[42] Bakhtin, *DI*, 156.

used action not for empathy but to illustrate moral dilemmas."[43] Without the spiritual significance medieval romance attributed to the wilderness of the wood, Stevenson is charged with representing a world that functions according to different ethical measures.[44] As Furnas continues, "He was chronically fascinated by "the war in the members"; by the need to choose courses of action without better guide than dubious guessing as to consequences; by the spectacle of people, himself included, struggling to do right while lacking both intelligible notions of what "right" is and the emotional thews and sinews necessary for such a feat."[45] If "right" is open for redefinition, the means of restoration and redemption traditionally meted out by religious or poetic revelation in a forest grove is no longer satisfactory. Both Dick and Otto find their adventures ending in marriage, but the familiar trope fails to bring the satisfaction of finality. Each relationship redeems the hero in its way, but the couple's future is by no means unproblematic.

This is particularly clear in *Prince Otto*'s closing scenes. In the context of restoring their marriage, Seraphina's exclamation, "O what a pit there is for sins – God's mercy, man's oblivion" (*PO* 188), acknowledges the chivalric romance heritage where the hero is redeemed by a spiritual revelation, but introduces a note of ambiguity. Choosing to separate "God's mercy" from "man's oblivion" with a comma sustains a reading of either of the conjunctions "or"/"and" into the sentence. "Or" sustains a Christian interpretation, offering the alternatives facing humanity on Judgement Day, while "and" leaves divine mercy on the same plane as man's oblivion. Seraphina's hope of redemption is located in "being born again" (*PO* 188) in the eyes of her lover rather than God. God's mercy is a convenient analogy for the efficacy of choosing to forget the past in the interests of sustaining human love into the future. The redemptive power of sexual love is couched in visionary language, leading Otto to declare he "durst not move for fear of waking" (*PO* 188). Bakhtin describes the function of dreams as "mak[ing] ordinary life seem strange, forc[ing] one to understand and evaluate ordinary life in a new way (in the light of another glimpsed possibility)."[46] Their unified selves, envisaged in the forest chronotope, represent an unattainable ideal where each completes the other outside the flow of biographical time. This is unsustainable because the forest chronotope is not divorced from historical time; it only casts the illusion of being so. The highly romanticised event serves to sharpen the contrast with everyday experience. Instead of concluding with the lovers' fragile hope of a future redeemed by their mutual love, Stevenson's postscript places the royal couple back in domestic-time; living

[43] Furnas, 197.
[44] Saunders, 13-19.
[45] Furnas, 200.
[46] Bakhtin, *PDP*, 147.

with Seraphina's father, they have reverted to childhood dependence, penning verse that is worst when written in collaboration.[47]

Prince Otto and *The Black Arrow* are complex reinventions of the traditional chivalric romance. Both novels refuse to compromise philosophical engagement and the hero's psychological realism for the sake of sustaining genre tropes long out-dated by readers' changing tastes. The forest chronotope proves a flexible setting for romance, fostering the development of ideas pertaining to gender power, spiritual faith and the increasing subjectivity of time through the hero's dialogic encounters. It is a chronotope which actively seeks to expose internal conflict by forcing the hero into dialogic engagement with the world. In the forest Otto is reawakened to the reality of his position in Grunewald's history. Only when he is back at the palace does he revert to type and give up the struggle to redeem his fortunes and those of his kingdom. Sandison describes the scenes that take place in the forest as "woodcuts" which share a disturbing heritage with the figures on Keats's Grecian Urn, trapped in art and devoid of a human soul because they occupy a purely spatial plane, untouched by the passage of time.[48] Any moments of stasis only serve to reinforce the futility of hiding in the forest as a means of escaping the political and historical reality. By introducing the chronotope of the road and in distinguishing the hero's development apart from his environment, real-time is reintroduced into the forest glade and the contemplations of the hero are endowed with a regenerative spirit of spontaneity.

The Dialogic Forest: Double-Words and Revelations

Arguably, the most formative period of Stevenson's life was the time he spent among the artist colony at Gretz, Fontainebleau. Situated just outside Paris, the contrast between the fashionable city and the still, woodland villages is still striking. Here, Stevenson wrote several of the essays [and letters] which advanced his understanding of consciousness, perception and aesthetics. The forest challenged his self-perception. As a writer amid fine artists, he was prohibited from sketching scenes on the page that could then be recognisably reproduced on canvas in oils, pencil or watercolour. Instead of the preliminary studies produced by painters, he observed that the writer enjoys "a strenuous idleness … still

[47] Wilde's protagonist Dorian Gray echoes this idea that to experience love in reality renders a person unfit for its portrayal in art: Sybil's relationship with Dorian destroys her acting career. Her ideal performance of love is exposed as a sham in the translucent, exposing light of love's reality. Oscar Wilde, *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, vol. 3, ed. Joseph Bristow and Ian Small, (Oxford: OUP, 2005).
[48] Sandison, *Future Feeling*, 171.

floating like music through his brain, foresights of great works … the last heart-throbs of that excited amateur who has to die in all of us before the artist can be born."[49] His awareness of the self's duplicitous nature gained clarification during his sylvan experiences. In a passage that is rather proto-Bakhtinian, Stevenson describes the process of being painted:

> Your friend at the easel labours doggedly a little way off, in the wide shadow of the tree; and yet farther, across a strait of glaring sunshine, you see another painter, encamped in the shadow of another tree, and up to his waist in the fern. You cannot watch your own effigy growing out of the white trunk, and the trunk beginning to stand forth from the rest of the wood, and the whole picture getting dappled over with the flecks of sun that slip through the leaves overhead, and, as a wind goes by and sets the trees a-talking, flicker hither and thither like butterflies of light. But you know it is going forward.[50]

He imagines himself as seen from the position of an outsider, recognising the "surplus" of his being that exists beyond his own vantage point. The work of the painter "goes forward" in the same way that the individual enters the world and is aware of himself coming alive to a greater extent by being acknowledged, and thereby momentarily completed, in the eyes of another. This moves towards the assertion that it is when both self and other are brought into dialogue, through the painting, that a more intricate understanding of self is created through their collaboration, as the two perspectives are infused.

"The Treasure of Franchard", Stevenson's only fictional work to be explicitly set in Fontainebleau, opens with a statement conducive to this theory, "we reckon our lives, I hardly know why, from the date of our first sorry appearance in society, as if from a first humiliation; for no actor can come upon the stage with a worse grace."[51] The story continues to bear the fruit of Stevenson's experience of the French forest in his student days. Dr Desprez, the protagonist, adopts Jean-Marie because he recognises the boy's potential to complete him. From their first encounter he sees their minds as interrelated: "Desprez could not tell whether he was fascinating the boy, or the boy was fascinating him" (*MM* 173). In their second meeting he tests his instinct by interrogating Jean-Marie's capacity to reason by pursuing a Socratic dialogue. The problem is that, by employing such an explicit aim in his questioning, Desprez is seeking to finalize the boy's character and recognise himself in the process – his is a monologic agenda, derived from classical techniques; his vanity demands a

[49] Stevenson, *AI*, 80.
[50] Stevenson, "Forest Notes," *AI*, 111.
[51] Stevenson, "The Treasure of Franchard," *MM*, 171.

companion who confirms his superiority rather than challenges and modifies his understanding. Desprez explains to his wife, "You married the animal side of my nature, dear; and it is on the spiritual side that I find my affinity for Jean-Marie" (*MM* 184). He only pursues relationships that appear to offer him a greater internal unity and self-confirmation. His pedagogical theory, and the narrator's contention, that it is easy to convince a boy "whom you supply with all the facts for the discussion" (*MM* 196), is disproved by Jean-Marie's independent discourse. He refuses to impute the lessons of the doctor uncritically, without first testing them against his convictions. He exercises Bakhtin's double-voiced response in several senses, finding accord with many of the doctor's theories and assuming them as his own, but resisting others, and moderating the words imparted to him in their discussions.[52] The doctor's assumption that having indoctrinated the boy, his responses will be predictable is moderated through their exchanges.

The forest of Fontainebleau enlivened Stevenson's ability to see time in space, to borrow Bakhtin's observation of Goethe.[53] When he breathes in the distinctive scent of the forest, he imagines the current generation of deer bounding through the woodland to be part of the ancient world living on in modernity.[54] In his capacity as a tourist, he senses the picnics of antiquity and lavish parties hosted in the "pleasure-ground" forest of mirth with a palace at its epicentre.[55] Traces of previous inhabitants intoxicate the forest air, and he understands his own place, both now and for the future, as part of this spectral existence: "a projection of themselves shall appear to haunt unfriended these scenes of happiness … if anywhere about the wood you meet my airy bantling, greet him with tenderness."[56] The forest, although deeply historical, is populated by the traces of those who have felt a spiritual connection there, haunting the observed present with ghosts of the past and fragmented projections of the future. Here, identity is conceived according to its complex future relation to the forest, as if a part of the present self must be deposited here and now, to mark the site of revelation or the moment of threshold. The forest chronotope encourages the individual subject to engage with the world differently, and thus reconfigures the notion of identity itself, enabling it to multiply and split through space as well as time.[57] Doctor Desprez understands the connection between the forest and his state of mind; "the smell of the forest" (*MM* 175) infiltrates the village, it actively permeates his thinking during his morning perambulations

[52] For distinctions of different dialogic types see Bakhtin, *PDP*, 181-190.
[53] Bakhtin, *SG*, 10-59.
[54] Stevenson, *PNE*, 149-54.
[55] Stevenson, *AI*, 73.
[56] *Ibid*., 80.
[57] For a succinct and useful discussion of the evolution of self from the Enlightenment to the end of the nineteenth century, when selfhood became explicitly linked to mind and took on a "variously conceived but invariably fragmented" character, see Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2004), 115.

round his garden, tricking him into feeling a state of unity with the world. In all respects, Desprez regards the forest atmosphere as exercising a palpable influence over his thoughts, which helps him to develop a new philosophy for life, removed from the materialist concerns of his past as a society doctor in Paris.

The beginning of true dialogue, as exemplified by Jean-Marie, is the character's ability to speak in earnest, which implies that a character's state of self is observed externally by the author. Bakhtin contends that "only that which was at one time unconditional, in earnest, can become conditional," and it is this state of conditionality which is the prerequisite for double-voiced discourse.[58] In "Olalla", the narrator speaks with an earnest authority that is not matched by the account he gives of himself.[59] The central problem that emerges is his lack of a coherent identity, which is heightened by his current journey into a foreign and exotic country. He perceives himself as Scottish, but also as English, civilised but drawn to degradation, a contented outsider, but longing for company, self-sufficient but desperate for social interaction, irreligious but awed by piety. He is, to a certain extent, self-aware, as he perceives the Padre has "mingled emotions with which to regard me, as a foreigner, a heretic, and yet one who had been wounded for the good cause" (*MM* 144). Any self-knowledge he has is unfortunately clouded by an arrogance that believes he is immune to experience, "beauty I had seen before and not been charmed" (*MM* 148) – an indefensible position for a man who confesses himself besotted with a portrait. Enmeshed in a crisis of self-knowledge, his account is strongly inflected with parody in a manner reminiscent of Lockwood's framing narrative to *Wuthering Heights*. This explicit literary echo is not limited to the narrator's act of smashing a window pane with his bare hand, but pervades the very nature of his character.[60] It is evident in his over-feminized tendency to hysteria, a superficial interest in the appearance of things, an unsubstantiated vanity which comically inflects all his observations, and an illaudable failure to understand the depth and significance of local culture, custom and religion.

After he had written "Olalla," Stevenson troubled over its ethical centre which, he worried, was too deterministic, boxing life into a prefabricated design.[61] In Bakhtin's terms, Stevenson's chosen narrator (who remains enigmatically nameless) must provide a "manner of seeing and portraying" events that will allow the author to "utilize [his discourse] from

[58] Bakhtin, *PDP*, 190.
[59] According to Bakhtin, when fiction employs a narrator, separate from the author, the text's discourse must be either parody or stylisation. Here, because it is recanted as if orally delivered, the narrative retains the distinction of *skaz*.
[60] The link between *Wuthering Heights* and "Olalla" in the smashed window pane has been made by Beattie, but she does not develop the extent of the connection between the texts beyond this incident.
[61] This is similar to Bakhtinian "monologism." See Robert Louis Stevenson, "Chapter on Dreams," *PNE*, 232.

within for his own purposes, forcing us to be acutely aware of the distance between him and this alien discourse."[62] His anxiety that "Olalla" "sound[s] false" may be testament to the extent to which Stevenson has created a narrative voice distinct from and at odds with his own. The "false" element of the tale is rooted in the strange relationship between the narrator's point of view and the other speakers he encounters. Examining the relationship between Olalla and the narrator exposes their failure to understand one another's perspectives which prevents their love from transcending the circumstances. The story emphasises the importance of seeing with another's eyes as a metaphor for communicating effectively and overcoming cultural differences.

The tangible connection between the forest and the past is inscribed on the character of Felipe. Born and bred in the mountainous woodlands of Spain, the narrator describes him as a pan-like, primitive survival.[63] He can only respond to the world with immediacy, there is no opportunity for reflection or evaluation: he has no faculty for imagination or moral reasoning. His failure to construct a library of ideal objects against which he can cross reference the world of visual experience limits his perception of time to an eternal present or the remote, unspecified past, which is echoed by the forest's distortion of linear time. By rendering 'deep time' almost palpable, the forest chronotope encourages the consideration of humankind's commonalities in the present. The narrator notes Felipe's terror of a gorge that plunges to a "wild river" and "some thoughts of Scottish superstition and the river-kelpie passed across my mind" (*MM* 127), pondering whether the Spanish have a similar myth that imbues water's sonorous power with a darker signification. The narrator's query echoes Andrew Lang's assertion that:

> [M]en, with the same needs, the same materials, the same rude instruments, everywhere produced the same kind of arrow-head. No hypothesis of interchange of ideas nor of community of race is needed to explain the resemblance of form in the missiles. Very early pottery in any region is, for the same causes, like very early pottery in any other region. The same sort of similarity was explained by the same resemblances in human nature, when we touched on the identity of magical practices and of superstitious beliefs.[64]

Conceiving the forces of nature as the uncontrollable other of the forest enables the narrator to perceive the commonalities in human cultures more clearly. The Kelpie establishes a folkloric connection between Spain and Scotland, representing the human attempt to achieve

[62] Bakhtin, *PDP*, 190-1.
[63] For a discussion of Felipe's resemblance to Pan in his ambivalent embodiment of cruelty and gentle childlikeness, see Reid, 84-5.
[64] Lang, 22.

mastery over the environment through nomenclature. Myth-making contains the uncanny and rationalises the inexplicable by bringing it into the comprehensible realm of language. Both cultures create narrative in an attempt to move beyond the unknowable and unarticulated to a state of conscious awareness or rationalised acceptance that tames the threat of the river's power. What is articulated is objectified and named, enters into reality and can be rationalised. Language promises a means of exerting control over nature by categorising or labelling phenomena. Where the narrator constantly mediates the world around him through a framework of collected folklore, culturally engendered expectations and restrictive language, Felipe responds to the moment according to instinct and his intimately lived past, springing from one "new idea" (*MM* 126) to the next.

Although spoken language is born of a dialectic struggle within the speaker's mind, there is an expectation that an utterance will convey an internal coherence, realised at the point of engagement with another subject.[65] To begin with, the narrator's language bears the natural, sensual impulses of his fellow traveller. Entering his room at the *residencia* his observations are punctuated by the same violence: "[the wall] was pierced by three windows, lined with some lustrous wood … carpeted with the skins of many savage animals" (*MM* 129). Moving from the forest to the *residencia* has altered the way the Englishman perceives the world. The timelessness of the forest, which appears to evoke the whole history of man, vanishes. Instead, the narrator is confronted with a space heavy with the labours of time. His momentary identification with nature and Felipe expires when their arrival is met with a complete absence of the hospitable rituals associated with civilised culture. At first, the transition appears symbiotic: Felipe "warmly re-echoed my praises" (*MM* 129) of the room, but their accord is broken because Felipe cannot sustain the performance of social propriety. His tendency to respond emotionally cannot be conquered despite his liking for the new guest. Felipe's sudden moods and fluctuations in character are echoed in the narrator's use of elemental imagery: the "changeable flicker" (*MM* 129) of the fire, the "shadow of dusky woods" (*MM* 128), tightens the relationship between impulsiveness and primitivism. Once inside, Felipe loses much of his Pan-like charm, clamming up and refusing to communicate, forcing his companion to disentangle their hitherto sympathetic perspectives.

With the dissolution of the male bond that had developed in the forest, Felipe inherits the potential to be objectivised in the narrator's world, particularly as their dissonance is compounded over his refusal to communicate. His act of protecting his mother endorses the atavistic themes of the narrative as trickery: his grandfather was reportedly mad and allowed his daughter to "run wild" (*MM* 125), abdicating the traditional responsibilities invested in

[65] Holquist, 168.

the paternal figure of the romance for the protection, education and advantageous marriage of the daughter of the estate. Ian Duncan argues that Scott had claimed the feminised spaces of the gothic romance to express the psychological development of the masculine hero in his Waverley novels.[66] Stevenson uses this inheritance to observe a more complicated relationship between genders. He inscribes his masculine narrator with all the traditional psychological and circumstantial attributes of the female subject: he is coalescing from illness, has an over-active imagination, falls in love with the painted image of a lady and is wracked with guilt at the thought of invading a woman's personal space. Furthermore, he imagines himself in terms of his physical appearance, relying on his external charms to recommend him to Olalla.[67] The social structure of the *residencia* is a matriarchy and the most influential family members in the narrative are female.[68] Olalla is a self-determining subject who anticipates the narrator's misunderstanding and misrepresentation of her and consequently resists his formulation of her.

Here is the core of the tragedy exposed by the tale, and the origin of the anxiety that it reads false. Jolly identifies it as "the horror of having no self," trapped in a body with a pre-destined future unable to transcend the circumstances – finalised, in Bakhtinian terms. [69] Although this definition encapsulates an element of the problem, it over-looks the perspective from which Olalla can be said to operate dialogically in the present, despite her ultimately finalised state. She is intensely self-aware and is engaged in her own struggle between will and desire which invests her actions with a certain unpredictability. When the narrator stumbles upon her cold, ascetic chamber he discovers a well-thumbed library discriminated by use and a pile of poetry. This causes him to recoil in "shame and confusion at … the thought that I had thus secretly pushed my way into the confidence of a girl … and the fear she might somehow come to hear of it, oppressed me like guilt" (*MM* 143-4). He confesses: "I had seen her books, read her verses, and thus, in a sense, divined the soul of my mistress" (*MM* 151), although the quality of his reading does not prove particularly insightful. Continuing in this strain, the narrator laments his intrusion into her privacy and renounces his previous impression that the bestial howls provoked by the winds could have been hers.

Within the gothic romance tradition, the space of the bedchamber within the castle is highly significant in terms of fixing identity and intellectual development. Duncan's discussion of

[66] Duncan, *Modern Romance,* 51-105.
[67] This is another echo of Lockwood, who remarks that he must "beware how I cause her to regret her choice [in marriage]," Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*, ed. Ian Jack, introd. Helen Small, (Oxford: OUP, 2009), 10.
[68] See Beattie, "Dreaming, Doubling and Gender," 14.
[69] Jolly, *Stevenson in the Pacific*, 33.

the feminized space of the daughter's bedroom in the paternal property of the Gothic castle traces the tradition back to Richardson: "Clarissa's closet is the precariously private space of (above all) her reading and writing, also the space of our own reading of the epistolary novel; the troping of this field of discourse in terms of the fate of the heroine's body has been well described by recent criticism."[70] His argument emphasises the aesthetics of self-expression made possible through the possession of a private space, a conscious privilege which extended to the reader of the gothic-romance. But the discourse of the closet conveys a dual meaning as there is a latent threat buried in the occupation of a space within the wider context of a paternal estate: "precariously private," the room is easily invaded at any moment, socio-economically dependent on a father figure for both existence and protection. The intimately personal activities of reading and writing are conducted in this room. Texts imply a dialogic quality as in the process of reading, the self is read and achieves a momentary completion, through the illusion of unification with the narrative. Sensitivity towards the word's demand for a response as part of the process for developing meaning endows utterances with the responsibility for representing the self in mediation with the world.

Anxiety over the transgression of this boundary is here justified in the misunderstanding which an encounter with an acknowledged insight into Olalla's notions of selfhood produces. This first failure to recognise the depth of her spiritual commitment results in the painful struggle between sexual desire, intellectual reasoning and spiritual identity which entraps both Olalla and the narrator. Although invested with the connotations of a bodily, sexual threat, the precedent set by Clarissa's chamber as a private room for reading and writing suggests that the narrator's abrupt entry into Olalla's bedroom is tantamount to an assault on her intellectual and spiritual identity. His misreading of her poetry is indicative of a more worrisome inability to understand her as an individual, and an unwillingness to acknowledge that she might occupy a point of view which is distinct from his own. Any alliance between them would be founded on the narrator's fanciful, idealised vision of Olalla, and could not help but prove restrictive to the continual development of her independent voice. The episode places "Olalla" in a tradition of romance vexed by the limitations imposed on female identity by overbearing male authority. Stevenson's treatment of the trope of invasion is interesting as it displaces anxiety onto the male subject and attributes the female protagonist with providing the impetus for action.[71]

[70] See Duncan, *Modern Romance*, 36-7.
[71] This represents a point of difference with Henry Rider Haggard's male fantasy, *She*, ed. Daniel Karlin, (Oxford: OUP, 1998), where the dominant female is still sexually available.

Coupled with Olalla's masculine penchant for study, austere living and poetic faith, is a "heroic spirit" manifest in the woods when she orders her would-be lover to "go away … today" (*MM* 152); commandeering the spirit of command traditionally reserved for the knight. Assertive in her speech, she takes the lead in breaking the ambiguously passionate silence which the narrator insists he is too weak and over-wrought with emotion to summon the strength to shatter. To compound his emasculation, the narrator makes an attempt at suicide: "I could not lose her, I said so, and stood repeating it. And then, like one in a dream, I moved to the window, put forth my hand to open the casement, and thrust it through the pane" (*MM* 154). Even as the narrator enters "a trance-like weakness" (*MM* 155), Olalla rescues him from death "with the strength of a man" (*MM* 156) banishing him to the village before daybreak. Failure to concede to Olalla's authority willingly results in his dramatic removal from the house; whereas Olalla refuses to allow passion to obscure reason, the narrator is swept away by the moment. During his feverishness he laments "the death-cry of my love; my love was murdered … an offence to me" (*MM* 156), until he fancies he "silently perused the story in her face" and is encouraged to confess "nothing matters; I ask nothing; I am content; I love you" (*MM* 157). He consistently reads his own desires into her features rather than trying to discern her true feelings.

His profound misunderstanding of her confession in the "misty clearness" (*MM* 157) of the sick-room is exposed in their final exchange on the edge of the wood at the site of a crucifix. Under the weight of history in the trappings of the *residencia* she is "The girl who does not know and cannot answer for the least portion of herself? Or the stream of which she is a transitory eddy, the tree of which she is a passing fruit" (*MM* 159). Olalla understands herself as ephemeral, seen in the wider context of her deterministic genealogy. The narrator cannot condone such a defeated response to the circumstances of their love, to deny which is to "rebel against the voice of God, which he has made so winning to convince, so imperious to command" (*MM* 159). He exposes the disparity between their voices by unwittingly stiffening Olalla's resistance. Imploring her to recognise God's authority points her towards the source of hope beyond her current bodily weakness, but also forbids her from marrying outside the church. The narrator uncovers two further objections to their union: Olalla explains "it is thought you love me, and the people will not suffer it" (*MM* 166). Within the Catholic culture of the Spanish hills, Olalla is condemned by her family's reputation as cursed degenerates. Although she is, in reality, as earnest in her faith as the villagers, superstition combined with slanderous gossip controls the local imagination. The situation in which Olalla finds herself can be understood according to Foucault's definition of the will to truth as reliant on a system for exclusion. Such a system is cultivated over the reach of human history as social discursive practice is shaped by institutions, eventually leading to

knowledge becoming indivisible from discourse. In Olalla's community, the Church determines "the manner in which knowledge is employed […], the way in which it is exploited, divided and, in some ways, attributed."[72] Olalla's family are known to be irredeemably defiled because the discursive practices of the Church are absorbed by the people and fixed into local myth. Olalla's repulsion at the thought of replicating "this cursed vessel of humanity" (*MM* 160) to another generation derives from local myths as well as her understanding of degenerative theory.

Olalla implores her lover to "look up for a moment with my eyes, and behold the face of the Man of Sorrows" (*MM* 167). For her, the image represents a deeper truth, the comfort that "a sparkle of the divine" lives within her, defined against "the hands of the dead … in my bosom" (*MM* 159). The tension she describes herself experiencing is analogous to Paul's explanation of the Christian life: "Not only creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit (Olalla's spark of the divine), groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies."[73] Without Olalla's eyes, that see the gospel as true and therefore understand the image as a representation of future glory, the narrator has "some sense of what the thing implied" (*MM* 167) but cannot grasp its full power and significance. Rather, for the narrator, the crucifix is "an emblem of sad and noble truths" (*MM* 167) that are another element of a world in decline, "vainly preaching" to passers-by in the twilight of their relevance. This disjunction between a life "leaning on the crucifix" and one who is reminded of a lost state of human faith, eternally divides their souls, rendering the narrator's previous plea that if they were bodily drawn together "it must imply a divine fitness in our souls" (*MM* 153), tragically absurd. Because he cannot sympathise with the way Olalla understands the world, they cannot overcome their differences.

The forest in "Olalla" is a complex chronotope which preserves the purpose of an arena of trial from its earliest manifestations in the chivalric romance, but has an implicit deeper history that unmasks the primitive in man through the disconcerting vacillation between immediacy and timelessness.[74] Olalla, self-controlled and pious, is overcome by physical attraction when she meets her potential lover in the woods. The forest's power to evoke the elemental and undermine civilised thought renders her iron will malleable, and she bends to the sound of her name on her lover's lips. Ultimately, her conscience will not allow her bodily desire to overcome the spiritual, scientific and social knowledge that, in her mind,

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[72] Foucault, "The Order of Discourse," 211.
[73] *Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (London: HarperCollins, 2002) Romans 8:18-23, p. 943.
[74] Lyell discusses the discovery of "deep time" and gives details of the perceived conflict between Christianity and fossil remains that indicated a much older earth than had been previously calculated by theologians. Sir Charles Lyell, *Principles of Geology or the Modern Changes of the Earth and its Inhabitants considered as Illustrative of Geology*, 2 vols, (London: 1875).

forbids their marriage. Just as he reduced Felipe's psychological profile to innocence, the narrator reads Olalla as superficially capricious, a manifestation of "the weaknesses of girls" (*MM* 153) in love. In the space of the *residencia*, Olalla appeals to the narrator's logic and reason, expressing the scientific theory behind her reluctance to reproduce; but even here her explanation implies a deeper spiritual contention. She describes her lot, "we who sit at home with evil" (*MM* 157), and explains that she cannot love him truly, "This capsule, such as it throbs against the sides of animals, knows you at a touch for its master … But my soul, does my soul? I think not; I know not, fearing to ask" (*MM* 158). True marriage is the meeting of two minds in open communication, and the narrator is incapable of recognising Olalla as a thinking subject in her own right which must be read as detriment to the future of their relationship.

Double-voice of the Forest

As with "Olalla", the central relationship that generates the narrative in "Beach of Falesá" is between a British man and a native girl; both stories are told by the love-struck hero, beginning with his arrival in her country. They also share the tropes of a tabooed house where the couple live, a dramatic meeting in a forest, and encounters with clergy, the girl's mother and other members of the alien society. Rather than producing a "gothic" romance as in "Olalla", these components are combined to create a tale which has been called "imperial romance," "hybrid domestic-adventure romance," "social romance" and "subjective adventure."[75] The distinction between two stories with seemingly identical parts derives from the distinctive characters of their tellers and the way they interact with the world. The nameless narrator of "Olalla" is a master of self-deception, highly educated, hypnotised by the "sleeping palace of legend" (*MM* 134), which coaxes his imagination into over-drive. He theorises about the figures he meets, and disregards their voices where they challenge his ideal. Wiltshire, on the other hand, is an obliging working-class adventurer, somewhat self-conscious about his soft heart, which he attempts to obscure with hard talk and brute strength. Nonetheless, he is a keen observer, alive to his own strengths and weaknesses, and aware of his inner fission. If he echoes the nameless narrator's buffoonery, it comes from a lack of education rather than misunderstanding, and serves to emphasise his status as an everyday hero.

[75] Jolly, "Stevenson's 'Stirling Domestic Fiction,'" also used by Joseph Kestner, *Masculinities in British Adventure Fiction* (London: Ashgate, 2010), Katherine Linehan, "Taking Up With Kanakas: Stevenson's Complex Social Criticism in The Bench of Falesá," *ELT* 33 (1990): 407-22.

Crucially, Wiltshire acknowledges the subjectivity of those around him, including his audience, whom he involves in the process of articulating his tale, making it more overtly dialogic than any of Stevenson's earlier forest romances and creating a community of tellers whose stories converge in his experience. Like so many of Stevenson's tales, "The Beach of Falesá" falls into the Russian Formalist category of *skaz*. Wiltshire as a narrator embodies "another person's voice, first and foremost as a socially defined person with a corresponding spiritual level and approach to the world."[76] Addressing others who share his ethnicity, his speech is directed towards (and by) the Imperial discourse which has shaped his thoughts until his arrival on Falesá. As a speech genre, his narrative is acutely aware of itself as continuing a tradition, superficially affirming what has gone before, but carrying a latent dissonance. This unspoken critique of the assumptions of Imperialist thinking is gradually accentuated as he comes into contact with the locals, and is what defines him as an individual subject. In his narration, he explicitly conforms to expectation, issuing statements that signify belief in British racial and cultural superiority. He asks Case to explain to the island chiefs that "I'm a white man and a British subject, and no end of a big chief at home; and I've come here to do them good, and bring them civilisation," and continues to protest "I don't value native talk a fourpenny-piece," presumably because "It's easy to find out what Kanakas think. Just go back to yourself any way round from ten or fifteen years old, and there's an average Kanaka."[77] Yet experience speaks against this discourse and he comes to realise "a superstition grows up in a place like the different kinds of weeds" (*SST* 52). He is as susceptible to the uncanny atmosphere of the woods as any 'Kanaka,' despite the supposed superiority of his cultural origins. Living among the community causes him to recognise that behaviour is not dictated by race, so much as environment.

The chronotope is, therefore, central to this emergent narrative which emphasises the importance of the subject's interaction with the world in the formation of identity and perspective. The forest chronotope is held in tension with that of the beach, which is the social centre of the island. On the shore, "a strange conglomerate of literary expressions and English and American slang, and Beach de Mar, or native English," collide and communication is reduced to a polyglot of dislocated utterances which speak past each other rather than coinciding in any creative understanding.[78] This is emphasised in Wiltshire's tale by the profusion of deceptive talk which intentionally orchestrates a false impression on the beach. The phrase "made believe" is employed ten times throughout the narrative, all but once in relation to social scenes played out between individuals or groups in beach life.

[76] Bakhtin, *PDP*, 192.
[77] Robert Louis Stevenson, "Beach of Falesá," *SST*, 23, 51, 55.
[78] Robert Louis Stevenson, *Selected Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson*, ed. Ernest Mehew, (London: Yale UP, 1997), 468.

Black Jack reads "an odd volume of a novel" (*SST* 11) in place of scripture at Wiltshire and Uma's "wedding;" Wiltshire stages intense interest in his baggage to avoid showing Uma his complicity in the deception; alarmed to find an audience of natives outside their house, Wiltshire theatrically feigns disinterest; acting as Wiltshire's interpreter, Case fabricates the substance of his communication with the chiefs for his rival's benefit; Mr Tarleton demonstrates an aptitude for selective hearing when Wiltshire blasphemes in his presence, and affects to enjoy Uma's salty tea; Maea "made believe [in Case's demons] from dodginess" (*SST* 58), recognising the opportunity to benefit politically from another's exertion of power.

Taken together, all these instances demonstrate that the investment in self-consciously performative speech and action can be deployed as a means of building up or disrupting the community. In Case, Wiltshire recognises an orator who,

> could speak, when he chose, fit for a drawing-room; and when he chose he could blaspheme worse than a Yankee boatswain, and talk smart to sicken a Kanaka. The way he thought would pay best at the moment, that was Case's way, and it always seemed to come natural, and like as if he was born to it. (*SST* 5)

The beach is polyvocal, with every man speaking his own dialect, telling the particular story that suits his interests in a certain situation in an attempt to manipulate social circumstances. Communication becomes difficult in an environment where one must discern the "true" story from an array of competing accounts which each convey or encourage a slightly different interpretation of events. Wiltshire's only haven from this indeterminate world is Uma, with whom "I didn't pretend to myself, and I didn't pretend to her" (*SST* 29). His shame at their inauthentic marriage is intensified by the otherwise genuine connection that springs up between them. Although their language is fragmented, communication between them is well-practiced, and Wiltshire allows himself to block out the discordant voices of the beach.[79]

The space of the forest is resistant to the complex games of subterfuge that structure human interaction in Falesá. Wiltshire is only ostracised on the beach; once under cover of the trees, "I found people willing enough to pass the time of day with me where nobody could see them" (*SST* 46), highlighting the self-conscious performativity in the village. He goes on: "I began to hold little odds and ends of conversation, not too much purpose to be sure, but they took the worst of the feeling, for it's a miserable thing to be made a leper of" (*SST* 47).

Although he still struggles with language, Wiltshire perseveres in his desire to communicate and understand the other from an innate desire to interact. The atmosphere in the wood helps him to see beyond superficial differences; a shared appreciation for the haunting otherness of the forest moves his perspective closer to that of the natives.

> [T]he queerness of the place is more difficult to tell of, unless to one who has been alone in the high bush himself. The brightest kind of day it is always dim down there. A man can see to the end of nothing; whichever way he looks the wood shuts up, one bough folding with another like the fingers of your hand; and whenever he listens, he hears always something new – men talking, children laughing, the strokes of an axe a far way ahead of him, and sometimes a sort of a quick, stealthy scurry near at hand that makes him jump and look to his weapons. It's very well to tell himself that he's alone, bar trees and birds; he can't make out to believe it; whichever way he turns the whole place seems to be alive and looking on. Don't think it's Uma's yarns that put me out; … it's a thing that's natural in the bush. (*SST* 51)

The impenetrable, unfixability of the wood breeds superstition and erodes rationality. There is no solace in feeling a close proximity to nature; the forest communicates nothing, but observes closely, retaining its secrets whilst unlocking Wiltshire's. The forest's density obstructs physical vision but establishes a richer aural experience that borders on the uncanny**.** The thickness of the overgrowth and obvious presence of decay make the tropical forest more menacing than the equivalent European landscape; man is vulnerable to attack from unseen assailants and powerless to decode his surroundings.[80]

Wiltshire's experiences in the forest transcend verbal expression, stripping his response to instinct which exists beneath the self-conscious constructions of language. In the village, he materialises questions of spirituality and faith into denominational issues; he rationalises belief as indicative of other cultures' primitivism. Various missionaries to Falesá are held culpable for the villagers' adherence to Western moral standards, undermining notions of absolute truths into forms of relative values. The forest chronotope reinstates the plausibility of faith, reducing technical debates into acts of personal prayer, acknowledgement (or denial) of God and the devil, harking back to its traditional design as a space of spiritual revelation. Case's trickery manipulates the spiritual beliefs of the islanders through a display of old tins, toys and luminous paint. Before Wiltshire can explode Case's faux-devils, he is

[80] This experience is drawn from Stevenson's accounts of his own project to tame the rainforest at Vailima. He spent many hours fighting back the bush to try and cultivate land on the estate. See *Letters*, vol. 7, 25-7.

caught up in the spiritual confusion caused by ethereal noises issuing from the trees. He sees the square outline of Case's Tyrolean harps, but only partially disbelieves their devilish associations (his brush with folklore teaching him that devils manifest themselves as either pig or woman) he "thought I might as well take the off chance of a prayer being any good" (*SST* 53), illustrating a point of comparison with Uma in dealing with a crisis. Only when he holds the "candlebox" in his hand does his fear sublimate into laughter. For Wiltshire, the spirituality of the forest is realised in the affinity he comes to have with Uma through sharing in her supernaturally-inspired terror and allowing his imagination to be coloured by local tales.

Building on a fear of the forest which has been lodged in local minds from ancient times (Wiltshire notes "this part of the island has lain undisturbed since long before the whites came" [*SST* 53-4]), Case pre-determines what his audience will believe they see. The distinction between the power of suggestion and observation is indicative of the slippage between language and what it seeks to represent, because of the listener's interpretative role. This problem is the substance of the precarious social situation on the babelistic island. Language is used to defer comprehension and complicate the listener's decoding task. People manipulate speech genre and language as a means of speaking in hidden communities, according to rules that are obscured from wider society. With no native language, Wiltshire is at the mercy of Case; without the ability to read English, Uma believes the story Case spins to seal her marriage to Wiltshire and is vulnerable to manipulation by her husband; learning the wrong language inhibits Tarleton's attempt to bring the gospel to the islanders, exposing local converts to attack through fabrications that exploit their newly acquired fears of eternal damnation. These utterances deliberately orientate speech against the hearer, effectively stifling the attempt to communicate.

When Wiltshire enters the forest chronotope, his sense of historical time and geographical difference dissolve, and he responds to his environment with unimpeded immediacy. He drops his racial performance and exposes himself to the local atmosphere without erecting traditional cultural barriers to his perception. His accounts of the forest complicate the attempt to read his story as univocal. His assimilation with native culture, and his desire to understand their perspective, conflicts with the imperialist discourse that tempers his speech in recording and communicating with beach society. Neither Kiely nor Kestner detect "even the faintest irony in the tale"[81] but Wiltshire's final statement is worried by doubleness, heavy with latent irony and self-parody:

[81] Kiely, 170 and Kestner, 152.

> "My public-house? Not a bit of it, nor ever likely. I'm stuck here, I fancy. I don't like to leave the kids, you see: and – there's no use talking – they're better here than what they would be in white man's country, though Ben took the eldest up to Auckland, where he's being schooled with the best. But what bothers me is the girls. They're only half-castes, of course; I know that as well as you do, and there's nobody that thinks less of half castes than I do, but they're mine, and about all I've got. I can't reconcile my mind to their taking up with Kanakas, and I'd like to know where I'm to find the whites?" (*SST* 71)

Wiltshire articulates the imperial line on inter-marriage for the benefit of "you" his white audience, but the rest of his utterance profoundly undermines this adopted stance. His love and pride in his family is obvious in his investment in and anxiety for their futures. He has sacrificed his dream of being a publican to give them the best chance at leading happy lives, protecting them from the prejudice of "white man's country." It is a defeated acknowledgement that the "civilised" world sees his children differently because of their parentage that causes his despair, rather than the shade of their skin.

This rupture in his narrative is indicative of Bakhtin's most sophisticated phase of dialogism, when participants in the dialogue "clothe themselves in discourse, become utterances, become the positions of various subjects expressed in discourse, in order that dialogic relationships might arise among them."[82] This formal requirement for dialogism is complicated further by the introduction of Wiltshire's self-parodic tendencies. According to Bakhtin, parody is similar to stylization, where:

> [T]he author again speaks in someone else's discourse, but in contrast to stylization parody introduces into that discourse a semantic intention that is directly opposed to the original one. The second voice, once having made its home in the other's discourse, clashes hostilely with its primordial host and forces him to serve directly opposing aims. Discourse becomes an arena battle between two voices. In parody, therefore, there cannot be that fusion of voices possible in stylization or in the narration of a narrator …; the voices are not only isolated from one another, separated by a distance, but are also hostilely opposed.[83]

As a subject, Wiltshire is alloyed to the imperial project both by the nature of his employment as a trader and his cultural heritage as a nineteenth-century Englishman, yet he

[82] Bakhtin, *PDP*, 183.
[83] *Ibid*., 193.

is inherently uncomfortable with the exploitative aspects implicit in this identity. His speech reflects this contrariness, and it becomes more evident in the conflicting voices held within his narrative. The competing discourses create a tension that pervades his language, giving the text that energy which Kiely attributes to the attempt to overlay a tropical landscape with Victorian laws of morality. This is only a manifestation of the deeper psychological struggle in which Wiltshire, the narrator, is engaged. His instinct is juxtaposed with the discourse appropriate to an imperial adventure-romance and the befitting sentiments of a masculine adventure-hero which are suitable to its frame. The rhetoric which has educated his expectations falls in contradiction to the world he discovers on the island. He can no longer support the story that his fireside audience expect (and have trained him) to tell. Although he refuses to denounce the racist ideas common to classic imperial adventure explicitly, the *fabula* of his account resists endorsing the hollow repetitions that his narrative occasionally articulates.

Earlier in his narrative, he has allowed his mask of nationalist pride to slip. From his first moments in the South Seas, he reveals a detachment from Britain. This first becomes obvious in his abortive attempt to "dream England" as he has been taught is appropriate for an imperial officer abroad. Against this imperial-romance imperative, his genuine feelings immediately spring to the surface: "I was dreaming England, which is, after all, a nasty, cold, muddy hole, with not enough light to read by" (*SST* 17). This acknowledgement allows one to read quite a different intonation into his self-styled lament "I'm stuck here, I fancy." The lack of light becomes a paltry excuse for the inherent racism that he has come to realise impairs his fellow countrymen's view of the world. His self-definition as "a common, low, God-damned white man and British subject" (*SST* 35) courts his fellow traders' assent by echoing their racist, imperial discourse, while simultaneously expressing bitter frustration at the obtuseness of the ethnic category.[84] Kiely's fear that "the brittle surface of popular adventure … is under serious strain … [and] threatens to shatter its own simple frame" is symptomatic of Wiltshire's fraught identity. Any imperialist views he articulates are eschewed by his descriptions of the racial composition of his neighbours, his marital fidelity and, later, his paternal care.[85]

The double-voiced discourse embodied in Wiltshire's repressed response to his new environment is complicated and strengthened by his experience of subjection at the hands of Case. Wiltshire's identity is aligned with the natives from the second he alights on the shores of Falesá because of Case's tyrannical reign over islanders and white-traders alike. He is

[84] This is particularly emphasised by the expansive and increasingly arbitrary nature of the category on Falesá. The other "whites" on the island are the "yellow" Case and the Negro Black Jack.
[85] Kiely, 179.

subject to Case's rule to an even greater extent because he believes the story Case tells, at first uncritically allowing himself to be written into it. In an attempt to fall in with the white men of the island, consistent with the expectations of imperial discourse, "the hero's speech has already begun to cringe and break under the influence of the anticipated words of another, with whom the hero, from the very first step, enters into the most intense internal polemic."[86] Wiltshire puts up no resistance, but happily ignores his suspicions, imbibing Case's assurance that "nobody would touch my things, everyone was honest in Falesá" (*SST* 6) – a statement heavy with proleptic irony as Case personally ensures nobody touches Wiltshire or his store when he implicates him in Uma's taboo by marriage. Wiltshire already exposes a pre-disposition to discomfort at participating in white exploitation of the colonised. Despite finding self-justification for his despicable marriage contract, "but it was the practice in these parts, and (as I told myself) not the least fault of us white men, but of the missionaries" (*SST* 11), the excuses sound hollow in his retelling. Fully admitting that he partially disbelieves the story he tells, even at the start of his faux-marriage, Wiltshire demonstrates the central conflict already latent in his role as an imperialist male. His discomfort in the actions and politics embodied by Case and his associates stops him from pursuing the immediate sense of subjection he encounters in their company, preferring to avoid further interaction. Even before his marriage and love for Uma blossom into a half-caste family, Wiltshire is suppressing uneasiness with his socially and economically necessary acts as an imperialist.

The forest chronotope provides a locus for self-revelation and renewal which is more meaningful than simply altering the dimensions of the romance illusion. The depth of love between the Wiltshires is confirmed in their actions on behalf of one another in the forest, despite having to face their deepest psychological fears. Uma's taboo is redeemed through her white husband's love and sacrifice, the beach celebrates the end of prejudice and fear with Case's demise, but the narrative refuses to close harmoniously. Although Uma may have discovered a white man capable of overcoming his personal prejudices, his discourse is marked by an inherent racism, indicative of the wider problems perpetuated by British Imperial discourse. Wiltshire's double-voiced discourse proves that the forest loses its potency when he returns to the real world of the adventure-romance, except that the truth revealed by the forest is more authentic than the artificial communications that structure the beach community; the stories spun to save face and erect masks in village life are the "sham" dream-world that prevent authentic dialogic engagement from taking place.

[86] Bakhtin, *PDP*, 227-8.

Conclusions

From his first experiments in reinvigorating the romance world of the forest, Stevenson imagined the space as dialogic, reverberating with the arguments and philosophies of centuries past and reconnecting in the minds of present-day subjects. The forest chronotope in *The Black Arrow* and *Prince Otto* engages with the diachronic tradition of chivalric romance, critiquing the role of the forest as a space for adventure where glorious deeds are enacted in order that the knightly hero is written into legend. Introducing the historicising presence of the road chronotope establishes an interchronotopic dialogism that preserves the hero's historicised identity and dislocates him from the sylvan world he inhabits. Time is experienced with recourse to a new subjectivity in Stevenson's forests, causing the traditional process of the knight's Christianized revelation, redemption and restoration to be reinvested in personal experience. "The Treasure of Franchard" and "Olalla" each visualise the forest chronotope as dialogic but their protagonists attempt to finalize time and space, fixing the world according to preconceived ideas dreamed up in consultation with chivalric romance tradition. The other characters of these tales undermine this project by retaining distinctive voices that strive to dialogise the word and embrace the opportunity to debate and adapt according to the forest's revelations, moment by moment. "The Beach of Falesá" reimagines the forest as an emblem of revelation, truth and reality, where man can escape the competing discourses of the civilised world. Yet Wiltshire cannot disassociate himself from his cultural origins, which leads to the double-voiced discourse in which the tale is told. Stevenson takes the ancient romance space of the forest and re-inscribes the nature of self-revelation experienced by the hero, encouraging him to recapitulate his understanding of his position in time and space.

PART TWO

Chapter IV: Master Chronotopes

Defining the Master Chronotope: Bakhtin's World

Todorov records a significant change in Bakhtin's engagement with genre as his notion of the chronotope forms:

> When Bakhtin returns to the question of genre, ten years later, his conception has become more focused and restricted. There is no longer question, with respect to genres, of an orientation toward the interlocutor but only of a relation between the text and the world – of the model of the world put forward by the text. This modelling is analysed at the same time into its constitutive elements, which turn out to be two: space and time. … To designate these two essential categories that always occur in conjunction with each other, Bakhtin coins the term *chronotope*, that is, the set of distinctive features of time and space within each literary genre. Given the definition of genre, the two words, genre and chronotope, will become synonymous.[1]

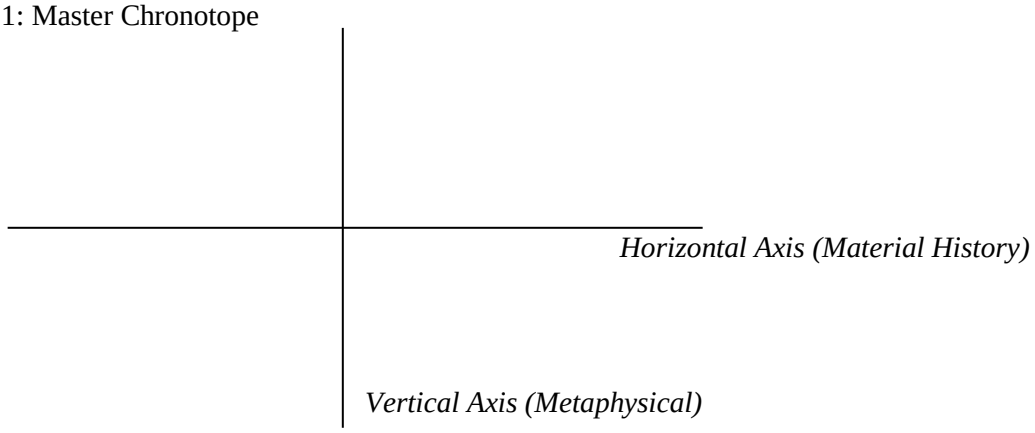
Although Todorov goes on to argue that in developing his chronotope theory, Bakhtin undermines his own assimilation of the principle with genre by devolving the chronotope into categories which are more equivalent to aspects of discourse, it is useful to see that genre theory was the field of research to which Bakhtin believed chronotopes contributed. With this in mind, it is possible to identify the idea present behind Bakhtin's discussions of time and space in more works than have hitherto been recognised, such as *Rabelais and His World*.[2] In his doctoral thesis, Bakhtin charts the crucial shift between Medieval and Renaissance thinking that heralds the arrival of a new textual model of the world. Through a change in the basic conception of time and space, Bakhtin posits Rabelais' invention of the

[1] Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 83.
[2] Emerson and Morson, 65-6, do not include this in their chapter on chronotopes, although Bakhtin was writing both during the same period.

genre of grotesque realism, which defined Renaissance literature apart from its medieval predecessor.[3]

Bakhtin first introduces the concepts of time and space as interlocked along two specific axes which define human thought. These are the vertical axis, which stretches between Hell (the underworld in Greek mythology), the earth and Heaven (Elysian Fields), and the horizontal axis, which represents historical time in the material world [Fig. 1]. Bakhtin observes that, before Rabelais, "The concrete, visible model of the earth on which medieval thought was based was essentially vertical. This hierarchical movement also determined the idea of time, which was conceived as horizontal. Therefore the horizontal was considered outside of time, and time was not essential for hierarchical ascent. There was no conception of progress, of moving forward in time. … Medieval eschatology devalued time."[4] Bakhtin points to Dante's *Divine Comedy* as the typical literary text that emerges from this way of understanding spatial-temporal structure. He describes the plight of individual souls along the vertical axis and their attempts to attain heaven or, at least, avoid the eternal damnation of hell. Stevenson clearly understood this as a crucial feature of the medieval experience. His short story "A Lodging for the Night" obscures the historically distinctive face of Paris under thick snow, effectively reducing the historicity of the tale to the figure of the date. On this blank, extratemporal map, Villion spends his time philosophising over the existence of God, personal morality and the aesthetics of poverty. The tale is punctuated by untimely death caused by murder, the cold and wolves. These startling reminders of Bakhtin's vertical axis fail to push Villion towards the comforts of Christian orthodoxy and merely provoke him to more aggressive questioning of the faith he encounters in those around him.

Fig. 1: Master Chronotope



[3] Bakhtin, *RW*, 24-5.
[4] *Ibid*., 402.

Out of this precept of narrative extratemporality, a literature that acknowledged the *presentness* of human experience emerged. This new literary mode radically sought to incorporate the historical moment, acknowledging the existence of the horizontal axis for the first time. Bakhtin defines one further characteristic which is necessary in creating this literary threshold and ultimately informs his chronotope theory: a change in the linguistic atmosphere. According to Bakhtin, the languages competing for supremacy in any given culture exert a controlling influence over the types of literary creativity that are able to flourish. "In medieval Latin, which levels all things, the marks of time were almost entirely effaced; here consciousness seemed to live on in an eternal, unchanging world. In such a system it was particularly difficult to look around in time and space, that is, to become aware of the peculiar traits of one's own nationality and homeland."[5] The impact of language on the literary form and the collective imagination becomes a central component in the way time-space is conceived.

With Rabelais and the Renaissance restructuring of the world, the medieval obsession with each individual's spiritual ascent or descent along the vertical axis was eradicated and replaced by a different schema that took a more corporeal view of things. Universalism entered into patterns of thought and structured perceptions of the world, transforming life into a collaborative and self-perpetuating progression towards a brighter, historical future.[6] Time becomes horizontal, related to the material world rather than distributed along an unseen progression towards (or regression from) the abstract heavenly places. The human race is constantly rejuvenating and being perfected as each generation build on the insights and successes of their forefathers. In Bakhtin's vision, life is fertilised from the ground where the dead decompose, establishing a direct link between decay and renewal. This connection maintains an equilibrium and a cyclical unity; re-birth accompanies death, perpetuating a relative thrust forward even at the moment of decease.[7] Bakhtin expresses the radical nature of this philosophical revolution as "The idea that man becomes more nearly perfect is completely cut off from the vertical ascent."[8] He ties the transformation directly to the changing circumstances of the language people used to communicate. Speaking and writing in the "dead" language of Latin, removed from the everyday utterances and transactions of daily survival, limited the scope of the literary imagination. If one is bound to express thought in a rigid, non-evolving language, the words become a restrictive prison,

[5] *Ibid*., 467.
[6] Bakhtin, *RW*, 406.
[7] This is typical of the carnivalesque and is illustrated in the motif of the pregnant old hag which was a popular image in art of the period according to Bakhtin.
[8] Bakhtin, *RW*, 407.

bound by rules invented to fit a past way of thinking about, relating to and processing a world consigned to history.[9]

In contrast to this, Renaissance France was alive to three different tongues which interacted and shaped one another, defining the vernaculars of spoken, regional French dialects, and official, standardized French against written Latin.[10] As Bakhtin explains, "The new, horizontal movement forward in real time and space is the prevailing note here. Man's improvement is attained not by the rise of the individual soul toward the hierarchical higher spheres but by man's historical development."[11] It was through the differing perspectives expressed and expressible in and between these linguistic variants that Bakhtin argues "the boundaries of epochs and philosophies could for the first time embrace vast dimensions and measure the flow of time; … could realize the present … [and] contrast "today" with "yesterday.""[12] Time is only meaningfully traceable when the language used to convey it is dynamic and plastic, malleable to change. It then becomes easier to distinguish between the present articulated thought and those notions that were held as true in the past; a distinction Stevenson notes in his essays on life in Fontainebleau and later works into his fictional uses of Gaelic in "The Merry Men", *Kidnapped* and "Thrawn Janet."

The competition between dialect and nationalised tongues in the everyday experience of Renaissance man not only privileged the succession of historic time, but also reified attachment to a particular geographical or regional space.[13] In the conjunction of these two constitutive planes of being, the influence of Bakhtin's chronotope theory becomes explicit: "If the interorientation and the mutual clarification of the major languages rendered the awareness of time and its changes more acute, it also stimulated the awareness of historic space in the dialects, which strengthened and expressed the local, provincial peculiarities."[14] Anything that implies a shift in how time is processed and understood must have an echo in the way space is conceived. Added to the concurrence of these factors, Bakhtin introduces the third strand which is essential in the formation of a literary chronotope: language. The innovations Bakhtin observes in Renaissance fiction after Rabelais hinge on a specific trilingual climate being established in France over the preceding centuries. The old printed

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[9] Bakhtin, *RW*, 466, contends "The rebirth of Cicero's Latin made it a dead language. The contemporary world, the new times, broke the bonds of Cicero's language and its pretence at being a living idiom." Cerquiglini-Toulet, 7-9, discusses the relationship between language and the emergence of a new literary genre as being heavily influenced by place.

[10] This idea is consistently implicit in medieval literary studies. For a detailed account, see R. Anthony Lodge, *French: From Dialect to Standard* (London: Routledge, 1993).

[11] Bakhtin, *RW*, 407.

[12] *Ibid*., 467-8.

[13] For a discussion of the transition between Latin and French in terms of geographical provinces, see Lodge, 55.

[14] Bakhtin, *RW*, 469.

word of Latin was gently eased out of exclusive use in France during the Renaissance period, as writing in the vernacular was permitted to flourish for the first time. Using a vernacular spoken language evolving in the present-day as the vehicle for literature injected a new presentness into the word on the page and recreated a sensation of current value which was lost when a writer worked in the unfamiliar, finished language of Latin.[15] The daily use of language provides an essential context for reinvigorating literature through the possibility of conveying an image of the living world in the words of that world. When vocabulary is constantly being refined by popular usage, words become dynamic, enriching their meaning apart from their literary inscription in everyday spoken transactions, which in turn produces new readings of their printed counterparts. Bakhtin later expands this thought in his essay "Speech Genres", which argues that "words belong to nobody, and in themselves evaluate nothing. But they can serve any speaker and be used for the most varied and directly contradictory evaluations on the part of the speaker."[16] It is through continual employment that the inert dictionary term is enabled to acquire the colour, depth and richness that give language its power and intensity. This, in turn, implies that the literary text can inhabit the same continuous state of becoming as it is written and as it is read in an open-ended dialogue with everyday speech.

For Bakhtin, Rabelais's fiction exemplifies the Renaissance worldview of this continuous, unbroken present, which transforms literature into a dynamic record of eternal becoming. This universal and continuous present fosters a celebration of the repetitive, cyclical here and now of history; a worldview which then fuels the literary mind and generates a new, creative genre that sees life as organic and progressive. According to Bakhtin, medieval thinkers emphasised the importance of representing the plight of the individual soul through highly stylised, religious literary allegory; now the world in all its richness enters literature, bringing an exhilarating confusion to the boundary line between life and art. A sense of the continual progress in understanding, creativity, technology and human achievement is mapped into literary works that capture an immediate, celebratory representation of existence. The carnival is, of course, a fundamental part of this tableau, and the processes of crowning and decrowning still inscribe some hierarchical proportions on the world. Now, this rigid social stratification is always in danger of being usurped – if only temporarily – which undermines the strength of the bonds holding these conventions in place outside carnival season.

Another marker of carnivalesque literature is the universalization of processes fundamental to life: Bakhtin argues that eating, drinking, excreting, copulating, dying, praising and

[15] *Ibid*., 466.
[16] Bakhtin, *SG*, 85.

abusing are all everyday acts which become characteristic of the form.[17] These deeds, although carried out by individuals in the literary text, often function representatively and become universal through their banality and grotesque exaggeration. Death is often figured in the same body as – or at least occurring in simultaneity with – birth, collapsing the image into a rebirth that is illustrative of another threshold moment in the endless, wider process of humankind's becoming. The old, pregnant hag is a popular image in folkloric tradition, which Bakhtin claims is grafted into the grotesque spirit by Rabelais's depiction of birth, death and renewal, and originates in the double-sided images associated with the "bodily lower stratum." Each generation begins with the culmination of their parents' achievements and carries these ideas forward: death is not absolute, or even an end, but a new beginning that stretches into a future of eternal becoming whose hallmark is constant innovation. This dramatic and large-scale change in the way time-space is represented in literary texts is what is meant by the term "master chronotope."

The next overhaul of the master chronotope occurred at the Enlightenment when humanity's identity as a universalised, progressive race was essentially jettisoned for a more introspective worldview. History, which had been imagined as a narrative of progress through identification with the shared values and destiny of the individual man, became individualised once again. Heredity was not important, the world had to be reimagined, reconfigured and redesigned through the concerted efforts of individuals.[18] Significantly, Edinburgh, Stevenson's birth place, was one of the centres of European enlightenment thought.[19] Individual pioneers in philosophy, law, geology, history and medicine emerged at the university, recreating the boundaries of thought through the establishment of several new academic disciplines.[20] This legion of scholarship was discriminated over by critics who guided the lay reader in the manner of their engagement with the most deserving of these texts, emphasising the individual's response as a mark of distinction above all.[21] The Enlightenment period, Bakhtin claims, "had a lack of historical sense, an abstract and rationalist utopianism," which stemmed from the belief that reinvention is only possible through a complete break from the past.[22] He traces the history of laughter in *Rabelais*, stating that the muted pre-Romantic laughter is "the expression of [a] subjective, individualistic world outlook very different from the carnival folk concept of the previous ages, although still containing some carnival elements." Furthermore, he suggests that

[17] Bakhtin, *RW*, 84-96.
[18] See Harrison, "Enlightenment," 107-52.
[19] David Allan makes the case for the significance of Scotland in understanding the intellectual impact of the Enlightenment period. David Allan, *Making British Culture: English Readers and the Scottish Enlightenment* (London: Routledge, 2010).
[20] *Ibid*., 7.
[21] *Ibid*., 33.
[22] Bakhtin, *RW*, 116.

"Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, [is] a peculiar transposition of Rabelais' and Cervantes' world concept into the subjective language of the new age," which reaffirms the direct link between language, worldview, time and space in shaping literary creativity.[23]

A similar claim, more directly relevant to Stevenson's influences, can be made for Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* series. Scott's establishment of the historical novel as a genre (and therefore a unique major chronotope) coincided with many of the major innovations in scientific research happening in Edinburgh. Investigating the past and discovering new ways of coming to terms with its lingering legacies is here translated into a means of structuring literature. By processing historical events in the light of modern discoveries and understanding, Scott transposed history into the literary language of his epoch, and used it to discuss contemporary problems. Possibly his most significant contribution to literary history remains his innovative ability to fictionalise history by inscribing an individual crisis or moment of transition (becoming) onto the grander narrative of national identity. Scott is representative of the wider post-Enlightenment trend which desired to rewrite the world from the position of now; it seemed to these industrious pioneers that they were living at a time when humankind's cultural, scientific and technological potential was being realised. Broadly speaking this mind-set, which tended towards solipsistic individualism, is often associated with the Romantic poets; although the Romantics ironized their expression of this vision, the essential chronotopic attitude towards life in a post-Christian, scientific era remained consistent. Progress and achievement is only limited by the imagination in a world where the past provides a point of definition against the present, and acts as a pivotal moment in forging the future.

The spirit of progress and an increasing interest in temporality, historicity and individual experience continued to define the attitudes of Victorian Britain. This was especially evident in the evolution of the realist novel, which was the dominant form of fictional narrative until the *fin-de-siècle*.[24] This increased emphasis on Bakhtin's horizontal axis had coexisted, to a greater or lesser extent, alongside a vertical 'metanarrative' embedded in Britain's Christian heritage.[25] Fiction of the Victorian period is often organised according to a subtext that believes in heaven and trusts things will ultimately be put right by the just judge, but

[23] *Ibid*., 36.
[24] Arata notes this as one of the many signs thought to indicate the truth of degenerative theory as manifest in literary practice. Arata, *Fictions of Loss*, chapter one, 181-4.
[25] The Enlightenment introduced several influential voices of dissent: David Hume's *A History of England* is strikingly secular, Thomas Hobbes embodied a sceptical philosophical tradition which argued against the Christian position, and the Romantic poets further challenged religious assumptions. Those who held these views were still very much in the minority.

demands to see social responsibility and justice meted out on earth nonetheless.[26] Dickens typifies this in the social agenda that runs through his fiction alongside a Christianised rhetoric surrounding death and heaven. Despite his Christian sympathies, he was deeply critical of several religious movements which he felt neglected to attend to social problems in favour of preaching the gospel.[27] In his fiction, a spirit of change, progress and correction is often traced through individual cases of justice ideally administered by a paternalistic social system. There are many echoes of Renaissance ideals within this paradigm: an emphasis is placed on the present-state-of-things, humanity's relationship to a higher being shadows the progress offered by the historicised present which is emphasised in the process of becoming. Owen identifies the same trend, arguing that over the course of the nineteenth century, "the geography of self shifted dramatically as attention was redirected from a higher, timeless, or divine aspect to the subterranean, temporal, and mundane foundations of human personality."[28] Most significantly then, the Enlightenment investigations into the nature of selfhood are retained in Victorian literature through the negotiation of the relationship between the individual and society, which increasingly finds a locus in the singular complexity of the individual.

By the *fin-de-siècle* there is another discernible change in the way the world is understood, and some of the assumptions and systems used to define time-space in the preceding epochs strain under the weight of these new ideas.[29] The first, and potentially most researched, of these big ideas is the cultural currency Darwin's theories gained.[30] Many (including Darwin himself) found it difficult to combine evolution theory with the existence of a creator-God. Biblical notions of time had held sway over society for centuries. Theological resistance to scientific practice is similarly evident in the struggle Sir Charles Lyell describes with relation to extrapolating the suggestive evidence provided by a growing fossil record, which pointed to a much older earth than the Church officially allowed for by its calculations from scripture. The idea that there was consolation in a future world to come that expunged the present realities of suffering, inequality and death shaped much of culture. The historic world was not the only or the most significant reality and this impacted the way lives were

[26] Relevant here is William Booth's establishment of the Salvation Army (1878) which is a Christian denomination dedicated to combining social action with gospel belief, and the Oxford Movement's influence on theology in the Anglican church which prioritised earthly beauty over spiritual concerns. See Glenn K. Horridge, *The Salvation Army: Origins and Early Days, 1865-1900* (Godelming: Ammonite Books, 1993) and Hilary Fraser, *Beauty and Belief: Aesthetics and Religion in Victorian Culture* (Cambridge: CUP, 1986).
[27] See Andrew Sanders, *Charles Dickens* (Oxford: OUP, 2003), 140-6.
[28] Owen, 115.
[29] The impact of scientific theories on the literary imagination in the nineteenth century is traced by Gillian Beer's seminal work, *Darwin's Plots*.
[30] Joseph Carroll, *Reading Human Nature: Literary Darwinism in Theory and Practice* (Albany: U Presses Marketing, 2011). See particularly Part Four, 197-277.

lived and was often used to justify the way nations acted (albeit with limited or no reference to Biblical principles). For the best part of two thousand years, morality, behaviour, attitudes and life-choices had been shaped according to a higher authority; God's existence was both abused to wield power and seen as a comfort and encouragement to live an upright life. The general acceptance of God shaped the way individuals understood each other and themselves in relation to the world. Without a universally accepted idea of God, the whole arrangement of time-space alters drastically. Bakhtin's vertical axis does not exactly disappear, but is relabelled. If God might not exist, then historical time which had been gaining credence throughout literary history suddenly becomes the only universally accepted axis on which human experience functions. Without a concept of a higher being, there can be no heaven and no hell. In which case, here and now – the horizontal – is all, and morality is open to be redefined.[31]

This thought permeated literature with the doubt, insecurity, increasing subjectivity, loss and fragmentation that is so endemic at the *fin-de-siècle*.[32] The writers who found themselves left questioning any hope beyond the world that confronted them were driven to a closer examination of the human experience that looked to the human mind to find a new purpose. This resulted in several phenomena: an increasing interest in the fields of psychology, heredity and spiritualism.[33] Although Stevenson's Presbyterian family continued to exert some influence over his spiritual ideas, his investigations into theories of the mind and the latest scientific research into the deep past intrigued him considerably; his travelogue *In the South Seas* is now widely regarded as much as an anthropological study as anything else. These influences have received deserved attention in Stevenson Studies of late, with Julia Reid's valuable work on the relationships between Stevenson and F. W. H. Myers, James Sully and Herbert Spencer, the evolutionary psychologists.[34] Her book explores the impact of evolutionary psychology on Stevenson's imagination and also considers how notions of inheritance and heredity shape anthropological culture. This progression provides a model

[31] For a discussion of Bakhtin's obsession with ethics and his notion of the superaddressee, see Emerson and Morson, 135-8. Stevenson can be seen to investigate similar ideas to Bakhtin's superaddressee in some of his essays. See Stevenson, *ES*, 5-56.
[32] See Arata, *Fictions of Loss*, Lyn Pykett (ed. & introd.), *Reading Fin-de-Siècle Fiction* (London: Longman, 1996). This view has more recently been critiqued in reference to the emergence of Modernism by Owen, 8-16, and Landy and Saler.
[33] See Charles Atkins, *Spiritualism, Mesmerism and the Occult, 1800-1920*, ed. Shane McCorristine, vols. 3-4, (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012). Roger Luckhurst, *The Invention of Telepathy, 1870-1901* (Oxford: OUP, 2002), Sarah Willburn and Tatiana Kontou, (eds.) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Nineteenth-Century Spiritualism and the Occult* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012). For a discussion of spiritualism and the Fabian Society, see Jonathan Rose, *The Edwardian Temperament, 1895-1919* (Ohio: Ohio UP, 1986), chapter one. See Owen, "Introduction," chapter one and chapter four for a discussion of the diversification of the spiritual realm beyond orthodox forms of Christianity, and how this related to questions of selfhood and identity.
[34] Reid, 6, 25-30.

for how ideas about the human mind invariably led to an interest in the origins of the human race, in the absence of Eden. A stronger sense of heredity is another outworking of the crisis in human identity which has a notable influence on the literary output of the period. Gothic returns are a mutation of this impulse to look to the past for an explanation of current trends in human behaviour, patterns of thinking and bodily conditions. This weight of history is given a psychological manifestation in Freudian psychology, and is intriguingly foreshadowed in some of Stevenson's critical essays, as well as his fiction.[35] By considering one of Stevenson's first fictional publications it is possible to see more specifically how the master chronotope of the *fin-de-siècle* influenced his work.

Stevenson's *Fin-de-Siècle* Vision: 'The Pavilion on the Links'

"Pavilion on the Links" is a remarkable short story that exemplifies Stevenson's theory that fiction ought to enable the reader to enter the world of the narrative – providing a space where incidents could be examined from numerous perspectives and ideas could be interrogated from several competing views. Even though it's one of his earliest works of fiction, it is indicative of his penchant for experiment. It exposes several different ways of thinking about time and space, and his later revisions emphasise the emergent *fin-de-siècle* concerns with endings, dissipation and loss. There are a couple of ways Stevenson's treatment of conventional chronotopes implies a larger paradigm shift in cultural perceptions of time-space in the final decades of the nineteenth century, which gestures towards the master chronotope he was writing into being.

Although it is not among his most famous works today, Arthur Conan Doyle viewed "Pavilion on the Links" as one of Stevenson's two masterpieces, describing it as,

> the very model of dramatic narrative. That story stamped itself so clearly on my brain when I read it in *Cornhill* that when I came across it again many years afterwards in volume form, I was able instantly to recognize two small modifications of the text – each very much for the worse – from the original form.[36]

[35] See Stevenson, "Pastoral," *MP*, "Pulvis et Umbra," *ES*, "Chapter on Dreams," *PNE*. Much of Beattie's work also investigates the psychological and psychoanalytical in Stevenson's oeuvre, "Dreaming, Doubling and Gender;" "Father and Son: the Origins of Robert Louis Stevenson's Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde," *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* 56 (2001): 317-60.
[36] Conan Doyle, 120.

Conan Doyle is right to express such admiration, but the modifications he refers to as weakening the tale offer a glimpse of Stevenson's involvement in a wider cultural trend. Victorian beliefs in progress, expansion, self-improvement and God were being threatened by new archaeological, anthropological and geological research that revealed humanity's limited place in the history of the world. The future looked less secure or predictable in the light of "deep time", and innovative theories such as primitivism and degeneration.[37] From the alterations Stevenson made between the *Cornhill* 1880 version and the 1882 book edition of "Pavilion on the Links," it is possible to trace an increasingly historicised, individualistic and degenerative perspective in Stevenson's writing, that reinforces this transformation in conceiving time and space.[38] His 1880 text is peppered with familial references such as "your dear mother" (*TI&NAN* 291), "your unhappy grandfather" (*TI&NAN* 313), and "my dear children" (*TI&NAN* 328), that position the text very precisely in relation to its audience, following the convention of the traditional Scottish Tale. These allusions give the piece a reassuringly progressive Victorian frame, focused on passing experience down to the next generation. The 1882 revisions emphasise the tragedy of Clara's death and undermine the solace Frank finds in his children. Instead of overhearing an intimate family tale that promises a much bigger ancestral story, the reader of the 1882 text is haunted by a past that mars the present with regret, loss and death. The tone of the narrative becomes unhealthily nostalgic causing a sense of time stagnating into memory. The allure of the past inhibits the future from becoming, positioning the story in the *fin-de-siècle* mode of loss and end-times.

Several traditional means of understanding the individual's situated point in time and space are directly challenged by Frank's experience on the links. Death is never far from his consciousness; the ephemeral state of man in relation to nature, history and culture is always on the edge of articulation. The land itself provides a metaphor for this in what becomes a refrain:

> The country, I have said, was mixed sand-hill and links; LINKS being a Scottish name for sand which has ceased drifting and become more or less solidly covered with turf. … The quicksands were of great extent at low water, and had an infamous reputation in the country. …, it was said they would swallow a man in four minutes and a half; but there may have been

[37] See J. Edward Chamberlin and Sander L. Gilman, (eds.), *Degeneration: The Dark Side of Progress* (New York: Columbia UP, 1985), John Glendening, *The Evolutionary Imagination in late-Victorian Novels: An Entangled Bank* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), and Arata, *Fictions of Loss*, 33-4.

[38] For this reason some of the following quotations are taken from an edition which includes the textual variants: Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island and New Arabian Nights*, ed. and introd. M. R. Ridley, (London: Dent, 1962).

> little ground for this precision … the place told of nothing but dead mariners and sea disaster. (*NAN* 285)

No certainty can be sustained by such a landscape; everything is open to contestation and redefinition. The sea, an ancient metaphor of the eternal rhythms in nature, brings chaos and disaster, emphasising man's liminality. The shore is far from firm and stable – "more or less" fixed, but disintegrating from solid turf to sand hill and quicksands over the course of Frank's description.

This instability is by no means limited to the countryside – the man-made structures in the story are similarly subject to visible decay. By and large, Victorian fiction teaches us to expect estates to be synonymous with the hero – in the *Bildungsroman* the protagonist tends to find himself by inheriting or establishing his household at the end of the novel.[39] In gothic fiction, this archetype receives a few modifications, but the solidity of property remains the central belief – the theme of inheritance is broadened rather than reduced. One of the more specific chronotopes Bakhtin outlines in "Time and Chronotope in the Novel" is "gothic-castle-time" which emphasises the importance of the ancestral past in understanding the space of the castle:

> the place … of historical figures of the past; … [described] in furnishings, weapons, the ancestral portrait gallery, the family archives and in the particular human relationships involving the dynastic primacy and the transfer of hereditary rights. … legends and traditions animate every corner of the castle and its environs through their constant reminders of past events.[40]

Family artefacts signify the living generation's duty to honour their personal history, echoing Burke's contention in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* that inheritance, of property and values, establishes the parameters for behaviour.[41] Taking these prototypes together, Graden ought to be stable, enduring and grand - actually, Stevenson imagines a crumbling barrack: "built of a soft stone, liable to consume in the eager air of the seaside, it was damp and draughty within and half ruinous without" (*NAN* 284). The link between the estate and the family line is not lost. Northmour is single, violent towards women (and therefore likely to remain so) and ultimately to die without an heir while fighting in

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[39] Allan Hepburn (ed.), *Troubled Legacies: Narrative and Inheritance* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2007) see especially Bradley D. Clissold, "Heredity and Disinheritance in Joyce's *Portrait*," 191-218.
[40] Bakhtin, *DI*, 246.
[41] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2003) 12 Jan. 2014 <http://www.myilibrary.com?ID=173448>.

Garibaldi's war. Instead of spatialising a past, Graden prophesies the future decline of the dynasty.

The eponymous Pavilion at first appears to resist the estate's atmosphere of degeneration. It "presented little signs of age. It was two storeys in height, Italian in design, surrounded by a patch of garden in which nothing had prospered but a few coarse flowers" (*NAN* 284). Despite its modernity, the connotations of decline and fall embedded in the nationality of its architect soon become explicit, as the description continues:

> [It] looked, with its shuttered windows, not like a house that had been deserted, but like one that had never been tenanted by man. …. The place had an air of solitude that daunted even a solitary like myself; the wind cried in the chimneys with a strange and wailing note; and it was with a sense of escape, as if I were going indoors, that I turned away and, driving my cart before me, entered the skirts of the wood. (*NAN* 284)

The building is scoured of "constant reminders of the past," even for a man who has spent four months in residence, destabilising the notion of bricks and mortar as providing a lasting repository for memory or a public memorial to history. No local traditions are incorporated into the structure, which is detached from its surroundings, possibly implying an anxiety over the decline of Scottish creativity in recent times. Its dislocation in time and space is tempered with hostility; the shutters deter any further inquiry and the barren garden discourages loiterers. Furthermore, the strange wailing produced by the wind in the chimney dismantles a potentially supernatural acoustic effect, eradicating the ghostly suggestion of previous inhabitants. The building has been reclaimed by nature to the extent that all human traces have been erased. Rather the wood, traditionally the realm beyond civilisation's comforting influence, provides the means of shelter and escape, the protective indoors where Frank enjoys respite from an impersonal past.

Just as Graden reverses the temporal conventions of the gothic, the pavilion implies a mysterious future rather than repressing the past. The oddity of the neglected building is increased by clear preparations for occupancy:

> There was no sign of disorder, but, on the contrary, the rooms were unusually clean and pleasant. I found fires laid, ready for lighting; three bedrooms prepared with a luxury quite foreign to Northmour's habits, and with water in the ewers and the beds turned down; a table set for three in the dining-room; and an ample supply of cold meats, game, and vegetables on the pantry shelves. There were guests expected, that was plain; but why

> guests, when Northmour hated society? And, above all, why was the house thus stealthily prepared at dead of night? and why were the shutters closed and the doors padlocked? (*NAN* 288)

It too implies a future, establishing the open-endedness of the narrative by raising a series of puzzling questions; the building's secrets have not yet passed into history and so cannot be uncovered. The property is reticent, actively resisting Frank's attempts to understand the reasons behind its current state of ordered preparation, reflecting the limited perspective and fragmentary nature characteristic of the short story form.[42]

Carried to its ultimate logical conclusion, this inability to anticipate events interrogates the predominant Victorian conception of eternity. The clash of religious worldviews embodied by Huddlestone, Clara, Frank and Northmour gestures towards the diversification of notions of spirituality and the supernatural at the *fin-de-siècle*.[43] Huddlestone is a particularly pertinent figure in this regard. He is introduced as having "somewhat the air of a Kalmuck, ... He wore a skull-cap of black silk; a huge Bible lay open before him on the bed" (*NAN* 311), incorporating references to Buddhist, Jewish and Christian traditions as if in his desperation for absolution before death, and in keeping with his penchant for gambling, he is willing to acknowledge the existence of any number of gods. The scientific reasoning behind this weakened attitude towards scripture is represented in several ways. Graden Wester's rocky setting and the natural processes alluded to through Frank's description of the coastline implicitly refer to the geological discoveries which occurred throughout the nineteenth century, casting doubt on the literal truth of the Genesis account of creation and causing many to question the Bible's authority. Huddlestone's brand of Pascalean Christianity is contrasted to Northmour's evolutionary ideas which fail to save him from superstitious anxiety. When a gull squawks in Frank's ear he comments, "'There is an omen for you,' ... 'They think we are already dead.'"[44] Stevenson's uneasiness with the fatalism of Darwinian evolutionary theory is reflected in Northmour's comment; he found any system of belief that involved accepting that man ultimately has no agency over his own destiny objectionable.[45]

Rather than resolve the differences embodied by these men, Frank's framing narrative remains indeterminate. When Huddlestone dies he comments: "although God knows what were his obsequies, [he] had a fine pyre at the moment of his death" (*NAN* 324). The

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[42] Michelle Pacht, *The Subversive Storyteller* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars P, 2009), see "Introduction."
[43] See Owen, 8, and Mikuláš Teich and Richard Young, (eds.), *Changing Perspectives in the History of Science: Essays in Honour of Joseph Needham* (London: Heinemann, 1973).
[44] This superstition reappears in *Catriona*, "Tale of Todd Lapraik."
[45] Stevenson, "Pulvis et Umbra," *ES*, 62.

reference to a funeral pyre provokes a comparison with the death-rites of ancient polytheist Celtic and Nordic cults, destabilising the semantics of Frank's orthodox "God knows" into blasphemous exasperation. The biblical doctrines of inheritance and afterlife, echoed in corresponding gothic themes, are jeopardised (but not obliterated) by the Pavilion's destruction and the mysterious disappearance of Huddlestone's body. The morning after the "red and angry light" has consumed the building in a "towering flame" which appears to allegorize God's judgment, "Thick smoke still went straight upwards in the windless air of the morning, and a great pile of ardent cinders filled the bare walls of the house, like coals in an open grate" (*NAN* 327). Hellfire is relaxed into the image of a domestic hearth, but the pillar of smoke still evokes God's presence leading the Israelites out of Egypt, leaving the spiritual tension unresolved. The disappearance of the modern Pavilion from the landscape overnight continues to acknowledge the ephemeral nature of material culture, reiterating the approaching crisis of civilisation's end. Significantly, the fire starts in Northmour's darkroom, further emphasising the ultimately futility of attempting to use technology to counteract the transitory quality of experience. It also serves to position Northmour as a member of a vanishing community of amateur photographers and, by thus establishing the narrative's historical moment more precisely, the tale itself becomes vulnerable to going out of date.[46]

Material culture is susceptible to disintegration and change, physically embodying the linear, unrepeatable nature of historical time. The natural world often provides a comforting counterpoint to this uncertainty, representing the cyclical paradigm of enduring, regenerative life. As has already been discussed, forests are traditionally spaces of romance where time no longer obeys conventional rules, providing the opportunity for retreat, escape or self-epiphany in the miraculous atmosphere of the chivalric romance chronotope.[47] Stevenson's representation of the forest complicates this literary heritage; the copse in "Pavilion" does not allow these associations to remain unproblematic. "Sea-Wood" is not in any sense natural, permanent or secure, immediately relinquishing any claim to antiquity as "the Sea-Wood of Graden had been planted to shelter the cultivated fields behind, and check the encroachments of the blowing sand" (*NAN* 286). Although young for a forest, the Sea-Wood has still outlived the generation who created it, emphasising man's transient life-span in comparison to nature. In her analysis of the conflicting timescales employed by Thomas

[46] The first meeting of the Photographic Society was in April 1853 and Sir William J. Newton's talk "Upon Photography in an Artistic View and in its Relation to the Arts" controversially suggested that blurred images might be more representative of the truth of nature than ones more precisely defined. By the 1870s the amateurs were being written out of journals and marginalised by the new spirit of professionalisation. See Grace Seiberling and Carolyn Bloore, *Amateurs, Photography and the Mid-Victorian Imagination* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1986), 22-7, 107.

[47] Harrison, 156-64, reads Wordsworth's representation of the forest as an ironic engagement with the tension between the state of civilisation and the eternal regenerating power of nature.

Hardy, Gillian Beer notes "the intervention of the human form disturbs … the assurance of Darwin's [mythical] tree. The woodland [of *The Woodlanders*] is simultaneously a scene of decay, deformation, new growth and 'starry moss'."[48] Hardy's wood sustains a host of diverse life-spans in the "mesh of event and experience." Sea-Wood presents a similar space of natural struggle which emphasises numerous means of understanding time. Various species are in competition with one another, "elders were succeeded by other hardy shrubs" (*NAN* 286); but they also battle the "fierce winter tempests" that maul the coastline, "[leading] a life of conflict" (*NAN* 286). Hardy's woods envisage the human figure "as part of (not fully in control of) natural process," whereas Stevenson's Sea-wood is an artificial mark of human design on the wilderness. Humanity is constantly striving to control the environment and fix space in time, but this imposition is far from harmonious: "even in early spring, the leaves were already flying, and autumn was beginning, in this exposed plantation" (*NAN* 286). Despite the lack of success of this scheme, there is nobility in the attempt to defy the odds which is echoed in the wood's struggle against the elements.

Hardy was fully convinced by the arguments of natural selection, to the point where his work is burdened with conveying the malignant implications for humanity. Stevenson remained equivocal, as Block, Reid and Turnball have all commented, interpreting Darwinism as "a new doctrine" that was thought-provoking but not necessarily congruous.[49] Rather, he felt it ought to "be enough for faith that the whole creation groans in mortal frailty, strives with unconquerable constancy: surely not all in vain."[50] Stevenson sees Darwinian determinism as limiting the scope for effective human endeavour. His Pauline metaphor invites the speculation that the same concerns which motivated his rejection of a predetermining God prevented him from accepting a scientific theory which similarly denies the human potential for transformation through personal effort. This ambivalence is evident in "Pavilion"'s juxtaposition of Northmour and Frank's opposing attitudes towards Clara. Northmour allows brute nature and instinct to overcome civility in his behaviour, often speaking to Frank "fiercely" (*NAN* 325) or "interrupting savagely" (*NAN* 326) where Clara is concerned. He understands sex as a basic impulse; in the 1880 text he is described as "licking her face like a dog" (*TI&NAN* 325), drawing a bald connection with animalistic barbarity. Clara is objectified by him as a possession to be bought and owned, quite literally in his business transaction with Huddlestone for her hand. His obsession with competition

[48] Beer, *Darwin's Plots*, 234.
[49] See Olena M. Turnball, "Stevenson and Theories of Evolution" in Ambrosini and Dury, *Writer of Boundaries*, 228-36, and Ed Block, "Evolutionist Psychology and Aesthetics: *The Cornhill Magazine 1875-1880*," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 45 (1984): 465-75. *JSTOR*. 4 Feb. 2013 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2709236>.
[50] Stevenson, *ES*, 66.

and physical dominance is infused with the desire to play the Byronic hero, evident in his repeated requests that Frank duel to the death for Clara.

In contrast, Frank upholds the chivalric romance convention that shaped the past, saving his maiden from both the physical danger of being trapped in a besieged tower and the implicit sexual threat of Northmour's advances. Frank first reveals his presence on the Links to prevent Clara from wandering into the quicksands. His interest derives from watching and then listening to her, upholding the chivalric code of honour in direct contrast to Northmour's rough, physical advances that symbolise his single-minded desire for sexual fulfilment. His belief in her innocence is aligned with Victorian and Romantic ideals of womanhood: "I could have staked my life that she was clear of blame, and, though all was dark at the present, that the explanation of the mystery would show her part in these events to be both right and needful" (*NAN* 296). He never questions her purity and works to resolve the situation to clear her name beyond doubt. His trust is "founded on instinct" (*NAN* 296) and their minds run together despite no words being exchanged between them, "So swiftly and wisely does Nature prepare our hearts for these great life-long intimacies, that both my wife and I had been given a presentiment on this the second day of our acquaintance" (*NAN* 297). These romantic tropes offer respite from the constant shifting of the world, providing a timeless interlude that seems to stabilise experience in a continuous present.[51]

The internal mechanisms of the chivalric romance chronotope are parodied in Stevenson's forest; "eventness" is no longer central and the dream-vision's meaning is distorted. The "suddenly" that energised the original chronotope dissipates into isolated incidents, such as the flash of the lantern that wakes Frank in the woods, which tends to lead to an eerie anti-climax that negates action or confuses understanding. The *fin-de-siècle* master chronotope of decline and ending is also implicit in Sea-wood's distortion of the "dream vision." Rather than embodying a state outside time, separate from the main narrative, the forest exerts an influence over memory that permeates Frank's entire account, transforming his understanding of reality to betray an occasional dreamlike uncertainty.[52] After the Italian attack dispatches Huddlestone, Frank describes their flight into the woods as "all to me, as I look back upon it, mixed, strenuous, and ineffectual, like the struggles of a sleeper in a nightmare" (*NAN* 324). The incidents of the night in question "are points lost for ever to my recollection" (*NAN* 324). The adventurer's subjective manipulation of time, introduced into literature by the chivalric romance, has disintegrated in Stevenson's narrative and become a

[51] Romanticism is echoed in Stevenson's use of language as well as the delineations of time-space; the highly charged romance words solitude, hermitage, fire, sward, swoon, mist, moon, wind, sea, glimmers, shadow, ghost are all used to describe these wooded scenes.

[52] This slip into a dreamlike state is complicated by references to contemporaneous events, such as Garibaldi's campaigns, photography and economic crisis.

disruption of time's linearity, causing repeated revisions of the past that betray the fragmentary and ephemeral nature of memory.

In collusion with this disintegration of the narrator's subjectivity, the road – figured in "Pavilion" as the romantic derivative of the stream – also bears the scars that a dissolute time-space has wrought on the process of autobiography. The whole life of man is implicit in the romanticised natural image of the stream; Wordsworth's *Prelude* uses the river more specifically as a motif for the active mind: "I sauntered, like a river murmuring/And talking to itself when all things/Are still," [53] later extending this idea to describe the intellectual meanders involved in his current project of writing autobiographically:

> Even as a river,—partly (it might seem)
>
> Yielding to old remembrances, and swayed
>
> In part by fear to shape a way direct,
>
> That would engulph [*sic*] him soon in the ravenous sea—
>
> Turns, and will measure back his course, far back,
>
> Seeking the very regions which he crossed
>
> In his first outset; so have we, my Friend!
>
> Turned and returned with intricate delay. (Book 9, 1-7)[54]

Working in the shadow of this literary tradition, Stevenson's diminished streamlet in Sea-Wood spatialises Frank's psychological state of temporal stasis. It "ran among the trees, and, being dammed with dead leaves and clay of its own carrying, spread out every here and there, and lay in stagnant pools" (*NAN* 286), expressing the same notion as Wordsworth's "turned and returned with intricate delay." Stevenson's image is indicative of a different sentiment towards nostalgia, providing a more sinister allegory for the stubborn spots of time that ensnare Frank's memory, fixed to repeat in his imagination long after the reality is passed.

From the first, Frank makes incidental reference to the morbid and debilitating pull of memory; his first encounter with Clara is marked by Huddlestone's groaning "I still hear it again when I am feverish at night, and my mind runs upon old times" (*NAN* 291). The connection between fever and memory is indicative of the malaise associated with being

[53] William Wordsworth, *Prelude* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), Book 4, 119-121, 145.
[54] Wordsworth, 347.

drawn too far into the past. Later, Frank remarks on Huddlestone's Italian paranoia as "the hallucination of a mind shaken by calamity" (*NAN* 301), reading the present through the haze of distressing memories of previous experiences. This malignant impulse is one he later shares despite himself. From his perspective beyond events he confirms that "the recollection of that afternoon will always be graven on my mind" (*NAN* 304). In many ways, Clara provides the narrative's stabilising centre; as Frank explains "my wife kept an old-fashioned precision of manner through all her admirable life" (*NAN* 194). Her character and their marriage appear permanent in an otherwise changeable world. In death, she achieves the ultimate state of completion; she cannot change but must remain forever as she is in his recollections. His observation suppresses the *instability* characteristic of the mediating act of remembrance: memories are fluid, subject to modification, change or even loss. Removing his wife's "old-fashioned precision" reintroduces the sensation of fluctuating time from which she provided shelter. The past agitates his mental state, clouding his judgment and undermining his ability to conceive the world in the present apart from the distorting effects of calamity, but most importantly, resisting any engagement with the future.

This tendency towards a destabilised, or eradicated, future is indicative of a change in the understanding of the master chronotope which gained credence at the *fin-de-siècle*. Bakhtin's chronotopic division of literary history can be extended to include this further threshold, which saw the conception of the "vertical axis" diversify beyond Christian theology, and as a result, provoked questions as to whether history might be in decline, or even brought to an end, without the hope of a regenerative new creation. This branch of thought considered "progress" to be already in reverse: Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, published in 1859, Hutton's theory of "deep time" developed from studying geological specimens, Lyell's discussion of fossil evidence and a burgeoning interest in psychology brought science into conflict with Christian theology and church doctrine on the flow of time. This research caused increasing doubt over God's existence and, by implication, removed the security of an afterlife, placing an increased significance on material history, and undermined the origins of the moral order on which societal convention and law had been based. Linear time and the comfort of a spiritual existence beyond human history were similarly thrown open to debate. Stevenson's Christian upbringing never allows him to break conclusively with an understanding of humanity's spirituality, but his artistic vision is troubled by the possibility of man's diminished status in a Godless world.

In addition to these spiritual repercussions, developments in technology and scientific understanding were beginning to have negative consequences on the way communities functioned. For all the positive benefits to health, travel and infrastructure that they brought, there were numerous possibilities for catastrophe if the technology failed or the experiment

went wrong, which led fears of degeneration and apocalypse to preoccupy intellectuals, artists and social commentators.[55] This trend is exemplified by Stevenson's revisions and imaginative engagement with the various time-spaces of "Pavilion on the Links." The narrative is preoccupied with death, the disintegration of memory and the inherent instability of both time and space in terms of material culture and natural processes. The awareness of what lies beyond articulation, or even thought, and the darker repercussions of the progressive narrative which defined the Enlightenment played on Stevenson imagination. His literary response was to write fiction that explicitly acknowledged the implications of this changing chronotopic perspective. The following two chapters will explore Stevenson's response to the contemporary world of the *fin-de-siècle* and how he sought to use romance as a means of rethinking the way individuals related to one another and understood their point in time as a threshold into a new epoch.

[55] Rosalind Williams, *The Triumph of Human Empire: Verne, Morris, and Stevenson at the End of the World* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2013).

Chapter V: City

[A]s he looked up to heaven in his heroic way, it seemed to him that the very stars contributed a dumb applause to his efforts, and the universe lent him its silence for a chorus. That is one of the best features of the heavenly bodies, that they belong to everybody in particular; and a man like Léon, a chronic Endymion who managed to get along without encouragement, is always the world's centre for himself.

- *New Arabian Nights*[1]

As we have already seen, Stevenson is most readily associated with fictional spaces that are traditionally the preserve of adventure-romance; ships, islands and forests being prime examples. The temporality of his narratives is generally characterised by the chronotopic marks of chivalric romance: the miraculous is expected, the plot is driven by coincidence and sudden happenings that generate new revelations and provoke further exploits, albeit often modified by the integration of dissonant minor and motivic chronotopes. Thus far in the works considered, these principles have been reimagined through their polychronotopic structure and the hero's psychological realism, which repositions the text as in the process of becoming. Until recently, with the exception of *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886), the substantial amount of fiction that Stevenson wrote (or co-authored) that is concerned with urban life and the spaces more typically commandeered by realist novelists has been largely under-discussed, or dismissed as a "false" oddity in his oeuvre.[2] Yet in Stevenson's representation of the cityscape he brought to bear his most original experiments in the nature of time-space, extending the characteristic of the chivalric romance chronotope which "exhibits a *subjective playing with time*, an emotional and lyrical stretching and compressing of it … [and] has a corresponding subjective playing with space, in which elementary spatial relationships and perspectives are violated."[3] Stevenson's city is populated, narrated, and thereby created, by a series of individuals who play with temporal and spatial subjectivity in their accounts of the city experience.

By electing to use the short story form in *New Arabian Nights* (1882) and *The Dynamiter* (1885), Stevenson enables several different characters to become the central focalisers of the city. Each new subject forces a redefinition of the connections between the stories, causing

[1] Stevenson, *NAN*, 317.
[2] Kiely, 120.
[3] Bakhtin, *DI*, 155.

the reader to adjust their understanding of the world being presented to them. As Alan Sandison has noted of London in *The Dynamiter*, it "becomes one of those tropes of bewilderment and menace which are everywhere … it is where the "romantic silence" of Bloomsbury is "roared about on every side by the high tides of London" while, for Challoner, it "sounded in his ears stilly, like a whisper; and the rattle of the cab that nearly charged him down was like a sound from Africa."[4] The ambiguity of the city worlds Stevenson creates is exaggerated because his narratives are told from a variety of unstable perspectives which can only ever communicate an incomplete version of the nature of events. This effect is perfected in the convergence of differing voices and constructions of time-space that proliferate in the novella for which Stevenson has remained most famous, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

During the nineteenth century, urbanisation resulted in a new way of experiencing and organising time.[5] The old natural rhythms of pastoral-time were displaced by the mechanical ticking of a centralised city clock; the expansion of the railways forced the issue of running the country according to a centralised time, which saw the gradual disappearance of localized city time zones.[6] Greenwich Mean Time was introduced in 1884, positioning London as the temporal standard for the world.[7] Two years previously, the Ancient Monuments Protection Act was passed, ushering in an era of heritage and state-preservation of important cultural artefacts, which indicated a changed attitude towards the national past in terms of locating a sense of British identity. Urbanised areas illustrated the positivist vision of land tamed by man against the wilderness of nature, places that allowed stability and continuity across generations – an opportunity to bury the dead, diversify industry and consolidate a deeper sense of historical and cultural character.[8] This revolution in technology, time and space management is reflected in Bakhtin's observation of the idyllic chronotope's decline. It originally existed as a major chronotope of various types: love, agricultural labour, craftwork and family literature, but disintegrated by the nineteenth century into the motivic chronotope figure of the "man of the people," represented by the

[4] Alan Sandison, "A World Made for Liars: Stevenson's *Dynamiter*," in Jones, 153.
[5] For a comprehensive account of this general trend, particularly the temporal implications, see Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1973), 145.
[6] Beaumont and Freeman, 85-100.
[7] Nicholas Freeman, *Conceiving the City: London, Literature and Art 1870-1914* (Oxford: OUP, 2010), 4. This may, in fact, be an oversimplified view of a complex process that had taken centuries to establish, but the principle remains.
[8] John Locke's understanding of the city was that it reclaimed wilderness as property, converting valueless commodity into a commercially viable product. This view is explored in the second chapter of Richard Lehan, *The City in Literature: An Intellectual and Cultural History* (California: U of California P, 1998), 41. See also Harrison, chapters one and two, for a discussion of the principle of cultivating land for economic gain, the benefits of which are tempered by a warning as to the ecological repercussions of intensive farming.

servant who "retains a proper attitude towards life and death."[9] The idyll was replaced by a nineteenth-century culture which was heavily reliant on urban centres, not just economically, but also creatively and socially. Stevenson was writing at the end of this age, which had glorified the industry and possibility implicit in urban expansion, where Dickens had made a character of the capital and Gaskell had inscribed a struggle for social justice and progressive politics onto the paving stones of a thinly fictionalised Manchester.[10]

Increasingly, Stevenson saw the city in terms characteristic of the *fin-de-siècle*; a fractured space, unknowable and ephemeral, which demanded the observer constantly reinterpret their complex sensory experiences in order to comprehend the world.[11] As Nicholas Freeman notes, "What was only dimly emerging was art that dwelt with the experience of city life rather than using the city as a backdrop for melodrama, romance, intrigue, or, in the fiction of Elizabeth Gaskell, for example, a blend of these and political agitation."[12] In Stevenson's urban fiction, the interaction between the subject and the city generates a complex vision of the dialogic nature of this lived experience. This principle becomes explicit in the furtive panic Jekyll experiences when he realises that he has transformed into Hyde while lazing on a bench in Regent's Park. As Jekyll, he enjoys the sociability of observing the crowds strolling through the gardens, but his dramatic metamorphosis changes the way he perceives and relates to his environment, according to the response he anticipates his new guise will excite from the urban crowd. Subjectivity is here both an internally-constructed and a dialogically-defined lens through which the city is organised and experienced in the narrative. Jekyll understands that his changed exterior transforms his position in the world, from the inconspicuous spectator into an infamous spectacle; "For Jekyll, the streets pose no threat; for Hyde the streets … are now fraught with terror."[13] Although his two bodies inhabit the same "person," Hyde is distinct from Jekyll in the eyes of London because of the notoriety of his deeds, causing the body Jekyll and the body Hyde to think, act and respond entirely differently.[14] Stevenson displaces the belief in stability, community and progress

[9] Bakhtin points to Sir Walter Scott and Charles Dickens as representatives of British novelists who employed the idyllic chronotope in this way. Bakhtin, *DI*, 224, 235.
[10] For example, see Charles Dickens, *Bleak House*, ed. and introd. Stephen Gill, (Oxford: OUP, 2008); *Dombey and Son*, ed. Alan Horsman, introd. Dennis Walder, (Oxford: OUP, 2001); *Our Mutual Friend*, ed. and introd. Michael Cotsell, (Oxford: OUP, 1998) and Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South*; *Mary Barton* (London: Penguin, 2009).
[11] Benjamin describes the city as phantasmagorical, an illusory projection which allows the individual to garner comfort in the crowd by organising the world as he perceives it into a knowable commodity. Walter Benjamin, *The Writer of Modern Life: Essays on Charles Baudelaire*, ed. Michael W. Jennings, trans. Howard Eiland, (Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 2006), 40.
[12] Freeman, 26.
[13] Linda Dryden, *The Modern Gothic and Literary Doubles* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 91.
[14] See Robert Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction: Mapping History's Nightmares* (Oxford: OUP, 1999), 150-3. The gentlemanly tastes attributed to Hyde which tighten the parallel

generated by the city in the eyes of the previous generation, with a knowing appreciation for the transitory nature of urban experience and, therefore, the inadequacies inherent in an individual's perception.

Critical engagement with the cityscape has tended to focus on the relationships that exist between the different social groups who inhabit the landscape, and how they consume the urban delights that surround them. Arlene Young argues instead that "The larger experience can perhaps be better understood - better felt, seen, and heard - by shifting the emphasis from the observation of or by the individual within the city to the interaction of the individual with the city."[15] Stevenson's penchant for experiment means that his work is inevitably interested in both approaches to depicting his characters. The representation of the city that emerges in his work is subsequently drawn from a variety of perspectives. This chapter will examine some of the distinctive aspects of the arrangement of time-space which are consistent in the design of Stevenson's urban worlds. *New Arabian Nights*, *The Dynamiter*, *The Wrong Box*, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, *The Misadventures of John Nicholson* and *The Wrecker* all contain substantial episodes that chronicle city life. Although these works are each very different, their cities are places where random meetings and coincidences occur as a matter of course. Their characters are all knowingly engaged in observing or creating the spectacle of the streets; as Barry Meinikoff has noted, "Experimentation for Stevenson was the natural consequence of a habit of mind that explored every subject from its individual perspective, searching out the best way to treat the material formally as well as substantively."[16] Events happen simultaneously, often remaining unconnected or unremarked for long periods of time. The environment itself is as transient as the crowds who populate it – buildings are repurposed overnight or even disappear entirely, objects appear from nowhere and vanish into thin air, and the character of individual streets changes depending on the time of day or point in the week. Those present in the city have distinctly subjective experiences which emerge in tension with the crowd and the group psychology through which many urban authors generate interest.[17] This individualism provides a counter narrative to the collective identity that is preserved in

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between the monster and the homosocial community bent on preserving their reputation is argued in Patrick Brantlinger and Richard Boyle, "The Education of Edward Hyde: Stevenson's 'Gothic Gnome' and the Mass Readership of Late Victorian England," in Gordon Hirsch and William Veeder (eds.), *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde after One Hundred Years* (London: U of Chicago P, 1988).

[15] Arlene Young, "Character and the Modern City: George Gissing's Urban Negotiations," *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 49.1 (2006) 49-63. 49. *JSTOR*. 14 Dec. 2011 <http://Muse.jhu.edu/journals/elt/summary/v049/49.1.young.html>.

[16] Barry Menikoff, "New Arabian Nights: Stevenson's Experiment in Fiction," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 45 (1990): 339-362. 341.

[17] For example, the crowded streets of Dickens, Baudelaire, Poe and Thackeray emphasise the individual's position in relation to the crowd. Gustave Le Bon offers a contemporary psychology of the crowd which identifies the changing nature of culture and classifies the new epoch as the era of crowds. Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (London: Benn, 1896).

monuments and invested in the creation of a national culture, concepts on which the Victorian city was built, but it can never been entirely distinguished from it. The individual voice articulates a unique story, but it is a story which is told with an awareness of its reliance for its shape and purpose on mediating with other perspectives and the urban environment itself; a reliance that is suggestive of its ultimate fictionality.

Stevenson and the Short Story: Subjectivity in the City

Mid-Victorian representations of the city confronted the reader with complex and interconnected panoramic visions of social issues and urban spaces. This genre of the realistic novel, which pioneered some of the more sketchily drawn chronotopes mentioned in the conclusion to Bakhtin's essay, is far from both the romance that Stevenson sought to revive through his writing and the experience of encountering the modern metropolis. The extent of his contribution to the emergent genre of the short story in British literary culture has not yet been fully recognised.[18] From 1878, Stevenson published several individual and collected volumes of short stories that repeatedly married a sophisticated literary style with a literary form which, although nurtured by the periodical press throughout the nineteenth century, was regarded as a poor relation to the rich and impressive triple-decker volumes that respected writers aspired to produce. Because Bakhtin saw chronotope theory as a contribution to the field of genre studies, by considering the experimental formal structure of Stevenson's *New Arabian Nights* as a series of short stories, it is possible to argue that this burgeoning literary form is coincidental with the creation of a new chronotope. The new genre is necessary as a means of expressing the changing experience and understanding of time-space which had occurred by the final decades of the nineteenth century.

As Wendell V. Harris has noted, "Before [the 1880s and 1890s] to write serious fiction in England was to write a species of history, to integrate; only at the end of the nineteenth century did fiction begin to reflect reality perceived as a congeries of fragments."[19] The prevalent rationale for this situation has long been attributed to the popularity of the triple-

[18] Their freshness was recognised at the time. W. H. Pollock praises "their striking fertility of invention" in Maxiner, 110. Modern critics have also commentated on this, see Menikoff, "*New Arabian Nights*: Stevenson's Experiments in Fiction," and Sandison, *Future Feeling*, 83-141. Stevenson was an important figure in conceiving a similar British tradition that was taken forward by notable writers of the modern period, such as Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf and Arthur Conan Doyle.

[19] Wendell V. Harris, "Vision and Form: The English Novel and the Emergence of the Short Story," in Charles E. May (ed.), *The New Short Story Theories* (Athens: Ohio UP, 1994), 182-92. 190. This account is repeatedly supported by the other essays in the volume. See particularly Graham Good, "Notes on the Novella," in May, 147-64.

decker form with publishers, circulating libraries and journal editors who commissioned serials from established writers to popularise their titles. It is, the cultural materialist argues, the transition in the publishing market towards new magazines, such as *The Yellow Book* and *The Savoy*, and the changing face of established journals, *Cassell's Family Paper* and *The Strand Magazine* for example, to keep up with the new competition, which forced writers to engage with shorter fictional forms.[20] Other critics have noted that the Paterian school of aesthetics, which valued an individual's transient experience over the contemplation of the steady evolution of ideas through history, was actively searching for a new means of literary expression for its school. Harris suggests, "Many writers of the 1880s and 1890s turned therefore with relief to the isolable, the detachable. … But they were clear that quite another sort of vision had value, that the expression of that vision was the task of the short story, and that the legitimacy of that aim and that form was still largely unrecognised."[21] It would be rash to discount the influence that changes in publishing conventions had on writers, but it is also important to recognise that a desire to consider and represent developing societal realities contributed to new experiments in literary form.

Much of Stevenson's writing on the theory of fiction, and Romance in particular, concurs with later articulations of the theory of the short story.[22] The new form of romance Stevenson posited was relevant to and reflective of the contemporary world; he aimed to capture the essence of talk in his writing, distilling the passion and immediacy of oral storytelling for a much wider, literate audience; he fought to bring one creative and controlling thought to establish unity in his fiction, departing from the established Victorian ambition, epitomised by Henry James, to capture a "slice of life" in each novel.[23] Many of his earliest short stories are set in familiar romance territory; the Scottish countryside ("The Story of a Lie" [1879]), a desolate stretch of coastline ("Pavilion on the Links" [1878]). When Stevenson sat down to conceive his fictional city-world, he found the short story proved an apt form; its fragmentary nature, the emphasis on the subjective experience of the narrator or focalising character, and its formal intensity mirror many of the dominant sensations associated with encountering the *fin-de-siècle* city. In addition to this, Stevenson drew a provocative contrast between Europe's two most iconic cities in the short story cycles that comprise Prince Florizel's adventures. Taken as an entire volume, the *New Arabian Nights* approach the city at several points in an impressive historical chronology, depicting Florizel's contemporary and Villon's historic Paris, for example, and as the

[20] See Good, 158-9.
[21] Harris, 189.
[22] For a brief summary of these ideas, see Adrian Hunter, *The Cambridge Introduction to the Short Story in English* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), 1-5, and Emma Liggins, Andrew Maunder and Ruth Robbins, *The British Short Story* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 1-21.
[23] Stevenson, *MP*, 259-81, 234-58. Henry James, *Literary Criticism*, 44-65.

geographic centre of a region, provoking a contrast between urban and provincial experience.

One of the techniques that distinguish Stevenson's short stories as particularly innovative is the nature of his framing narrative. This feature of the short story genre is traceable in its origins as a "tale" and ensures it retains a tangible connection with the oral tellers who first developed the art. In *New Arabian Nights*, Stevenson links the opening story cycles, "The Suicide Club" and "The Rajah's Diamond", with an editorial commentary that commends "the erudite Arabian" on his work, and in so doing, as Menikoff has pointed out, ultimately subverts his authorial authority by exposing his fictionality.[24] These complex but playful layers of editing destabilise the reader, making it difficult to determine exactly what the teller's relationship is to the tale, and where he would like his audience to suppose fiction ends and reality begins.[25] "The Story of the Young Man with the Cream Tarts" finishes with a detached note on the eponymous protagonist, supplied by the hitherto unmentioned Arabian in consultation with his editor, who wryly withholds the particulars of the Young Man's current address, "for obvious reasons (*NAN* 35)." These reasons are left to the reader's speculation, playfully hesitating between self-reflexively referencing the fictitious content of the preceding story – the address cannot be revealed because, in truth, the man with the cream tarts does not exist – and keeping up the charade in polite concern for the man's privacy. Although the next offering from the Arabian storyteller is then advertised as a continuation of the adventures of Prince Florizel and the President of the Suicide Club, the following story opens with a new character as the seeming protagonist. In addition to his status as a marginal figure in the wider narrative of Florizel's story, Silas Q. Scuddamore is a wealthy American tourist in Paris, wavering on the periphery of Parisian society; exactly profiling the figure who becomes synonymous with the narrator of the modern short story. Silas's focalisation alters the narrative tone slightly, indicating the dexterity of the supposed Author, and emphasising the short story's malleability in switching between otherwise isolated perspectives. His Americanisms filter through into the narrator's phrasing – Dr Noel is a "Britisher" (*NAN* 36) – as well as influencing the content of the narrative.

The editor's next intervention revels in the generic distinction between the novel and his current project, "The Story of the Physician and the Saratoga Trunk", emphasising the craftsmanship which it has cost to render the present narrative from more prosaic and long-winded origins. Confessing to "omitting some reflections on the power of Providence, highly pertinent in the original, but little suited to our occidental taste" (*NAN* 64-5), establishes the editor's awareness that he stands on the cusp of two literary traditions, as

[24] Menikoff, "*New Arabian Nights*: Stevenson's Experiments in Fiction," 341-3.
[25] Sandison, *Future Feeling*, 102.

well as two cultures. The new genre of the short story is descriptive of the chronotopic parameters of modern fiction, refusing to accept Providence as the organising force behind the world and collapsing the resultant moral framework.[26] The social novel's implicitly Christianised design and generally conventional moral compass was wedded to the desire to articulate the whole of life in a single work of fiction. Their integration of sage reflections on universal questions of morality, digressions into political arguments and engagement with theological or scientific debates, is openly rejected as an outmoded means of both storytelling and conceiving reality by the editor's contemporary "occidental taste." Such a holistic approach to fiction is as alien to the *fin-de-siècle* as Western culture is from the East.

This is more than just a formal transformation of literary taste and aesthetic practice; in the final link of the narrative frame of "The Suicide Club" cycle, Stevenson repeats the act of distancing himself from the suppositions made by the omnipotent narrators of earlier novels in favour of an increasingly subjective point of view. As Patricia Waugh has argued in relation to the nascence of metafiction, "[t]he conflict of languages and voices is apparently resolved in realistic fiction through their subordination to the dominant 'voice' of the omniscient, godlike author."[27] Without the homogenising influence of an authoritative voice, the individual characters retain the force of their point of view in a dialogic narrative. Rather than simply rejecting the old form, Stevenson introduces the Prince as having "played the part of providence" (*NAN* 87), shifting the centre of the narrative to align with that of the hero. Instead of an equalised dialogic text, this establishes a different, albeit subjective, hierarchy, but the notion of a dominant, organising perspective remains intact; or this is how it appears to the editor. Although the Prince seems to orchestrate events, arranging coincidental meetings and observing unfolding situations from the sideline, ready to intervene and redirect things if necessary, this too is an artifice. He is not impervious to failure or reproach and occasionally demonstrates a lack in judgement – he is, after all, still human. In the final phase of the cycle, his providential role is deferred as another illusion in a world that cannot ultimately be controlled by anyone, and where events take on an arbitrariness that destabilises coincidence.

Stevenson's narrative game continually refuses to provide a stable centre from which his reader can orient himself. Each artist that claims to be the shaping force of the narrative is revealed as a mere puppet, stripping away the various masks adopted by the author to create

[26] Menikoff describes the uneasiness evident in the tales and categorises them as dark satire. Neider also describes the influence Stevenson's dynamic relationship with his Presbyterian upbringing had over his moral convictions as a writer. Charles Neider, "Introduction," *The Complete Short Stories of Robert Louis Stevenson, with a Selection of the Best Short Novels*, ed. Charles Neider, (New York: Da Capo P, 1998).

[27] Patricia Waugh, *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction* (London: Methuen, 1984), 6.

fiction until the mechanics of his craft itself are left exposed. The writer's dissatisfaction in conjuring a performance is paralleled by Florizel who finds his prescribed role as Providence unsatisfying; after he has meted out justice to the President, he sombrely reflects,

> "[M]y revenge is not five minutes old, and already I am beginning to ask myself if even revenge be attainable on this precarious stage of life. The ill he did who can undo it? … I might weary myself making thrusts in the carte until the crack of judgment, and Geraldine's brother would be none the less dead, and a thousand other innocent persons would be none the less dishonoured and debauched! The existence of a man is so small a thing to take, so mighty a thing to employ! Alas!" he cried, "is there anything in life so disenchanting as attainment?" (*NAN* 86)

He has faithfully administered justice, but the effect is to expose the vacuity of the act – what is done cannot be undone; his limited power is impotent to reverse events or make reprobation. The hero has no bite, providence has lost authority; to reach the end is to reach disenchantment and to realise that nothing has changed. This dramatic soliloquy eulogising the emptiness of success corresponds with the zeitgeist of the *fin-de-siècle*; the most exquisite pleasure is characterised by brevity and recognised as being an isolated sensation in life's wider experience of loss and futility.[28] Taking a life for a life cannot restore the dead or undo the evil consequences of a man's corruption; the Prince's "providential" powers are another fabrication, and in reality merely extend to the influence that his wealth and title afford in society. Any solution is once again delayed, and another cycle of deflective incident begins.

The Protagonist-Hero and Failed Flâneurie: Navigating the City

Throughout the Arabian's story-cycles, there are two competing plots: the overarching story concerning two adventures in the annals of Prince Florizel and Colonel Geraldine's lives, and the localised experience of a series of unconnected protagonists, whose perspective is consistently adopted to structure and intonate the individual narratives.[29] It is the tension between these rival protagonists that gives the tales their kaleidoscopic and disorientating nature. In "The Suicide Club" the most naïve of the trio of focalising protagonists is Silas.

[28] Famously, Pater's "Conclusion" became the touchstone for aesthetes and decadents such as Wilde and Aubrey Beardsley. Walter Pater, *The Renaissance* (London: Macmillan, 1873), 207-13.
[29] For a succinct distinction between narrative and story, see Waugh, fn5, 152. Menikoff also alludes to this as an indication of the Arab's skill in storytelling which is often overlooked.

His story exaggerates the extent to which Stevenson breaks away from using a conventional hero as the controlling centre of his narrative, parodying the figure of the artist in the urban environment, and the psychological response of the individual to modern city life which was later sketched out in Benjamin and Simmel's work. Silas's bashful reluctance to participate in life is absurdly coupled with an insatiable curiosity, "a born gossip; … life, and especially those parts of it in which he had no experience, interested him to the degree of passion" (*NAN* 37). Rather than representing Paris through the eyes of a *flâneur*, ready to do battle in the struggle for life presented by the modern city street, Stevenson's effeminate protagonist has determined to experience the city "from the seventh story of what is called a furnished hotel, in the Latin Quarter" (*NAN* 36).[30] Far from embracing the vastness of urban space open to him for his psychological development and intellectual stimulation, Silas hides in his hotel room and sets about reconstructing the interdependent relationships that characterise small community living.

Removing Silas from the street does not diminish his exposure to the questions surrounding the role of perception in constructing a subjective experience of the city. Indeed, as Matthew Taunton and Franco Moretti contend, "the great novelty of urban life … does not consist of having thrown the people into the street, but in having raked them up and shut them into offices and houses."[31] Arguably, by restricting his movements to the hotel and its locale, Silas reproduces a more typical Parisian experience. He establishes a tightly defined community for himself, occasionally dining with his neighbour Dr Noel "in a restaurant across the street" (*NAN* 37), but is otherwise content to indulge his curiosity in others by studying the envelopes of letters and making the most of an existing "flaw in the partition between his room and Madame Zéphyrine's" (*NAN* 37).[32] Avoiding the larger spectacle of the city streets does not allow him to escape the wider urban economy. The world he builds for himself through embellishing his glimpses of others' lives to construct his subjective reality echoes the dialectical process involved in flâneurie. Each new observation or circumstance appears to confirm his suppositions until his illusions are cruelly exposed.

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[30] Simmel reads the city as an intellectual rather than emotional experience which forces the individual to disengage with a large proportion of the stimuli around him and view the world in commercial terms: every object has a value in the urban economy. Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," in David Frisby and Mike Featherstone (eds.), *Simmel on Culture: Selected Writings* (London: SAGE, 1997), 174-85.

[31] Franco Moretti, *Signs Taken for Wonders*, trans. Susan Fischer, David Forgacs and David Miller, rev. ed., (London: Verso, 1988), 127. Matthew Taunton, *Fictions of the City: London and Paris in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Palgrave, 2009), 17, follows Moretti in his discussion of the Parisian streets and interiors.

[32] See Taunton, chapter one, for a detailed discussion of the communities in Parisian apartment blocks.

Moretti goes on to argue that the modern city is distinguishable "not … in having intensified the public dimension, but in having invented the private one."[33] Silas's activity, however, renders problematic any simplistic distinction between what constitutes public and private space, illustrating how Stevenson often uses his characters to expose conventional boundaries as merely academic. Throughout the *New Arabian Nights*, the difference between acting as an observer and being under surveillance is constantly challenged.[34] Even as Silas attempts to manage his environment voyeuristically, his spying is reciprocated and the scenes he witnesses, carefully staged: "he was astonished to find the aperture obscured in an odd manner on the other side, and still more abashed when the obstacle was suddenly withdrawn and a titter of laughter reached his ears" (*NAN* 37). When Silas does enter the public arena of the Bullier Ballrooms, his encounter with the crowd at first shocks and then emboldens him to sharpen his own performance; he understands that he can be anonymous in a situation where he is judged purely on appearance.[35] After an empowering realisation that the illusion of his identity is his to create, he fashions himself as a detective and eavesdrops on Florizel and Geraldine. Just as he attains control, the crowd pull him out of earshot and his uneasiness as to his place in the world returns. When he recognises Madame Zéphyrine's voice a moment later, he is prevented from becoming completely disillusioned of his ability to construct a convincing façade and to play his part in the spectacle. Silas's affirmation of an established network of relationships, being part of a community, enables him to sustain the illusion of control over the urban environment. The power of the crowd to exert an influence over the individual is neutralised by the experience of a personal connection.

Immediately after this moment where Silas believes he has successfully manipulated the crowd, he is left bereft and confused, his illusion of power totally subverted. The corpse he finds in his bed when he returns to the hotel, which leaves him legally compromised, is both a grotesque parody of his frustrated sexual expectations for the evening and evidence of his situation on the periphery of events. He is far from being the romantic hero of his illusion, and realises the coincidences of his encounters with Madame Zéphyrine were in fact strategically organised by an unseen figure of greater authority. The superficiality of Silas's gaze is fully exposed by this moment of personal crisis when he is framed for murder by

[33] Moretti, *Signs*, 127.

[34] The belief that one is always being observed by someone else leads to self-regulating behaviour flirts with Foucaultean philosophy. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991). Taunton links this idea to Haussmann's remodelling of Paris during the Second Empire, which saw the city restructured along boulevards (1853-1870).

[35] Walkowitz, 21, discusses the method by which narratives of the city are constructed along gender lines, casting the flâneur as the shaping gaze of the public sphere in the mid-Victorian era, challenged by the emerging New Woman in the 1880s which grew in strength during the fin-de-siècle. For general cultural attitudes towards gender politics, see Showalter, 118-20.

Madame and her associates. "But Silas, who, for all his curiosity, had not a seeing eye in his head, was able to supply nothing but meagre generalities, which it was impossible to recognise" (*NAN* 49). His eager voyeurism remains impotent, he is unable to recall - let alone decipher - the images and snatches of conversation that he so keenly pursued for pleasure when circumstances force him to remember. His enthusiastic passion for "everything" is indicative of a passive mind that is incapable of assessing what is worth distilling into memory from lived experience. Silas's eagerness to take in the world at a glance provides a foil to the editor's artifice in so perfectly honing his material from the Arabian's more extensive original.

Finding himself on the outskirts of the action rather than playing the leading role in his romantic fantasy as he had hitherto supposed, Silas allows himself to be stage-managed by Dr Noel and the Prince, and is accordingly sent to London. Rather than the glamour and teasing welcome of the Parisians, he meets with insult and derision at the hands of an impromptu crowd gathered on a dusty street corner. Instead of the titillating spy-hole that indulges his voyeuristic fantasy and allows him to imagine himself as an equally alluring body, he is subject to the Londoners' suspicion: "the eyes of the other diners seemed to rest on his" (*NAN* 60). Their collective gaze is threatening, penetrating and hostile; there is no flirtation or encouragement to prolong the encounter. The excessive manliness that swelled in his chest in the Parisian ballroom is replaced with a shrinking "shame and terror" (*NAN* 58) that sees him, ironically, whisked away to the Craven Hotel in Craven Street. Despite the hotel being at capacity, his "hermitage" (*NAN* 58), right at the top of the building, carries an air of isolation and unsettling silence where his Parisian quarters allowed him to establish friendships with his fellow tenants. In London, he is removed from neighbouring guests and ostracised from participating in the carnival of the city crowd, drawing an exaggerated distinction between the atmospheres of each capital. He creeps down to the yellow coffee room, where the décor is a mocking evocation of his cowardice, and attempts to appear uninterested by his surroundings.

Similarly, in "The Rajah's Diamond," Francis Scrymgeour rents rooms in Paris specifically to discover more about General Vandeleur, believing him to be his father.[36] The position of his garret has a view of the General's garden, allowing him to look out "between the boards of the Venetian shutters, which he durst not open for fear of attracting attention" (*NAN* 141). His awareness of his exposure to the unwanted gaze of others prompts him to take measures to conceal his interest; he understands that it is impossible to be an unobserved witness in the city. Yet, he is still incapable of recognising when he is under surveillance. Francis's

[36] For discussion of father figures in Stevenson's *Treasure Island* see Sandison, *Future Feeling*, 24, 43, 55, and McCulloch, 71.

decision to translate Euclid's *Geometry* to pass the time provides a twofold allegory for what he feels to be his more pressing task: acting as an amateur spy. Stevenson alluded to Euclid's foundational principles of mathematics as a more transparent means of communication than language could ever provide, as the Euclidean system, based on indisputable shapes and lines, was taught universally for much of the nineteenth century. Francis's translation complicates this purity unnecessarily, indicating a misunderstanding of the nature of the pattern in front of him and a desire to impose his will on affairs. Although his address is unknown to the General, when his cover is blown and he states the case as it seems to him, he is told he is not the General's son, and furthermore, has been brought to Paris as he is promised to Miss Vandeleur in marriage. Crucially, he discovers he has not been the primary orchestrator of events, but rather a marginal player in a much larger conspiracy: "You were exhibited to her two nights ago; and I rejoice to tell you that she rejected the idea with disgust" (*NAN* 156). In the same way that progress in nineteenth-century mathematics reduced Euclid's eminence, Francis's pretentions to detective work are exposed as of negligible relevance to a larger criminal investigation.

Taking the volume as a whole, the Arabian tales contrast sharply with the other short stories collected together, both in structure and style. Although Stevenson did not originally write the other pieces in the Ballantyne edition to compliment the Prince Florizel cycles, he was ever alert to the contrasts provoked by producing a collection of existing works. Here, the most compelling difference is that which exists between the modernity of the Prince's world and the antiquated atmosphere of events that take place in the historical city which provides a setting for "Lodging for the Night" and "Sire de Malétroit's Door." Each story is treated with the deftness and economy of Florizel's cycles, but the urban environment is more closely patrolled by officials and there is a greater awareness that to be in the street is synonymous with being under observation. Given the level of surveillance it transpires most of the protagonists in Florizel's city are under, the difference between the two epochs in this regard is a matter of degree, not kind. Situating events in a past which was openly regulated creates the impression that the boundary between private residences and public space is non-existent in the medieval city. On closer examination this fluidity gains some definition, again narrowing the distinction between human responses to the problems associated with urban experience from one century to the next. Although the subject matter is medieval, Stevenson takes a proto-modernist approach to the moral framework in which his characters operate, ultimately declining to direct the reader's response through his characters' beliefs. He refuses to romanticise the past as so many of his fellow artists were wont to do, but instead

emphasises the brutality of the struggle to survive and resists simple distinctions between past and contemporary city experience.[37]

One of the most disturbing features of the cities in *New Arabian Nights* is the temporal collapse Stevenson achieves by drawing a tight contrast between Villon's Paris and the Paris of Prince Florizel.[38] Despite retaining immediacy through the narrative's subjective focalisation, time becomes almost cyclical, resisting the illusion that the problems faced by contemporary society are purely restricted to modernity.[39] Based on the slenderest fragment of historical detail which linked the poet Villon to the murderer of Thevenin Pensete, "A Lodging for the Night" depicts the savagery of medieval Paris. Its historical setting increases the power of the recognisably modern ideas discussed by the characters, illuminating the sense in which Stevenson believed "Paris now is not so different from the Paris of then;" the same basic needs and questions shape existence and colour subjective experience.[40] The means of experiencing time-space may have changed radically between Florizel's time and Villon's, but the basic human response to being in the world endures. Villon's savage encounters with death on the frozen streets have a disturbing echo of Florizel's entanglement with the Suicide Club; tragic misfortune has been transformed into the ultimate wager for bored or disillusioned gentlemen. Villon's responses to the corpses on the street accurately portray his character, reducing the reader's empathy with his perspective in preparation for his debate with Euguerrand at the tale's conclusion.

The tale opens by democratising the domestic space, helping to establish the medieval context by rejecting the conventional nineteenth-century distinctions between public and private spheres. Stevenson's language is stark and violent; Dom Nicolas's "dilated shadow cut the room in half; … firelight only escaped on either side of his broad person, and in a little pool between his outspread feet" (*NAN* 243), undermining the traditional comfort roused by the fireside and anticipating the murder. The "little pool" is retrospectively

[37] For example, the Arts and Crafts movement, which included artists and writers such as Burne-Jones, Morris and Millais, brought a wave of neo-medieval interest that spanned the arts, including literature, architecture (also evident in neo-gothic), theology and fine art. See Patrick Bade, "Art and Degeneration: Visual Icons of Corruption," in Chamberlin and Gilman, 220-38, for a discussion of the Pre-Raphaelites as a "healthy" alternative to the degenerative mode. See Hilary Fraser, 1-6, for a concise summary of these ideas.

[38] The Victorians forged a link between the poet Francois Villon, on whom Stevenson based his character, and the Prince of Bohemia, tightening the parallel between the pauper poet and Prince Florizel. Morsberger records: "T. E. Child wrote in the spring of 1877 that: Villon has justly been regarded as the prince and laureate of Bohemia, that land of letters and license, whose inhabitants live in a state of hostility to the usages and conventions of society, and so far disregard the code of honesty and fair dealing as to consider perfect solvency to be incompatible with mental effort or ideal happiness." Robert E. Morsberger, "Villon and the Victorians: The Influence and the Legend," *The Bulletin of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association* 23 (1969): 189-196. 191.

[39] This line of inquiry draws the argument back to Bakhtin's opening statements in "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel," *DI*, 84.

[40] Stevenson, *FSMB*, 126.

invested with bloody horror, as it finds an echo in the description of the murder scene, a connection which is resisted by the soothing consonance of the phrase, detaching expression from content. The mocking "garland of red curls" (*NAN* 249) haunts Villon's imagination as he flees from the incident, providing a symbolic contrast to the white "glittering streets" (*NAN* 249) that surround him. Snow takes on a figurative role, masking the changes in the city landscape, connoting purity and creating an "indelible trail [for Villon] … wherever he went he was still tethered to the house" (*NAN* 249). This duality establishes an understated connection to the contrasting meanings encompassed by snow imagery in the Bible, where it both indicates the cleansing power of grace and the leprous mark of sin, accentuating the tale's moral inconclusiveness.[41] Rather than the protection normally associated with home and hearth, the interior is disturbed by arbitrary murder while the streets contain some refuge, but are underpinned by the menace of accusation, condemnation and death.

Villon is occasionally shaken from his thoughts by disturbing relics of humanity's struggle against the elements in a grotesque twist to Bakhtin's delight in the carnival atmosphere of medieval Paris and Benjamin's account of the *flâneur*'s leisurely ramble punctuated by aesthetic shocks. The respectable nineteenth-century gentleman walker's perambulations imply an intentional aesthetic process which is an incidental benefit for the medieval poet. Benjamin refers to Chesterton's assessment of Dickens as a "drifter" through London, "not stamp[ing] these places on his mind; he stamped his mind on these places;" the *flâneur* remains in control of his environment, orchestrating the random observations in the street into a coherent narrative. It is this romantic view of walking the streets that Stevenson parodies in his later satiric portrait of the dandy, Uncle Joseph, who "presented but a semi-venerable figure on the streets in which he loved to wander," failing to connect with contemporary London and continuing to deliver insipid lectures based on his experience of life gained solely in his youth. [42] Villon's walk is of a more symbiotic nature than either the impervious Joseph or the creatively imposing Dickens.[43] Past associations surface as he encounters personal landmarks and suggestive objects in the street. This emphasises the temporal dimension of his spatial journey, marking the shift and change of the city against the image stored in his memory. His recollections expose the progression of his identity from the wonder of an innocent child to the world-weary cynicism and dispassion of maturity. Memory is firmly tethered to the drama of the present, stimulated as part of the

[41] See *English Standard Version*, Psalm 51:7; Numbers 12:10 respectively.
[42] Robert Louis Stevenson and Lloyd Osborne, *The Wrong Box* (London: Heinemann, 1924), 3.
[43] Benjamin, *Writer of Modern Life*, 99.

process of evaluating now rather than as an intentional means of anticipating the evolution of his character.[44]

Villon is moved to empathy once, when he encounters the raw evidence of a woman and child ravaged by wolves. The scene evokes memories of his mother "telling him a story and pointing out the spot" (*NAN* 254). Notably, the bodies lie at a crossroads, indicating the collision of two worlds: the savage wilderness has literally penetrated and consumed cultured Paris. His "unpleasant interest" in the scene where nature subdues the civilised unmasks his studied aesthetic pose which purports to hold life loosely. He appears to experience the tug of filial duty expressed in his roughly affectionate resolution to visit his mother, but this is subverted by his underlying motive: "if he only knew where she lived, he might make sure at least of a shelter" (*NAN* 254). Villon's isolation is entirely his own making; he seeks out the company of petty criminals who indulge his selfishness and reassure him of his intellectual superiority rather than conforming to the moral pattern of the day. Rather than pass judgement in his capacity as storyteller, Stevenson presents his readers with a problem that he declines to comment on directly, in sharp contrast to his essay which divisively concludes: "For a man who is greedy of all pleasures, and provided with little money and less dignity of character, we may prophesy a safe and speedy voyage downward."[45] Although the philosophical framework by which Villon views the city is less sophisticated and intentional in construction than those of his nineteenth-century descendants, the human need to create a narrative from the shocks and impressions inherent in city-dwelling remains consistent. The master chronotope may have evolved in time, but the character's dialogic interaction with his historicised world remains essential to generating events in Stevenson's fiction.

There is another significant counterpoint to the city raised through the compilation of the *New Arabian Nights*: that with the provinces, both in France – "Providence and the Guitar" – and Britain – "Pavilion on the Links." Although time is often perceived to be passing more slowly in these rural environments, the same fragility and ceaseless change is central to Cassilis's experience of the Links, as noted in the previous chapter. "Providence and the Guitar" raises the same issue of the outmoded type of the romance hero rendered problematic by Prince Florizel in relation to the measure of modern success. Stevenson's protagonist, Léon, directly addresses the ancient dilemma facing the professional artist: the choice between upholding aesthetic principles and earning a decent wage. As a mediocre actor who scrapes a living with his touring musical act, his heroic status is at once belittled and endorsed by the narrator. As a modern hero, his circumstances parody tradition, being

[44] Bakhtin, *SG*, 28.
[45] Stevenson, *FSMB*, 124.

far removed from the miraculous worlds inhabited by medieval knights: "When all seems over, and a man has made up his mind to injustice, he has still, like the heroes of romance, a little bugle at his belt whereon to blow; and the Maire, a comfortable *deus ex machinâ*, may still descend to deliver him from the minions of the law" (*NAN* 301). Although Léon's heroism is located in his determination to maintain the illusion of romance in the face of uninspiring circumstances, the strategy is rendered problematic by the contrasting reaction of his wife, Elvira, and the travelling undergraduate, Stubbs.

When it becomes clear that the Berthelinis must spend the night outside, the couple respond characteristically:

> "Do not let us exaggerate, Elvira – the experience is positively charming. I feel a glow within me; I am born again. This is the poetry of life. Think of Cooper's novels, my dear."
>
> "Léon," she said fiercely, "how can you talk such wicked, infamous nonsense? To pass all night out-of-doors – it is like a nightmare! We shall die." (*NAN* 309)

Léon's romanticism might be interpreted as naïve irresponsibility except for the introduction of Stubbs, whose prosaic grasp on the nature of art and pragmatic desire to become a banker leave him appreciative of beauty but unable to express his delight with precision, or to understand his companions' artistic mission. His lack of imagination would have left him in the cold, whereas Léon's optimism and artistic passion eventually finds them shelter. The instant fraternal respect that is established between Léon and Monsieur the Artist confirms their joint commitment to what Elvira describes as "a mission – which they cannot carry out" (*NAN* 323). Their heroism lies in their staunch determination to pursue life as art without succumbing to either the pressures of modernity or the acknowledgement of failure; a conclusion which expands on the editor's sympathetic treatment of Prince Florizel's supposed demise to the lowly occupation of running a tobacconist's shop. These provincial stories isolate one aspect of the choices faced by the modern hero on the urban streets and examine the problem from a different but complementary angle. The inclusion of modern rural experience provides a softer echo of the bewildering encounter with the *fin-de-siècle* city; through shock and sensory overload, the urban space intensifies the individual's engagement with the most pertinent issues of the moment.

Blurring Boundaries: Reading the Subjective City

The Dynamiter, Stevenson's collaborative sequel to *New Arabian Nights*, uses a similar structure to subvert the traditional gendering of the romance hero by enclosing within each of the urban adventures recounted from the perspectives of Somerset, Challoner and Desborough, a tale told by a woman that juxtaposes contemporary London with a contrasting environment. This series of three short story cycles is framed by episodes in Mr Godall's tobacconists which reintroduce the Arabian author. The asterisked metatextual comments from the translator introduce the narrative's self-reflexive spirit from the first, providing an echo of the organising imagination that becomes evident within the individual tales. Controversially this storyteller is a female playing a man's game. Clara Luxmore not only exhibits the unmaidenly virtues of a strong personality and quick intellect, but she also unashamedly lies, weaving a web of fantastical narratives around herself to construct a disguise that deflects attention from her involvement in Zero's bomb plot. This is indicative of a break from the prevalent theory of fiction in the nineteenth century, which asserted that "forms of fiction derived from a firm belief in a commonly experienced, objectively existing world of history."[46] Clara's model for storytelling rejects this principle and is content to exploit these residual expectations in her audience. The seeming coincidences and unfathomable connections that the male narrators half-uncover through their blundering adventures are only made coherent by Clara's confession when she discovers herself in love with Desborough, the only gentleman willing to accept her fabrications at face value and thus enter into her lively, thoroughly subjective, world. By placing a woman at the centre of the mystery, Stevenson dismantles the notion that romance narratives are organised according to the hero's glorious deeds. The values that determined the precise nature and form that acts of chivalry might take are subverted in a world that is increasingly erratic and subjective. In the unpredictable city, the context requires an understanding of the construction of self, honour and integrity that is more fluid than the faithful adherence to a predetermined code.

The amateur detectives who set out from Godall's shop still believe in the principles of chivalric romance, and are, therefore, determined to glorify themselves by demystifying the secrets of the city street. Their random decision to solve the mystery of a man "over six feet high … disproportionately broad, clean shaven, with moustaches, and wearing a sealskin great-coat," who was spotted at Green Park and is wanted by the police, is immediately disconnected from the assumptions they make about the nature of the chronotope in which

[46] Waugh, 6.

they are operating.[47] Their actions are based on the logic of the chivalric romance world, where time and space are organised to shape a chronotope defined by consistently miraculous events. Unfortunately, the London streets operate in a similar manner to the arbitrary means by which they have selected their quest: characteristically unsystematic and impossible to comprehend at a glance. Somerset's initial experience captures the essence of this underlying disjuncture:

> But although the elements of adventure were streaming by him as thick as drops of water in the Thames, it was in vain that … he courted and provoked the notice of the passengers; in vain that, putting fortune to the touch, he even thrust himself into the way and came into direct collision with those of the more promising demeanour. Persons brimful of secrets, persons pining for affection, persons perishing for lack of help or counsel, he was sure he could perceive on every side; but by some contrariety of fortune, each passed upon his way without remarking the young gentleman. (*TD* 66)

Somerset is aware of the latent potential for deduction presented by the hordes of witnesses on the streets, but he realises that isolated or phantasmagorical observations are insufficient to connect together an understanding that allows one to see beyond the superficial appearance of things.[48] Without an authoritative, omnipotent narrator overseeing the action and endorsing or critiquing the characters' perspectives, the fictional world is openly disconcerting and devoid of concrete facts. In order to gain a more profound understanding of the half-stories that "*he was sure* he could perceive" in the surface images of human lives surrounding him on the pavement, he must provoke and establish some kind of relationship with the individual members of the crowd. The city can only be navigated by establishing ephemeral connections with a wide network of people; the constant changes registered in the urban world by the influx and departure of residents and the construction or redevelopment of buildings and spaces are testimony to the illusory nature of absolute knowledge.[49] Success is determined by one's ability to engage dialogically with those whom one is randomly brought into contact.

Stevenson has been criticised in the past for the weakness of his female characters, but the Luxmore ladies outwit all three of the gentlemen detectives who cross their paths by proving more flexible to the urban environment's ephemerality. Drawing this distinction down

[47] Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Dynamiter* (London: Heinemann, 1924), 5.
[48] Following Benjamin's definition where phantasmagoria is the impression the flâneur gains from his superficial shocks and encounters on the street. Benjamin, *Writer of Modern Life*, 70-2.
[49] For a discussion of this phenomenon in connection with modernism see Raymond Williams, "The Metropolis and Modernity," in David Kelley and Edward Timms, (eds.), *Unreal City: Urban Experience in Modern European Literature and Art* (New York: St Martin's P, 1985), 21-2.

gender lines serves to illustrate the failure of the would-be heroes to adapt to this new era of romance. Clara Luxmore's ability to create and disguise mysterious circumstances originates in her power over the public spectacle, which she achieves by overlaying reality with a diverting tale, mixing speech genres and delightedly experimenting with the limits of fictionality. In her encounter with Challoner, this pattern is established immediately. Finding herself undeniably connected with an explosion in a house on a quiet street in the early hours of the morning, she loses no time in decoying the witness to Hyde Park and relaying the dramatic story of her heritage to distract him. Her tale is dark and enthralling, set in the deserts of Utah and concerning a sinister brand of the Mormon religion which has been corrupted into a dangerous sect run by the shadowy figure of the President. She relays her parents' murder at the hands of their family friend, Dr Grierson, and then speaks of her journey to London. The subject she chooses is pertinent to the task she has undertaken in detaining Challoner. She deliberately describes her conversation with an old lady on her train from Nevada City: "I was soon glibly telling her the story in the doctor's letter … until I had exhausted my instructions, and as the lady still continued to ply me with questions, began to embroider on my own account." (*TD* 42) She uses the established literary conceit of inventing a tale within a tale to discuss the skill involved in maintaining artifice itself, and thus hints that her current narrative is not to be understood as a faithful record of objective historical fact. The process she describes is one of collaborative dialogue, a conversation between two women on a train flowing into an extended narrative. This is not only metafictional in the sense that it overtly describes a model for creating fiction, but also because of the direct link it establishes with how *The Dynamiter* itself came into being: "Stevenson and Mrs Stevenson collaborated in *The Dynamiter*. Mrs Stevenson was entirely responsible for the stories of *The Destroying Angel* and *The Fair Cuban*" (*TD* iv). Clara's story demonstrates how her talents, once limited so that circumstances "soon carried one of my experience beyond her depth" (*TD* 42), have matured through practice to enable her to crystallise an idea into a yarn that coincides with the impression of herself as "the picture of distress and innocence" (*TD* 12) that she has generated for Challoner.

Challoner's chivalrous inflexibility in response to her tale contrasts unflatteringly with her arch self-awareness and ease in communicating through a range of speech genres, tailor made to fit the circumstances and designed to activate a causal chain of events. Despite the fact that it was "an excellent story; and it might be true, … he believed it was not" (*TD* 50). His refusal to recognise the spirit in which her tale was told, to indulge her imaginary world or to collude in the illusion she has laboured to establish merely spares her any anxiety that he will complete the errand for which he has been appropriated. Having warned him through her tale that she is capable of resourcefully manipulating men – she affected her escape from

the house by passing messages to her aunt through one of Dr Grierson's prodigies – Clara demonstrates her sophisticated understanding of the craft involved in anticipating a sequence of dialogue. Her conversation with Challoner is designed "while taking into account [his] possible responsive reactions, for whose sake, in essence, it is actually created."[50] She is taking this principle of communication to extreme, imaginatively placing herself outside the event in order to envisage a conversation that will result in his total compliance.

Despite giving the impression of helpless dependence on male protection, her account of her previous life suggests her radical proto-feminist values. Her tale is punctuated with phrases which are openly resistant to marriage, and there is no doubt who holds the power in their subsequent exchange. Having noted his limited imagination, she exploits his naïve approach to dialogue by anticipating his desires, "tak[ing] into account the apperceptive background of the addressee's perception of my speech … [as] this will determine his active responsive understanding of my utterance."[51] She guides the conversation, "Come now, say your lesson" (*TD* 54), teasingly withholds information, "I will not tell you until the last moment, … for I perceive you are growing too imperious" (*TD* 54), intentionally misleads him, "give this letter with your own hands into those of Miss Fonblanque" (*TD* 54), and sets the conditions of the exchange to increase his humiliation: "Excellent … it will be the most humorous scene" (*TD* 54), with all the confidence of a director blocking an actor in rehearsal. Their conversation is a calculated attempt to gain his cooperation in her undisclosed deception, rather than to clarify his understanding of her true self.

Her effectiveness in controlling his response to the quest is reliant on his predictable reaction to the circumstances which fall in line with an outmoded code of chivalry. He is prevented from abandoning his mission by reflecting "the enchantress who had held him with her eye had now disappeared, taking his honour in pledge; and as she had failed to leave him an address, he was denied even the inglorious safety of retreat" (*TD* 55). By the time he is face to face with M`Guire, "the earl's daughter, the earl and the visionary consulships in foreign cities … had long ago begun to fade in Challoner's imagination. Like Dr Grierson and the Mormon angels, they were plainly woven of the stuff of dreams" (*TD* 57). His final revelation is not to discover the reason behind his journey to Glasgow, but to recognise that:

> The conduct of the man with the chin-beard, the terms of the letter, and the explosion of the early morning, fitted together like parts in some obscure and mischievous imbroglio. Evil was certainly afoot; evil, secrecy, terror,

[50] Bakhtin, *SG*, 94.
[51] Bakhtin, *SG*, 95-6.

> and falsehood were the conditions and the passions of the people among whom he had begun to move, like a blind puppet. (*TD* 61)

Rather than acting the knight and saving the damsel in distress, he finds himself playing a cameo role in a drama conceived and directed by the woman in the park – a figure who has disguised herself so expertly he does not even know her name. His failure is due to an inability to interpret different speech genres or allow a degree of elasticity in his understanding of what constitutes fiction and how this relates to his conception of reality. Clara's superior ability to read people, interpret situations and adapt to a variety of theoretical perspectives is an invaluable skill in negotiating the variety of the modern urban experience; Challoner's incapacity to understand women who do not conform to the stereotypical boundaries provided by the Victorian stereotype of the Angel in the House, set by his idealised vision of gender politics, leaves him powerless to resist her affectation of the damsel in distress.

A year later, in *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Stevenson explored the same theme of theorizing the fictional process itself and exposing the inadequacies of domestic-time as a chronotopic gateway to comprehending the *fin-de-siècle* city. Like *New Arabian Nights*, the narrative retains an omniscient voice, but it is focalised through Utterson, advancing according to the progress of his investigations. Rather than enter the vivacious, populous world of Mr Enfield, the reader encounters London from the more reticent perspective of the lawyer, which creates a discrete narrative that remains on the eerily quiet periphery of London's bustling thoroughfares. Critical opinion over Utterson's role is divided between understanding him as religiously abstemious, suffering greater repression than Jekyll, the allegorical representation of "Everyman" and a warning against excessive humility.[52] Although these observations are all true, the core of Utterson's character development is located in the dramatized conflict of self-deception. His perspective is infected by the disease of hypocrisy, which is personified in the repellent form of Hyde, a reading which Stevenson endorsed in a letter to John Paul Bocock.[53] In this respect, Utterson is a

[52] Garrett discusses the significance of form and ends by drawing a parallel between Utterson's reading of Jekyll's confession and all other readers of the text. Peter K. Garrett, "Cries and Voices: Reading *Jekyll and Hyde*," in Hirsch and Veeder, 59-72. For readings that emphasise sexual repression see Showalter, 109-11, and Stephen Heath, "Psychopathia Sexualis: Stevenson's Strange Case," *Critical Quarterly*, 28 (1986): 93-107. Reed argues that Stevenson deliberately constructs an analogy between Jekyll's transforming potion and the influence that alcohol has on personality, to introduce the concept that Jekyll is in fact suffering from alcoholism. Utterson's transformation here begins the many incidental comments which link him so strongly to Hyde. Reed Jr., especially "Alcohol in the Text: The Letter," 19-31.

[53] "The harm was in Jekyll, because he was a hypocrite – not because he was fond of women … The hypocrite let out the beast Hyde – who is no more sexual than another, but who is the essence of cruelty and malice, selfishness and cowardice: and these are the diabolical in man." Stevenson, *Selected Letters*, 352.

forerunner of Stevenson's complex narrator, Mackellar, who was a participant in and observer of the events he commits to paper, despite protesting otherwise.[54] Although Utterson is not giving a direct testimonial, the incidents of the narrative converge and are organised according to his accumulative knowledge which leads to moments of indeterminacy, raising the same interpretative issues to which the first person narrative is subject.

Almost the first detail we learn of Utterson is that "when the wine was to his taste, something eminently human beaconed from his eye; something indeed which never found its way into his talk, but which spoke not only in these silent symbols of the after-dinner face, but more often and loudly in the acts of his life."[55] This observation shows that Utterson is in the habit of disconnecting act from speech, introducing an element of doubt as to his personal integrity which is developed by the observation that "it was frequently his good fortune to be the last reputable acquaintance and the last good influence in the lives of down-going men" (*JH* 31). Being in receipt of such a dubious honour erases some of the previous ambiguity of the "eminently human beacon" emitting from Utterson's eye; rather than act as a moral, truth-telling light among men, it would appear he blinds his brothers to their follies, encouraging them to continue along the path of self-destruction by failing to admonish, apprehend or even acknowledge unwise or immoral behaviour. This attitude of maintaining silence in a conspiracy to gloss over the truth so as to perpetuate the illusion of respectability is analogous with Jekyll's self-deception that, having unleashed Hyde, he can somehow control him, keeping their association hidden from society.[56] Utterson's peculiar brand of universal denial, his vow of silence in the interests of preserving appearances and characteristic of being "embarrassed in discourse" (*JH* 31), establishes a sinister connection between him and the secret Jekyll attempts to repress which engenders the reader's mistrust.

His desire to sustain a dichotomous worldview, where there are "good" people and "bad" people, is indicative of a belief system which derives comfort from the knowledge that there is a rational explanation to mysterious circumstances and, therefore, an objective history can be recounted by correctly arranging the facts. By associating Utterson with this perspective, Stevenson was engaging with the assumption upon which both the predominant form of the realist novel and the emergent detective novel were based. Whereas he strove to question this notion, the following year Conan Doyle introduced the public to an infallible detective

[54] See chapter six for a full discussion of this idea.
[55] Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, ed. Martin A. Danahay, (London: Broadview, 2005), 31.
[56] Arata discusses in detail the "weapon of silence" used by the professional male community against the prying eyes of the world. Arata, "The Sedulous Ape: Atavism, Professionalism, and Stevenson's *Jekyll and Hyde*," in Bloom, 185-210.

who reinforced the concept. Utterson shares Sherlock Holmes's desire to impose order on an otherwise chaotic, unbound urban space. Both believe in the first principle of detection, that there is a deducible solution, an objective reality to be discovered. Utterson rationalises the case, "If he could but once set eyes on [Hyde], he thought the mystery would lighten and perhaps roll altogether away, as was the habit of mysterious things when well examined" (*JH* 39). Whereas Holmes seeks to preserve his intellectual superiority for personal satisfaction and the pleasure of humiliating the police, Utterson increasingly finds his realist assumptions about life and self under attack.[57] Holmes is above the society on which he passes judgement, a cool, amoral personification of logic. He collects evidence and the climax of his investigation is revelation, clarification and the public naming of truth. Utterson is implicated in the crime he is seeking to solve, robbing the final epiphany of triumph and instead causing the narrative to end in an irresolvable, abrupt silence once the confession has been articulated.

Utterson's gradual realisation is evident in his attitude towards the city he moves in; to begin with, he reads it as he does the will, which is the first documentary artefact that suggests the realist principles of domestic-time may not stand: "It offended him both as a lawyer and as a lover of the sane and customary sides of life, to whom the fanciful was the immodest" (*JH* 37). His solitary habits are a mark of his discretion, and it is this quality which ingratiates him with urban society. He lives alone in a "bachelor house" (*JH* 37) where he habitually reads dry divinity before the "clock of the neighbouring church rang out the hour of twelve" (*JH* 37). Although his domestic situation is secluded, it is directly shaped by the precise, socially coherent time represented by the clock, and the publically respectable moral values implied by his theological interests. There is a similar paradox in Utterson's visit to Dr Lanyon, whom he finds "sat alone over his wine" (*JH* 38). The conviviality in their meeting is undermined by a barely-articulated spirit of artificiality that burdens their talk, first invoked by the omniscient narrator's casual remark that Lanyon's geniality, "as was the way of the man, was somewhat theatrical to the eye" (*JH* 38). A professional argument has ended his friendship with Jekyll, and his ability to sustain relations with Utterson can hardly recommend him as a man of genuine conviviality, given Utterson's reputation for preparing men for solitude with his rich silences. The domestic lives of both men illuminate solipsistic habits which characterize them as intensely private and withdrawn from city life, yet inextricably connected to it.

[57] Freeman, 6, argues: "In their differing ways, Sherlock Holmes and the LCC are responses to the same anxieties about the ungovernable urban, since each attempts to address the city's lawlessness and solve its mysteries."

Utterson trains himself to order the chaotic city so that he might read it with accuracy. He maintains a discrete distance from the "low growl of London," which he eventually tames by sharpening his sensory response to the urban milieu so that "the footfalls of a single person … suddenly spring out distinct from the vast hum and clatter of the city" (*JH* 40). His investigations into Mr Hyde disrupt his empowered position by introducing him to the confusing mysteries of interpretation that characterise a universe understood subjectively, from the position of gothic romance. When he first sees Hyde, he exclaims "There is something more, if I could find a name for it. God bless me, the man seems hardly human! Something troglodytic, shall we say? or can it be the old story of Dr. Fell? or is it the mere radiance of a foul soul that thus transpires through, and transfigures, its clay continent?" (*JH* 42) Exposure to the material fact at the centre of the case, Mr Hyde's countenance, generates a profusion of potential lines of enquiry rather than providing clarification, causing Utterson to question the empirical structures according to which he operates. Immediately, he finds his perspective changed; Jekyll's residence, once the most comfortable in London, is transformed by the recollection of Hyde's face so that "he seemed to read a menace in the flickering of the firelight" (*JH* 42). A year later, on the night Hyde reappears, this indeterminacy is reflected in the city's atmosphere: "Mr Utterson beheld a marvellous number of degrees and hues of twilight; for here it would be dark like the back-end of evening; and there would be a glow of rich, lurid brown, like the light of some strange conflagration; and here, for a moment, the fog would be quite broken up, and a haggard shaft of daylight would glance in between the swirling wreaths" (*JH* 48). The hazy ether provides a metaphor for the evolutions that have occurred in Utterson's theory of perception, echoing and contributing to the indistinctive nature of the connections and boundaries that govern the so-called facts of the case he now pursues and his understanding of how the mind can be transformative of the world.

Collecting intelligence, documenting facts and listening to accounts usually enables Utterson to cover over or dissipate a problem without compromising his commitment to the rational, scientific representation of events on which domestic-time rests. Hyde is a problem that cannot be communicated in words, so by definition, it cannot be contained within domestic-time. The implications of reading into the silence are what make the case so uncanny.[58] Utterson's experience of Hyde forces him to adopt a new attitude towards texts which recognises the importance of reading dialogically. Hyde's hand-written confession provides him with solace until Guest compares it to Jekyll's, and Poole confirms that it was hand-delivered through the laboratory door. The text changes its meaning when seen through a

[58] Thomas discusses the text as a study in the dissolution of self as the narrative silences Jekyll. Ronald R. Thomas, "The Strange Voices in the Strange Case: Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Hyde, and the Voices of Modern Fiction" in Hirsch and Veeder, 73-93.

wider, situated lens. This insight into the process of documentary interpretation is brought to a climax when he and Poole discover Jekyll's body.

In terms of articulating a broader theory of the nature of fictional narrative, Jekyll's lab actively draws the artefacts of domestic-time and empirical reason into dialogue with the wider scope of the dialogised romance:

> At one table, there were traces of chemical work, various measured heaps of some white salt being laid on glass saucers, as though for an experiment in which the unhappy man had been prevented.
>
> "That is the same drug that I was always bringing him," said Poole; and even as he spoke, the kettle with a startling noise boiled over.
>
> This brought them to the fireside, where the easy-chair was drawn cosily up, and the tea-things stood ready to the sitter's elbow, the very sugar in the cup. (*JH* 66)

Domestic-time is upheld in outward appearance, represented by Jekyll's charity work, religious enthusiasm and the unassuming apparatus indicative of the Lanyon school of methodical scientific research. The moment where the connection with this safe, realist world of afternoon tea ceremonies and the prosaic detailed discoveries of routine medicine disintegrates is, ironically, when Poole and Utterson look into Jekyll's mirror – symbol of the mimetic powers of literature:

> Next, in the course of their review of the chamber, the searchers came to the cheval glass, into whose depths they looked with an involuntary horror. But it was so turned as to show them nothing but the rosy glow playing on the roof, the fire sparkling in a hundred repetitions along the glazed front of the presses, and their own pale and fearful countenances stooping to look in. (*JH* 66)

Jekyll's discovery of his psychological instability is replicated first in Utterson and Poole's "involuntary horror" and then in the "hundred repetitions" of the hearthside, central symbol of Victorian domesticity. Domestic-time is an illusory means of representing the world which is exposed by the larger implications of Jekyll's experiment. His breakthrough in understanding the duplicitous nature of the self reinforces Utterson's discovery of the unreliability of the facts to inspire a single, accurate interpretation. Each insight is suggestive of the limitations inherent in domestic-time as a framework for fictional narrative; a more serviceable model, proposed through Utterson's encounters with objects to be read, understands the textual mirror as subjective in both design and reflection. By recognising

their position on the edge of the picture, examining the evidence of Jekyll's death for all that it might imply, Utterson and Poole see themselves with greater clarity, giving them access to the surplus of the world which surrounds them. The mirror exposes what they cannot normally perceive or refuse to understand of themselves, a circumstance which causes their "involuntary horror."

Jekyll's mirror foreshadows the more explicit disclosure made in his confession: the text operates in conjunction with the reader's imagination to generate an interpretation that reveals more about the reader, and the author, than either one could discern independently; a knowledge which can only be attained through dialogic collaboration. In the lab, Utterson is not so much disturbed by the horror of finding his friend's corpse, as by the startling insight he gains into his own identity. As far as his reputation is concerned, the revelations written into the crime scene must be contained, they cannot be allowed out into the streets. When Utterson reads Jekyll's account in the privacy of his study he is provided with a textual articulation of the experience he has already undergone for himself, over the course of his investigations into Mr Hyde and in his friend's lab. In reading the final testimonies of his friends, Utterson's perspective is brought into an uneasy alignment with the flesh-and-blood reader of the novella. The discoveries he makes about the difference between observation and discernment are not solved by the doctors' narratives, but perpetuated into the subjective experience of approaching the text as a dialogic artefact, for we are never privy to Utterson's final response.

Conclusions

Prince Florizel and Clara Luxmore might be the most prominent figures in the Arabian's cycles, but the individual narratives that comprise each volume are focalised through the subjective experience of the characters who unwittingly become entangled in the plot. This causes two major conflicts in the narrative. The first is between the implicit temporal structure of the frame and its tale. The erudite Arabian is determined to place the narrated events in the distant past, stories fixed in print after they have "been known among the inhabitants of Bagdad" (*NAN* 168) from a point of origin beyond memory. Narrating the story from an outsider's point of view replicates the immediacy of an oral tale by reinstating an ambiguity regarding the conclusion to, or even the precise nature of, the circumstances being relayed. O'Connor discusses the short story's "struggle with Time – the novelist's

Time" arguing that "it is an attempt to reach some point of vantage from which the past and future are equally visible. The crisis of the short story *is* the short story and not as in a novel the mere logical inescapable result of what has preceded it."[59] Stevenson's short stories mediate this temporal hiatus by constructing an inner logic that implies their indefinite continuation. As romances, each story retains the uncertainty Bakhtin praises as "filled with the creative possibilities of subsequent *real* emergence and development … a *germinative* seed, utterly real, visibly available, and at the same time filled with an equally real future that is growing out of it."[60] Despite Florizel's exalted accreditation by the Arabian as the generating power behind the romance, his authority is fragile and he ultimately loses control. In their very first adventure, Florizel draws the death card at the Suicide Club and it is only Colonel Geraldine's quick thinking that delivers him from an untimely end. This loss of autonomy and reminder of death is characteristic of the Stevensonian city which resists knowledge and evades interpretation, preferring to sustain the illusion, and entice the casual observer into participating in the performance, knowingly or not.[61]

The sheer number of differing perspectives, performances and motives for communication that are active in the metropolis leads to the reader experiencing a playful but unsettling sensation of disorientation. A host of paradoxes are sustained within the constantly fluctuating urban centre, leaving the question of what constitutes an insightful interpretation itself ambivalent. An array of competing subjectivities organised by Stevenson's connected short stories corroborates "the concept of London as a plethora of cities jostling for precedence within the same ever-expanding and unstable space [which] anticipated Foucault's notions of the *heterotopia*."[62] This notion plays on the concept of life as a struggle for prominence, but also survival, in a whirl of conflicting ideas, cultures and values. Lacking a solid point of reference, the short story narrative relies solely on the impulses of the perspective through which it is focalised, providing a useful parallel to the means by which the city is experienced. By burlesquing the detective in his cityscapes, executed most effectively in Utterson, Stevenson implies that the truth for which the sleuth is searching is another competing illusion offered by the metropolis, which is persistently deferred.[63] This point of view is held in tension with continual references to devilry, Providence and conscience which provides a competing discourse in the text; the dialogic

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[59] Frank O'Connor, *The Lonely Voice: A Study of the Short Story* (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1963), 105.
[60] Bakhtin, *SG*, 50.
[61] Sandison, *Future Feeling*, 151.
[62] Freeman, 15. See Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias," trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Architecture /Mouvement/ Continuité* (1984): n. pag. *Massachusetts Institute of Technology* 12 Feb. 2014 <http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/foucault1.pdf>. The sense in which "their role is to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space" is most relevant here.
[63] Sandison, *Future Feeling*, 105, 132.

nature of the narrative demands each is given credence. If the chronotope is "not a term that can be invoked 'in general,'" but must be attributed to a specific perspective, Stevenson's innovation in exposing narratorial authority as inadequate to the task breaks new ground. The array of subjective view-points vocalized in the text represents as many chronotopic fragments, which each depend upon their relative situatedness with respect to one another for definition.[64] Stevenson's narrative does not finally discredit or undermine any one of the competing ideologies vocalised in the text, he merely presents them for the reader's active response; reading fiction is not a straight forward exercise, but an activity which requires an intentional, focused engagement in an act of communication.[65]

[64] Holquist, 150.
[65] See *R. L. Stevenson on Fiction: an Anthology of Literary and Critical Essays*, ed. Glenda Norquay, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1999).

Chapter VI: The Estate

There are certainly few things to be compared with these castles, or rather country seats, of the English nobility and gentry; nor anything at all to equal the servility of the population that dwells in their neighbourhood. … The look of my uncle's park wall, even from the outside, had something of a princely character; and when I came in view of the house itself, a sort of madness of vicarious vain-glory struck me dumb and kept me staring.

\- *St Ives* [1]

Mr James utters his mind with a becoming fervour on the sanctity of truth to the novelist; on a more careful examination truth will seem a word of very debatable propriety, not only for the labours of the novelist, but for those of the historian.

\- *"A Humble Remonstrance"* [2]

If chapter five discussed Stevenson's *avant-garde* credentials in terms of his maverick approach to form and dialogising literary genres, this chapter sets out to establish how the chronotopic principles behind the short story also had a bearing on the more traditional nineteenth-century genre of the *Bildungsroman* – or, if it's not too much to venture, the novel itself. The similarity of the influence that the master chronotope of the *fin-de-siècle* had on two diverse genres demonstrates that although chronotope theory is closely related to genre, the two terms are not interchangeable, nor did Bakhtin intend them to be. Stevenson's final word on the estate comes in his half-completed novels *St Ives* and *Weir of Hermiston*. St Ives's experience of "a sort of madness of vicarious vain-glory" taking possession of him when he first sees his inheritance is not unusual among the protagonists of the *Bildungsroman*. Estates dominate the landscape of literary history and frequently establish the shape of the hero's future. An Englishman's home is his castle, and from Joe's humble forge and happy relationship with Biddy to the sweeping lawns of Pemberley, the nineteenth-century *Bildungsroman* consistently rewards good characters with title deeds and a marriage certificate.[3] When Stevenson writes about the estate, either the building or the family line tends to be in a state of decline, regardless of the hero's moral credentials. Graden Easter (1880), the *residenzia* (1885), and the Darnaway farm (1887) are all examples

[1] Robert Louis Stevenson, *St Ives*, (London: Heinmann, 1925), 146. The first edition in 1895 was printed with an ending by A. T. Quiller-Couch.
[2] Stevenson, *MP*, 264.
[3] Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*, ed. and introd. M. Cardwell, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (London: Penguin, 2003).

of houses on the brink of disappearance. In *Kidnapped* (1886), the Shaw estate remains in a state of incompletion while Ebenezer is in residence and when David reclaims his inheritance, his marriage to Catriona disrupts any sense of closure. Her highland blood ties them to the Jacobite rebels who fought against Scotland's submission to the Hanoverian monarchy. The estate is troubled by a divided loyalty towards their family in hiding on the continent and Scotland's newly established peace with England. The history of Hermiston, which is charted through the lives of several generations in *Heathercat* (unfinished), 'Thrawn Janet' (1881) and *Weir of Hermiston* (1896), is one of terminal decline.

St Ives (1897) discusses the fragility of the process of inheritance itself. Although St Ives encounters Amersham Place in full bloom, his uncle settles his affairs to appease an old grudge, making the necessary changes to his will from his deathbed. Even after the legal change has been made, it is far from certain that his last wishes will be respected. Although Amersham Place exerts a strong influence over St Ives's imagination, most of the events recorded in the novel occur far beyond the park wall. The novel is a further elaboration of one of Stevenson's recurring themes: the problematic distinction between historical and fictional narrative. As his theoretical writings insist, the difference is troublesome because both literary genres depend upon the written word for their expression.[4] Unconvinced that an idea, let alone objective truth, can ever be communicated without some alteration during the process of interpretation, Stevenson's fiction often sets out to question Victorian notions of what constitutes an historical account, and to undermine simplistic divisions that are traditionally erected between literary genres. St Ives engages in outrageous parodies of the traditional romantic hero, rescuing a fair maiden from the dangers of a compromising love affair and duelling with a fellow prisoner-of-war using half a pair of scissors in defence of his lady's honour. These acts, which are openly subversive of high romance, are tempered by more serious topical discussions of inheritance laws, foreign policy and the dubious power of the press to agitate public opinion and allow fictions to permeate the realm of the factual account. Stevenson's most effective reappraisal of the generic differences sustained between fiction and history is *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889) which takes the House of Durrisdeer as its subject and is predominantly set within the boundaries of the estate on Scotland's west coast. Rather than making the house the organising centre of the novel, Stevenson's text is shaped by the chronotope of the threshold and focalised through his narrator, Mackellar, to produce a much more complex narrative structure.

Glenda Norquay's seminal work on the symbiotic relationship between Stevenson as a reader and writer of fiction, *Robert Louis Stevenson and Theories of Reading*, powerfully

[4] Penny Fielding, *Writing and Orality: Nationality, Culture and Nineteenth-Century Scottish Fiction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 14.

demonstrates the value of understanding Stevenson's reading habits in order to illuminate his writing practices.[5] As a "vagabond reader" Stevenson absorbed what he read and incorporated elements of the formal and stylistic techniques used by authors he admired when penning his own work. Stevenson had just been reading *Crime and Punishment* (1866) when his mind began to run on the idea that would become his Scottish masterpiece. He was immediately captivated by Dostoevsky's ability to draw the reader into the room to witness narrative events develop with an intimacy he described to Henley in a letter of 1885 as akin to "having a brain fever."[6] When he relayed the experience to John Addington Symonds Stevenson wrote that the novel was "a room, a house of life, into which [the readers] themselves enter, and are tortured and purified."[7] As Richard Ambrosini intimates, "Rather than writing to show the reader how to *look* at the world to extract pleasure from it, from now on he would have to struggle to *create* fictional worlds."[8] Reading Dostoevsky pushed the limits of Stevenson's experimental vision when it came to the effects he wished to achieve as a writer, causing him to become ever more conscious of how he structured time and spacein his work. Extending Norquay's principle further, a chronotopic analysis of *The Master* exemplifies the lengths to which Stevenson's reading informed his understanding of narrative structure. Reading Dostoevsky and experiencing the effects of his innovative writerly practice challenged Stevenson to construct the time-space of his fiction with fresh cognisance and an intention which is intrinsically dialogic.

Given the impression *Crime and Punishment* had on Stevenson, it is unsurprising that Bakhtin saw Dostoevsky as an archetype of the dialogised novelist. According to Bakhtin, his technique proved one of the revolutionary contributions to world literature which transformed the way authors viewed the task of representing life in the novel. In *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1929), Bakhtin addresses the dialogic elements of Dostoevsky's corpus, tracing the development of his style from parody and satire to the objectification of the idea that becomes the structuring principle in his philosophy.[9] Dostoevsky broke out of the material determinism that defined the realist novel of the nineteenth century by attempting to capture the *presentness* of utterances exchanged between subjects who are aware of the surplus context that impinges on making everyday decisions beyond what is actually spoken or done. As Gary Saul Morson explains, "dialogue does not follow any preset path. Or to use Bakhtin's language, a dialogue does not "unfold", it "becomes". Its

[5] Norquay, 8-13.
[6] Stevenson, *Letters*, vol. 5, 151.
[7] Stevenson, *Selected Letters*, 310.
[8] Ambrosini, "The Art of Writing and the Pleasure of Reading," in Jones, 28.
[9] David Patterson, "Dostoevsky's Poetics of Spirit: Bakhtin and Berdyaev," *Dostoevsky Studies* 8 (1987): 220-30. *Toronto Slavic Quarterly*. 7 April 2013 <http://www.utoronto.ca/tsq/DS/08/219.shtml>.

result is not "already given" but made in the process of exchange. The same conversational starting point can always lead to multiple continuations."[10] According to Bakhtin, Dostoevsky is the first writer to allow this philosophy of simultaneousness to shape his writing. Stevenson's theory of literature as an attempt to recreate conversation rather than to ape reality or to preserve a standardised version of a story accords with this view. He strived to enter into an act of open-ended communication with his reader through his fiction, which meant that the narrative required at least two alternative perspectives in order to live, and ought to sustain several interpretative variations. This undergirding aesthetic principle is what makes Bakhtin's dialogic theory such a useful means of understanding Stevenson's poetics.

Bakhtin's chronotope theory is closely linked to his notion of the dialogic imagination. The task of describing the several different chronotopic "levels" and "types" suggested by "Time and the Chronotope in the Novel" has absorbed much critical attention since the essay was translated into English in 1985.[11] It can come as no surprise that a theorist who was adamant that dialogics are of central importance to fiction envisaged the chronotope as operating in several distinct ways both within and between different works.[12] Without such a multiplicity of forms, chronotopes would be incapable of operating dialogically. When Bakhtin becomes more specific about the role of chronotopes in nineteenth-century literature, he enlists Dostoevsky's fiction in support of one of the innovations he observes in emergence:

> We will mention one more chronotope, highly charged with emotion and value, the chronotope of *threshold*; it can be combined with the motif of encounter, but its most fundamental instance is as the chronotope of *crisis* and *break* in a life. … In Dostoevsky, for example, the threshold and related chronotopes – those of the staircase, the front hall and the corridor, as well as the chronotopes of the street and the square that extend those spaces into the open air – are the main places of action in his works, places where crisis events occur … In this chronotope, *time is essentially instantaneous*; it is as if it has no duration and falls out of the normal course of biographical time. It is as if Dostoevsky's landscape is animated and illuminated by the ancient public square's spirit of carnival and mystery … This does not, of course, exhaust the range of chronotopes in Dostoevsky; they are complex and multi-faceted, as are the traditions that they infuse with new life. (*DI* 249, final italics added)

[10] Morson, "The Chronotope of Humanness," 94.
[11] See Bemong and Borghart, "Introduction," 1-12.
[12] For a discussion of the central importance Bakhtin placed on dialogics see Holquist, 111.

The immediacy of Stevenson's reading experience of *Crime and Punishment* is generated by the instantaneous time of the dominant threshold chronotope. Dostoevsky invests his novel with the cognitive meanders common to decision-making, processing biographical time as one informative element in the matrix of ideas that crystallise in the instant when an act or thought comes into being. The world of the novel is experienced by the reader through the mind of Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov whose thoughts are defined against the ideas held by those around him with whom he enters into dialogue. Each dialogic encounter is a process of becoming that has no foregone conclusion but is created within the narrative moment. The chronotope of the threshold is also characterised by the irreversible nature of the change that has occurred: the character is marked by the decision that has been made, and the world has altered in some small but irrevocable way.

In terms of the master chronotope sketched out in chapter four, the distinct literary moment of the *fin-de-siècle* is prepared for by Dostoevsky's radical break with the *Bildungsroman* which dominated nineteenth-century fiction. In Bakhtinian philosophy, the intensification of biographical-time in the *Bildungsroman* is one of five variants that illustrate the emergent trend of perceiving time historically, a perspective which was prepared for by Enlightenment culture.[13] Bakhtin writes: "the contradictions of contemporary life, having lost their absolute, God-given, eternal nature, reveal a historical multitemporality – remnants of the past, and rudiments and tendencies of the future."[14] Past and present are fused together in the process of interpretation "in the power of time" which Bakhtin identifies in Goethe's writing. Goethe's interest in the materiality of time-space emphasises the horizontal, historical axis where the past is made visible in the present. He sees landscape as "a piece of historical time condensed in space … characters do not enter into it from outside, are not invented to fit the landscape, but are unfolded in it as though they were present from the very beginning."[15] A comfortingly inevitable future is incorporated into this vision, Bakhtin argues: "Goethe's world is a *germinative seed*, utterly real, visibly available, and at the same time filled with an equally real future that is growing out of it."[16] By imagining that temporality is visible in material space, Goethe retreats from considering the perspective of spiritual time-space which exists outside human history. In the past, Bakhtin stresses "the otherworldly future, severed from the horizontal of terrestrial space and time, rose as an otherworldly vertical to the real flow of time, bleeding the real future and terrestrial space as an arena for this real future, ascribing symbolic significance to everything, and devaluing and discarding

[13] Bakhtin, *SG*, 10-59.
[14] *Ibid*., 26.
[15] *Ibid*., 49.
[16] *Ibid*., 50.

everything that did not yield to symbolic interpretation."[17] The dominance of Christian theology shaped all literature, to a greater or lesser extent, by providing an alternative axis along which to imagine life. This spiritual realm formed an invisible "beyond" that determined the way material culture was perceived and represented in art.[18] Goethe is Bakhtin's archetype of a writer who saw space temporally and wrote about the human lives that were necessarily generated by their locality.

In thoroughly historicising time, Goethe emphasised what was visible, material and necessary at the expense of the invisible, the spiritual and the unpredictable. Binding narrative to the material world was the first step in a thought process that came to imagine the end of history, characterizing the final decades of the nineteenth century as a period when "Heroic narratives of foundation give way to stories of the end time."[19] Goethe's insights into visible time-space anticipate the uncertain futures that trouble *fin-de-siècle* fiction. Although the progressive optimism in material and historical development that defined Victorian culture was losing momentum, the new beginning that this change implied was posited in multiple forms; artists were prompted to renegotiate their attitudes towards the spiritual dimension of life, their understanding of human psychology which had become a focus in scientific research, and subjectivity, which was gaining credence over objective truths. [20]Admitting that there was a visible end point to current paradigms of thought caused thinkers to re-evaluate their practice and to imagine what lay beyond the uncertainties to which material history was now exposed.

Bakhtin's analysis of Dostoevsky's threshold moments anticipates this development; he becomes another writer "no longer within an epoch, but on the border between two epochs, at the transition point from one to the other."[21] The value attributed to the present must be accentuated in a world that has no determinable future. Without the *great time* implicit in the existence of a higher being, now is where that future is shaped and defined; today is the only time of which one can be certain. In *The Master of Ballantrae* this indefinable futurity is

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[17] Bakhtin, *SG*, 43.

[18] According to Hegel, 11-2, this dislocation between the "Absolute" transcendent being and the material world of everyday life led to a trend of inauthenticity and decline in art. Not since the fusion of an understanding of the Absolute and the artist's content present in Greek mythology (their literature created and described their gods) has art been pure and progressive.

[19] Arata, *Fictions of Loss*, 1. For an example of how this fear was ironized in contemporary literary culture, see Wilde, 318: "I wish it were *fin-du-globe*," said Dorian, with a sigh, "Life is such a disappointment." Kermode records this sense in modern crisis literature: "The time is not free, it is the slave of a mythical end." Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in Theories of Fiction with a New Epilogue* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), 94.

[20] For a discussion which connects writing practices, spiritualism with advances in communication technology, see Antony Enns, "The Undead Author: Spiritualism, Technology and Authorship," in Kontou and Willburn (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion*, 55-78.

[21] Waugh, 23.

evidently the impetus behind the narrative, which is driven by a series of "threshold moments" similar to (and informed by) those that Bakhtin identifies in Dostoevsky. Just as Raskolnikov must learn to think in terms of his situtedness, altering his ideas as his experience changes, rather than relying so heavily on a preconceived theory, Mackellar's attempts to write a definitive history of the Duries are sabotaged by his emphatic polemic.[22] His narrative is constantly working to close down any alternative readings to his own; ironically, by arguing for a single interpretation of events, he strengthens the indeterminacy of his account and calls the authority of the word itself into question. Mackellar is obsessed with the task of fixing the origin of the Durrisdeer myth in the hope of bequeathing his perspective on the family as the standard version of events recalled by posterity. His ambition is untenable because of the chronotopic nature of language itself, and the instantaneity of the events that his narrative recounts; there can be no irredeemably "evil" brother in a world which is experienced as in a constant state of becoming. The rest of this chapter will examine a couple of the most significant threshold moments in Mackellar's narrative before taking a wider view of the theories of reading and writing texts that are scrutinised as Mackellar's opinions and ideas shift in the process of creating his account.

Dialogic Chronotopes

In his introduction to the Penguin Classics edition of *The Master of Ballantrae,* Adrian Poole notes that the narrative "sway[s] on the edge of the crazy", caught between the narrator's obsession with documented history and his current project, which visibly undermines his commitment to impartiality.[23] This central conflict between form and content has led to much critical interest in *The Master*'s genre. It has been seen as an example of the Scottish nineteenth-century "serious and satiric" novel, a "complex exploration of national and psychic duality" and an extension of "the conventions of historical romance [which] uses the trope of the Gothic to provide an atmosphere that undermines certainty."[24] The ultimate instability of Mackellar's text has allowed critics to agree on the central importance of the

[22] Morson interprets Raskolnikov's "lesson" in these terms: "It is this theoretical mind that leads him to murder." Morson, "The Chronotope of Humanness," 99.
[23] Adrian Poole, "Introduction," Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae* (London: Penguin Classics, 1996), xiii-xiv.
[24] Douglas Gifford, "Stevenson and Scottish Fiction: The Importance of the *Master of Ballantrae*," in Bloom, 60, which also appears in Calder, *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland*, Marilyn Simon, "Doubled Brothers, Divided Self: Duality and Destruction in *The Master of Ballantrae*," *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 4 (2007): 129-50. *Robert Louis Stevenson Website*. 18 May 2012, Eric Massie, "Scottish Gothic: Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Master of Ballantrae* and *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*," in Jones, 172.

doppelganger theme figured in the representation of the Durie brothers whilst supporting a range of interpretations as to its meaning. James and Henry have been seen as signifying the opposition of history and reality; "Jacobite and Whig forces in eighteenth-century Scotland," and the fraudulence of polarity itself, in Mackellar's failure to separate the broader genres of oral and written tradition, history and fiction with consistency.[25] All these readings are persuasive because of the narrative's central ambiguity. By examining the chronotopes through which the worlds of the text are imagined, it is possible to cut through the problem of attributing *The Master* with a generic classification, and instead understand the novel from the perspective of dialogically engaged representations of time-space, which is generative of these conflicting interpretations.[26] As the main narrator and original editor of the documents which comprise the story, Mackellar "acts as a medium, interpreting actions and translating them into a rather dry account, but he fuses together the various episodes and so gives the text an otherwise lacking unity."[27] By identifying the major chronotope at work in the narrative, it is possible to see how indeterminacy is achieved without losing structural coherence, relieving Mackellar's narration of sole responsibility for holding all the disparate elements of *The Master* together. All of the chronotopic variants implied by the texts which comprise the narrative retain cohesion through their common relationship to the major chronotope of the threshold, resisting the simplified structure of "adventure-time" verses "biographical-time" and resolving the concern that *The Master*'s structure is stretched uncomfortably between romance and realism.

In the interests of constructing a believable myth, Mackellar painstakingly relays the history of the Durie family by going back to the beginning of the local record. This serves to establish the parameters of the major chronotope that (he hopes) will structure the rest of his account. After a brief justification for his manuscript's existence, he launches his story with the temporal and spatial specificity of an historian: "The Duries of Durrisdeer and Ballantrae were a strong family in the South-west from the days of David the First" (*MB* 9), but rather than continue to express himself with realistic transparency, he repeatedly succumbs to the lure of romance convention. Immediately after this self-assured opening, he turns to folkloric tradition to authenticate the family's importance: "A rhyme still current in the countryside … bears the mark of its antiquity; and the name appears in another which common report attributes to Thomas of Ercildoune himself" (*MB* 9). His unhesitating

[25] See Cairns Craig, *Out of History* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1996), 81, Joseph Egan, "From History to Myth: A Symbolic Reading of *The Master of Ballantrae*," *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 8 (1968): 699-710. 699, and Fielding, chapters five and six.

[26] Following Nele Bemong, "Internal Chronotopic Structures: The Nineteenth-Century Historical Novel in the Context of the Belgian Literary Polysystem," in Bemong and Borghart, 159-60, Ladin in Emerson, 128, Holquist, 153, 156, 167, and Pearce, 175, whose arguments each suggest that several chronotopes operate within an individual text.

[27] Massie, "Scottish Gothic," 172.

synthesis of history and poetry collapses the distinction between myth and fact, but this very impulse illuminates the way his narrative is inevitably shaped by his historic moment. Mackellar writes on the threshold of a permanent change typical of the master narratives that characterized *fin-de-siècle* culture.[28] His reason for writing hinges on the public interest invested in the twilight period of an ancestral line, "public curiosity is sure to welcome … [the account of someone] intimately mingled with the last years and history of the house" (*MB* 9). The end of the Duries' line marked the passing over a threshold from a past shrouded in national myth to the start of a new epoch in which the *Bildungsroman* and biographical literature-of-becoming was to be marked by decline and loss. This genre-conflation is the most obvious mark of Mackellar's chronotopic conflict. He clings to the notion that language can accurately record and preserve events for the nation, upheld by the epic tradition and promised in the historical novel. Despite this belief, he finds the substance of his tale dictates an open-ended, unfinished and morbid form. Although Mackellar constantly hints towards an inevitable future by employing suggestive metaphors, such as "I was not in time to avert what was impending, the arrow had been drawn; it must now fly" (*MB* 70), which are indicative of a commitment to traditional Scottish beliefs in fate and providence, this stance is part of his delicately constructed self. As P. H. Scott records, "Since Gregory Smith invented the term, the 'Caledonian antisyzygy'… no description of any Scotsman seems to be complete without a reference to it. It was, Smith said, a 'combination of opposites' which was to be found at every turn in Scottish character, history and literature."[29] Such encoded theoretical assumptions reveal an underlying determination to narrate the origins of myth with a fixed ending in mind. Unfortunately for Mackellar, his mask is prone to slipping. In the first few pages he says of the Master, "he was then supposed to be dead" (*MB* 21), which although expressed plainly, hints at the unpredictable instability of even the most basic facts, establishing the conditions for a narrative defined by becoming.[30]

Within this major chronotope of the threshold that spans two worlds – the past glory of the Duries and their future extinction – several minor threshold moments mark the points of accelerated disintegration or decline where one of numerous possible outcomes in the narrative is decided upon. This polychronotopic structure is illustrative of the fact that particular chronotopes can function on several of the different levels set out in the

[28] Many *fin-de-siècle* commentators discuss this. See in particular Arata, *Fictions of Loss*, Brantlinger *Age of Empire*, Ruth Hoberman, *Museum Trouble: Edwardian Fiction and the Appearance of Modernism* (Virginia: U of Virginia P, 2011).
[29] P. H. Scott, *Walter Scott and Scotland* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1981), 10.
[30] Massie sees this, and argues that the predominance of chance and hazard in the narrative structure undermines the romance of going to war. Massie, "Scottish Gothic," 169.

Introduction, even within a single narrative.[31] The most notable spaces associated with the minor chronotope of the threshold in *The Master* are the entrance hall, the hall, the shrubbery, the beach and the forest clearing, which follow Bakhtin's prescription for the spaces that will host any narrative's significant threshold moments.[32] All of these examples showcase "the falls, resurrections, renewals, epiphanies, decisions that determine the whole life" not only of *man*, but of the estate and the Duries.[33] In these minor threshold chronotopes, narrative time thickens and slows, spatialising the specific point of change, like a seismic event that releases years of amassed energy in a single, volatile incident. Mackellar labours over this time-space structure, particularly when he comes to relay the events of the Master's return, prefacing the incident with his "strange thought, how many of us had been storing up the elements of this catastrophe, for how long a time, and with how blind an ignorance of what we did" (*MB* 70). In admitting their blindness, Mackellar demonstrates the impossibility of predicting the course events would take with any accuracy. Several symbolic images are woven into the narrative to indicate change or the crossing of a boundary. Stevenson plays on the existing metaphorical meanings invested in the word "threshold" indicating the breaks and crisis points common to every life by making references to material thresholds such as windows, doors and the coastline, or temporal thresholds such as dawn, dusk, noon and midnight.

Importantly, the first minor chronotopic threshold in Mackellar's account is the discussion surrounding the Durie response to Prince Charlie's call to arms. It takes place in the hall and serves to identify two moments of transition. The first crisis is the more obvious. The scene climaxes in Alison's act: "she caught up that piece of gold which had just sent her lover to the wars, and flung it clean through the family shield in the great painted window" (*MB* 13). When Alison throws the guinea through the lozenge of stained glass, she creates a physical symbol of this threshold in the Duries' history. In personal terms, it marks the moment when Alison first regrets her love for James, and although Henry's fortunes reverse and he is "more made up to from that hour" (*MB* 13), he comprehends the damage done to the dynasty, gloomily prophesying "We shall live to repent of this" (*MB* 13). The smashed window that destroys the coat of arms symbolizes the irrecoverable breach in familial relations and the weakening of the House. Critics have rightly commented on the collusion between the break in the personal, private-time of Durrisdeer and the crisis of national,

[31] "Polychronotopic" follows Pearce, 71, 175.
[32] See Bakhtin, *DI*, 248. Additionally, the shrubbery provides a "corridor" between the house, the bay and the village "extend[ing] those spaces into the open air" (*DI* 248) and the forest clearing functions like a "public square" in the woods.
[33] Bakhtin, *DI*, 248.

public-time traced in Scotland's failed struggle for independence from England.[34] The gaming metaphors of "cheating at cards" (*MB* 12) and tossing a coin to determine fate link the act of going "to the wars" (*MB* 12) with boyish adventure-romance and, as Eric Massie has argued, implicitly theorize history as the arbitrary outworking of time.[35]

In Bakhtinian terms, this randomness implies the *eventness* of history; any act might fall out differently if it were to be repeated. The surplus of possible outcomes implied by a single event acknowledges that the route taken is not exclusive or predetermined, but shaped in the moment of decision by the connections established between an individual subject and their context, as they are perceived by that subject in that instant. The old pragmatic attitudes of the Enlightenment generation are vocalised by Lord Durrisdeer who insists that by hedging their bets and dividing the family's interests "we are saving the House of Durrisdeer" (*MB* 12); he sees this course as the only one possible if the House is to stand. These conflicting means of understanding the dynamics of history echo the discrepancies between systems of thought that emerge over time and define the master chronotope. In Scotland particularly, the past is represented by Enlightenment philosophy, classical literature, paganism and a certain brand of Calvinism, which stand in opposition to an embryonic post-romantic suspicion of these received epistemological systems.[36] If Scotland's national division between loyalty to the romantic cause of independence and pragmatic acceptance of Union is echoed in the Duries' schism, the fragmentation of the family shield refers to the irretrievable loss felt by Scotland that has implications for how Scots conceptualise their national history.

Historical time moves swiftly in this episode, and the relative stasis of the estate is punctuated by sudden communications from the world beyond: "to these four came the news" (*MB* 11) setting Durrisdeer at a remote distance from national events. These communications intensify, exaggerating Durrisdeer's growing isolation and withdrawal – Poole describes the house as a remote island – while sustaining the immediacy of the historic changes being lived through: "Next was the news of Culloden … What must John Paul do but burst into the hall where the family were sat at dinner, and cry the news to them" (*MB*

[34] See Gifford, "Stevenson and Scottish Fiction," 61-4, 75, and Egan, "From History to Myth," 699-710.
[35] Massie, "Scottish Gothic," 169-70.
[36] For an introduction to the way Enlightenment ideas influenced literary culture in Scotland, see Richardson, *Literature, Education and Romanticism*, and Allan, *Making British Culture*. See Craig, 1-5, 68, for a survey of these issues in nineteenth-century Scottish culture, although he sees Hume as one of the Enlightenment philosophers absorbed into English culture at the expense of contributing to the "provincial" culture of Scotland. This negates the essential Scottish turn of mind which prompted Hume to ask the very questions from which his philosophy was derived.

15).[37] After the war-time flurry of correspondence, "time went by in the house … without much change" (*MB* 15). Once the heir is lost, the bid for national sovereignty defeated, the new age broached and the threshold crossed, time settles back into biography – the recounting of marriages, births and deaths. It transpires that the sense of immediacy has, all along, been a trick of narrative. Although the tumultuous events described take on the quality of an eyewitness statement, they all occur before Mackellar's arrival at the hall.

The description Mackellar writes from personal experience ought to work in collaboration with the reader's genre expectations to provide a crucial warning as to his character. The replacement "lozenge of clear glass" in the hall window is styled as "a blemish" on a room that is otherwise described in accordance with a setting in a gothic romance, "handsome with its family portraits and the pargeted ceiling with pendants, and the carved chimney" (*MB* 19).[38] Although his narrative began with the stated intention of observing realist narrative practices, delivering evidence as behoves "a witness in a court" (*MB* 19), the dominant chronotope of threshold has already been interrupted by Mackellar's imposition of gothic-castle-time which accompanies a subversive alteration in the narrator's genre.[39] Northrop Frye argues that genre is determinable by observing how a text treats supernatural phenomena, and at this point in his account, Mackellar's straight-laced use of ghoulish metaphors indicate that he has strayed into writing romance: "there was a shadow on that house, the shadow of the Master of Ballantrae. Dead or alive (and he was then supposed to be dead) that man was his brother's rival" (*MB* 21).[40] These spectral shadows deliberately prepare for Mackellar's reference to the Master, associating him with the diabolical in a manner that is proleptic of both the description of his "resurrection" and the vampiric metaphors used to portray the financial burden he places on the estate. Using gothic-castle-time to prepare for the next threshold moment alerts the reader to Mackellar's position outside narrative time and reiterates his unreliability as a narrator, scrutinising the generic distinctions between history and fiction when both are dependent on language for their existence.

When Mackellar regains the narrative after Burke's heterodiegetic account discloses the secret of the Master's survival, nearly a decade is dismissed in four pages, before hesitating over another crisis moment.[41] Having lingered on the chronotopic threshold, decelerating the narrative by reporting speech in direct transcriptions of dialogue, and through

[37] Poole, "Introduction," *MB*, xv.
[38] Bakhtin, *DI*, 245-6.
[39] The deterioration in Mackellar's realistic narrative is tracked by Nels C. Pearson, "The Moment of Modernism: Schopenhauer's "Unstable Phantom" in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Stevenson's *The Master of Ballantrae*," *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 31 (1999): 182-202.
[40] Frye, *Anatomy*, 50.
[41] Gerard Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), 244-5.

contextualising events with precise description, Mackellar increases the pace until the Master's physical arrival.[42] It is not as if these seven years are uneventful in themselves; the estate is slowly bled dry by the Master's financial demands, Miss Katherine grows up, and relations between Alison and Henry fluctuate. Yet, to relate detail would be to dwell on "the period in which Mr Henry showed himself the worst" (*MB* 64), directly conflicting with his reason for writing. Mackellar varies the tempo of his narrative to obscure his ellipsis of events which would sully Henry's good character. This period also lies outside the presentness of the threshold, with time unfolding predictably, given the circumstances and relational tensions developed by Mackellar's description of the breaking news that James lives. While things follow the pattern established by the previous threshold moment, there is a hiatus in the narrative until the next instance where the capriciousness of becoming emerges. This interval is not lost on Mackellar, who is full of suspicion that the Master will return in person, and has determined to control the visit as much as possible. He sets up "a spy glass in [his] room" (*MB* 70) and gathers reports from "tenant folk" with knowledge of the traders' network that operates in the bay to prepare to encounter the other Durie brother. His fastidious character refuses to give in to the random nature of historical time that is emerging from his account; the future must be determinable if sufficient evidence is collected in the present.

Subject to this jealous observation from the confines of the house, the bay functions as a chronotopic boundary for the romantic existence of the wandering Master and the life of repressed desire and duty conducted by Henry (and Mackellar) on the estate. The bay is a geographical point of transition, but more importantly, it spatialises the equivocal differences Mackellar seeks to describe between the Durie brothers and their life experience inside and beyond the estate. These physical and psychological boundary lines are drawn to appear coherent, fixed and impenetrable, but neither proves to be so. The coastline is in a state of perpetual change, subject to geological, marine and meteorological processes that constantly erode and reclaim land, reshaping the shore. This provides an elaborate metaphor for the Durie brothers' relationship; their desires run more closely together than the polemical Mackellar wishes to admit. Henry's daydreams as he gazes on the bay function as a reminder of the other ways his life could have progressed, had the coin toss landed differently, keeping the liminality of the threshold chronotope constantly in mind. The bay symbolises an intersection between the imaginative chivalric-romance-time that Henry projects onto James's adventures beyond the boundaries of the estate, and the mundane laws

[42] Rimmon-Kenan discusses the four different types of durational effects common to narrative: scene, summary, ellipsis and descriptive pause. This analysis also uses Genette's theory of decelerating and accelerating narrative time for effect. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (London: Routledge, 2003), 52-4.

of biographical-time to which he feels subject. His life unfolds while his brother is actively engaged in developing a dynamic selfhood in which nothing is predictable and his identity is constantly open to redefinition, according to the arbitrary course of his adventures. Mackellar fails, or declines, to notice the family resemblance traced in the brothers' shared desires despite their different circumstances.

Temporal and spatial indices intersect significantly as Mackellar's narrative begins to dwell on details, intimating the approach of a divisive event. On the evening of the Master's return, he surprises himself by his actions, fulfilling the instantaneity of threshold-time which must remain unanticipated. He describes an "uneasiness upon my spirits" that compels him to "burst through the thickets to the edge of what they call Craig Head" (*MB* 71), at the very moment of the Master's return. Despite his attempts to rationalise his emotive gut reaction as interpretative skill, Mackellar fails to overwrite his bodily experience with an intellectual explanation, emphasising his bifurcated self in the attempt. Threshold language marshals the scene; Mackellar observes from 'the *edge*' having 'burst *through*' thickets at *dusk* as James alights onto "the *point* of a rock" (*MB* 71, my italics). Both men occupy literally precarious situations which could be destabilised at any second, during the ambivalent hour of twilight when light mixes with darkness. Mackellar admits "I might have stood there swithering all night, had not the stranger turned" (*MB* 72). His use of the unusual Scots verb "to swither" captures the essence of the moment. The OED's definition, "To be or become uncertain; to falter; to be perplexed or undecided; to hesitate," exactly describes the Bakhtinian notion of the subject's state of being in the moment of threshold, self-consciously poised between multiple futures.[43] The Master's arrival indicates a shift, but in what direction it is impossible to know. When he first heard of James's survival, Henry immediately felt: "I have only the name and the shadow of things – only the shadow, there is no substance in my rights" (*MB* 62). His life has altered from a state of security and certainty into one of precarious unknowns. As long as James remained absent, his "resurrection" did not necessarily reverse all the implications of their belief in his death. Mackellar's opinion of this absent figure has been derived from the biased sources of hearsay, Henry's wounded account and the letters exchanged in the context of a fraternal dispute. With the Master before him, he has the opportunity to evaluate the man against whom he is so prejudiced, but rather than engage him in conversation to try and divine his character, he hesitates and remains aloof, stubbornly loyal to his preconceptions.

The next two chronotopes of the threshold are structured in such a way that one seems to imply the other, twisting the essential temporal instantaneity into Mackellar's increasingly

[43] "swithering" OED. *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. 18 April 2013 <http://www.oed.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/Entry/195987?rskey=jUEjkT&result=1#eid19649015>.

desperate determinist framework. The novel ends with the dramatic double death of the Durie brothers after James's failed attempt at a third resurrection. The threshold reached in the forest clearing is an inversion of the threshold moment of the duel. In Durrisdeer's shrubbery, on 27 February at midnight, Henry assumes James is dead for the second time, but he is rescued by free-traders to begin a new life in India. In the frozen American wilderness, Secundra Dass and Henry believe James to be alive until, when he is dug up, his corpse fails to revive. The two scenes are linked by several circumstances that are supposed to be indicative of their interrelation; the arrangement of the narrative suggests that events in the shrubbery must lead to the scene in Albany forest. Clunas notes that when Henry's request to see James's grave is met with derision, "his resentment comes bursting forth in a flood of words … [which] differs starkly from Mackellar's account of the duel."[44] With the past firmly in the reader's mind, the details of Mackellar's account continue to force a comparison, indicating the chronotopic relationship between otherwise vastly different locations.

In each point of similarity, the graveside bears a slightly enhanced and more exaggerated equivalent to that described in the Scottish scene. Both environments are remarkable for the bitter weather, "frost had bound the air" (*MB* 95) on the Estate while "earth, air and water were strained to bursting with the extremity of frost" (*MB* 213) in the forest clearing. The duel is fought by candle-light where Secundra digs in the glow of a fire; the shrubbery is "in the midst of frosted trees" (*MB* 95) but the grave is in a clearing of a frozen forest. "Never a word said Mr Henry" (*MB* 96) as the brothers prepare to draw, and as he witnesses the exhumation of his brother's body, Mackellar "never observed him to draw a breath" (*MB* 218). Finally, Henry leaves James for dead and lapses into a long, psychological illness after they cross swords, whereas his belief that he has witnessed the Master's resurrection from a frozen grave causes his death. Although separated by an ocean and the best part of a decade, the duel in the shrubbery at Durrisdeer and the grave in the forest clearing are pulled together by the symmetry of the language in which Mackellar couches his narrative. To establish his account as authoritative history, Mackellar believes he must make events appear inevitable so he strives to write in this tradition. His narrative strains under the effort of sustaining assumptions that undermine what his close analysis of threshold moments must reveal: the competing futures that exist until definitive action is taken. In the same way that James is dead to Henry until Burke arrives at Durrisdeer with letters that prove otherwise, he believes his brother is going to wake up until he fails to do so. In these moments of resurrection and death, a threshold rich with possibility is passed through and the world is

[44] Alexander B. Clunas, "'A Double Word': Writing and Justice in *The Master of Ballantrae*," *Studies in Scottish Literature* 28 (1993): 55-74. 69.

reinvented in that moment. The brothers' relationship to one another, even when stripped to the basic assessment of whether they are alive or dead, is never comprehensive or final.

Reading between Chronotopes

Several other minor chronotopes which contrast with the chronotope of the threshold are identifiable in *The Master*, some of which have already been mentioned. This competition between differing structures of time-space emphasises the importance of both language and situatedness in generating chronotopes, creating resistance to Mackellar's account and opening up the internal dialogics of the novel. As has already been described, this is apparent in the gothic-castle-time that often seeps into Mackellar's narrative as another way of bolstering his notion that the past bequeaths an inescapable legacy to the future, but it is most tangible when documents authored by another subject enter his narrative. The most sustained example of this is Burke's narrative, which has a distinct style and is structured by the looser, more traditional chronotope of adventure-time. Both of these examples illustrate that individuals are prone to producing subjective narratives which reinforce their personal, localised experience of life. Living on borrowed time after fleeing the battlefield, Burke literally escapes history to survive, his mindset reflected in his narrative in the way it empties time-space of politicised or historicised meaning. He and the Master assume various disguises to lose the past in the eternal present of adventure-time; they adopt the stereotypical identities which are native to adventure fiction while aboard Teach's ship. Significantly, they are not the only interlopers of the boundary between history and romance; Teach himself is a character borrowed from both traditions, based on the mythologised pirate Blackbeard.[45] Later, the two trek though the American forest under the guidance of Chew, learning his tracking skills and customs in an evocation of Fenimore Cooper's juvenile romances.[46] Burke's narrative slips back into the antiquated chronotope of romance-adventure time as a reflection of their enforced separation from current affairs. Their encounter with America shares marked similarities with the world of the Greek romance: "an *alien world*: everything in it is indefinite, unknown, foreign. Its heroes are there for the first time; they have no organic ties or relationships with it; … they can

[45] See Daniel Defoe, *General and true history of the lives and actions of the most famous highwaymen, murderers, pirates, &c. Interpers'd with several remarkable trials of the most notorious malefactors, at the Sessions-House in the Old Baily, London, &c. By Capt. James Macklecan* (Oxford: Walker and Jackson, 1647) 148. Eighteenth Century Collections Online. 20 Dec. 2013 <http://find.galegroup.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/ecco>.

[46] See James Fenimore Cooper, *Last of the Mohicans*, ed. Richard Slotkin, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986).

experience only random contingency. … [A]dventures follow upon each other with … remarkable speed and ease."[47] By bringing Burke's romance world into contact with Mackellar's account, Stevenson creates an explicit dialogic encounter between the old romance and his reinvention of it. The heroes return from America and their adventures are absorbed into Mackellar's edited work, another cultural artefact of the dying world which is teetering on the threshold of becoming.

Two further chronotopes that play a significant part in the text are the motivic chronotope of the letter and the minor chronotope of the ship. As has already been stated, by proceeding each significant moment of threshold with an exchange of documents, Stevenson destabilises Mackellar's power over the text. Different perspectives enter his account, imposing alternative readings or questioning the significance he places on events. Even when Mackellar is not granted access to their content, their existence is disruptive, increasing the possibility of error or obstruction in his record and emphasising the fact that his narrative is only one version of several possible interpretations. A letter's content can change the central focus around which the narrative has hitherto been organised. Revealing a previously undisclosed secret or exposing a character's hidden motive impacts the reader's understanding of the fictional world. When repressed knowledge resurfaces it can force a readjustment of all previous judgements, illuminating the incompleteness of human perception, and, therefore, exposing the limitations of any written account. The information contained in the letter shifts the conceived centre by which all other inferences are structured and determined. Because so many sources are openly repressed by Mackellar, it is impossible to undertake a comprehensive reading of the world he describes, which emphasises the text's incompletion and intimates that the reader is charged with restructuring the existing fragments of evidence to arrive at the most probable interpretation of events. The act of reading itself becomes another threshold on which the meaning of the text is constructed. There is no telling what form each recalibration will take as it is dependent on a complex convergence of circumstances that remain unique to each encounter with Mackellar's narrative.

This clash between the discrete historicised moments in which the reader, writer and text are shaped is elucidated by the exchange between Thomson and Johnson in the preface, and also serves to illuminate Stevenson's self-reflexive approach to authorship. These characters are a teasing reference to the nicknames Stevenson and Baxter assumed when playing pranks on the unsuspecting citizens of Edinburgh.[48] Blurring the distinction between fiction and reality in this way foreshadows the problems of categorising narrative discourse as either literary or

[47] Bakhtin, *DI*, 101.
[48] See Poole, *MB*, 229, n1.

historical, which becomes a major theme in Mackellar's subsequent account. Stevenson is drawing attention to the inherent conflict between the written word itself, the authorial and editorial context, and the reader – pushing these material concerns to the forefront of the reader's mind before the novel opens. Stevenson's strategy in drawing attention to the nature of his textual experiment seems to be to alert his readers to the theoretical assumptions that lie behind the act of approaching any text.[49] Understanding the temporal and spatial bearings on a text (and the implications personality and historical context have on the act of reading), makes it possible to read against situatedness by taking these influences into account when interpreting language, chronotope and character as they are constructed in the narrative. It will, however, never be possible to neutralize these factors completely. This highlights the difficulties of interpretation but also confronts the issues surrounding genres of discourse head on. History, biography, fiction, folktale, anecdote each have their own distinct voice and consequently need to be approached with sensitivity; reading a text through the wrong "genre-lens" leads to unhelpful and unnecessary distortions of the kind which beguile Mackellar.

Similarly to *New Arabian Nights*, adding an editorial frame to a text already worried by the intricate relationships that exist between those who create and consume print introduces an extra ambiguity. Power over words and their meanings is shown to be wielded by writer, interpreter and editor. The value of authorial intention in criticism is now marginalised as a matter of routine, but in the first decades following mass literacy, critical reading was not such a wide-spread practice.[50] Before literacy became a wide-spread skill, writing and print held a mystical aura for an undereducated populous. This attitude is inscribed in the historical detail of several characters in Stevenson's own work; Alan Breck's kinsman cannot write, Long John Silver's literacy distinguishes him from his peers, Dande writes poetry for oral delivery to reach a wider audience. The mass public's relatively recent acquisition of reading skills implies a more naïve audience of readers who tended to attach great significance to authorial intention at the expense of recognising the reader's agency over interpretation. Rose's work on the reading habits of the working classes argues that this inclination originated from a limited experience of literature which reduced their interpretative frame of reference when confronted with any textual material.[51] New readers

[49] Bakhtin discusses these kinds of practical issues surrounding communication in "Speech Genres," *SG*, 60-102.
[50] See Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh (eds.), *Modern Literary Theory*, 4th ed., (London: Hodder, 2001), 185-9. See also Reader Response Theory, which takes this principle a stage further. Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1974); "Indeterminacy and the Reader's Response in Prose Fiction," *Aspects of Narrative: Selected Papers from the English Institute* (London: Columbia UP, 1971).
[51] Here I paraphrase the main arguments in Rose, *Intellectual Life*, 92-115.

found it difficult to adjust to concepts of ambiguity, discernment and differences in critical approach because they were often taught to read by Christian groups whose main aim was to enable individuals to engage with scripture and the prolific writers of religious allegory that shaped early Victorian print culture. This explanation can be extended to include the persistent influence of Associationist ideas regarding the direct correspondence between ordered words on the page and organized thoughts in the mind that informed pedagogical theory well into the nineteenth century.[52] Writing was seen as demonstrative of a cerebral, social and moral superiority, so it stood to reason that the contents of a book were generally assumed to be trustworthy. Mackellar's reversal from a traditional stance on hermeneutics to greater critical awareness imitates this wider cultural trend which was emergent at the historical point when the narrative is set. Deciding to run the Edinburgh Edition of *The Master* with the preface brought an otherwise innocuous sequence of readerly and writerly images into sharper focus, drawing attention to the novel's self-reflexivity as a text which imitated historical discourse incompletely by purposefully leaving events open to interpretation. Before Mackellar's account is released from the strong paper, seals and binds that contain it, Stevenson suggestively introduces the inconsistencies which exist between personal memory and history, verbal expression and lived experience and the restrictions implicit in the self's fixed point in time and space. Once Mackellar lays down his pen, he relinquishes control over his work as each written phrase harbours more than one meaning, any of which may be called forth or come to prominence in the chronotopically specific act of reading.[53]

All written records remain, to some extent, subject to the designs of their author; even those penned with a view to exposing the instability of language, or that purport to be impartial instruments to fact. If there can be no definitive history, the representation of the past is abandoned to poetics and its reconstruction in the imagination of the reader. .[54] Although conflicting with "authentic history" (*MB* 10), the sentiments described by Thomas of Ercildoune echo reality with an uncanny truth which conveniently escapes Mackellar's notice. Another stowaway which threatens to disrupt the dichotomy Mackellar attempts to construct between his trustworthy written account and deceptive oral culture is the letter. As a personal, often polemical, written medium, it directly upsets the assumption that "writing can be seen as a technology which provides the necessary temporal distance and physical

[52] Richardson, 13-5, 174-6.
[53] Although this idea has not been theorised until relatively recently, the concept is not new; Chaucer urges the text of "Troilus and Criseyde" to "go, litel bok, go, litel myn tragedye!" as he closes the narrative. Geoffrey Chaucer, *Works*, ed. L.D. Benson, (Oxford: OUP, 1988), 473-585. 584.
[54] See Duncan, *Scott's Shadow*, 29.

space for a cool and rational assessment of material."[55] Like an oration, a letter implies a known audience which influences the mode of its execution. Even the most precise correspondent's choice of language can be betrayed by the rash response their epistle provokes in the recipient. In this situation, the act of writing is undermined by the manner of reading. It is not only the author but also the addressee who is in danger of acting in the heat of the moment, eschewing the notion of writing as an entirely rational or objective means of communicating.

The first sentence of the preface introduces an interesting tension in the figure of the "consistent exile" who is the fictional editor of Mackellar's narrative and, by virtue of the name of his companion, analogous with Stevenson himself.[56] The phrase is curious in itself, playing on the full breadth of meaning encapsulated by both individual words. "Consistent" refers to both the nature of the period of exile and the character of the exiled. It describes the longevity of his physical distance from Edinburgh, and the manner of his regret at the circumstance. "Exile" is a striking choice, connoting involuntary removal or ejection from a place and evoking a connection with the biblical heritage of the wandering, nomadic Israelites, but for the tempering influence of *consistent* which tends to suggest "staying, remaining, … settled, persistent; durable … congruous, compatible."[57] These two words capture in essence the rupture between expression and experience which lies at the heart of the novel. By generating several related meanings that alter in emphasis and understanding when used as a combined phrase, Stevenson's lexical choice illustrates that words themselves are incapable of providing precise imitations of emotions, objects or concepts and must be approached as independent signs as well as vehicles for conveying insights and observations of the human condition. Each word in a sentence is in a state of becoming as its meaning shifts with each word that follows, tempering or extending the original reading. As the exile attempts to capture the feelings inspired by returning to a once familiar city, the reader is sensible of the void between his memory of the time when Edinburgh was his home and his present experience of being a comparative stranger. Exposing the painful shift in his relation to the city contributes to an understanding of the influence of time on the individual's experience of place, which becomes a tangible metaphor for the relationship between the reader and the text.

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[55] Fielding, 158.

[56] The relationship between the two characters in the preface seems to be a reference to the friendship which Stevenson shared with Baxter, thus making the "exile" a reference to Stevenson himself – Harman gives a full account of the pranks the two played as students in Edinburgh under the aliases of Johnson and Thomson and the extent to which Stevenson continued to celebrate his old alias into adulthood. Harman, *Robert Louis Stevenson*, 66, 232. This is also recorded in Poole's notes to the Preface, *MB*, 229-30.

[57] "consistent" OED. *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. 5 Aug. 2011 <http://www.oed.com.ezphost.dur.ac.uk/view/Entry/39645?redirectedFrom=consistent#eid>.

As a compelling allegory for the way that a text alters according to the dynamism of the reader's psychological progression through time, Stevenson's encoded warning chimes with Bakhtin's cautionary words against "[confusing] the listener or reader of multiple and varied periods, recreating and renewing the text, with the passive reader of one's own time."[58] Edinburgh as a relatively stable place inspires in Stevenson "equal regret for what he once was and for what he once hoped to be" (*MB* 5), his emotional reaction to the city (or the text) provides a reading of his psychological past and an anticipated future by drawing an illuminating contrast with his present achievements and sense of self. As a result of this perceptible cognitive and physical shift, he reads the city in a new way, as "consistent exile" he understands Edinburgh differently, approaching it simultaneously through a host of intrusive memories and from the perspective of an outsider. Words on the page are similarly subject to the reader's material chronotope. The text provides a focus for the cultural and linguistic assumptions that have shaped and continue to influence the reader's ability to think and interact. Words are interpreted through memory, association and experience which are all volatile in time and space. As Stevenson arrives at Dr Thomson's house, he is "feeling all this dimly," groping for language to express the idea of his emotional response to the past which has been pulled into the phenomenological present by the familiarity of Edinburgh's streets and houses. Response is inseparable from the moment of experience and resists communication, as it is so dependent on an accurate self-analysis. Yet the sensation Stevenson hesitates to describe is instantly recognisable to everybody who has moved house, emigrated or spent time away from home, connecting these observations to the recognition that language is both centrifugal and centripetal, working out from itself but also retreating into its own design.[59]

As the two friends settle down to their evening together, Stevenson's expression retains an insistence on the complex relationship between time and language: "a few words that sounded of old days" (*MB* 5) punctuate their conversation before they "pledge the past in a preliminary bumper" (*MB* 5). Sharing a drink re-establishes the homosocial bond between the friends, despite the passage of time which has rendered Thomson a married man, cut adrift from the insular world of bachelorhood. The act of toasting bygone times recalls their shared masculinity, providing consolation from the difference rendered by time which has been playing so strongly on the mind of his guest. Despite the solace found in reconstructing the habits and customs of the past, there is still an underlying nervousness that recognises that things are different now, a hang-over from the anxiety latent in the observation that Thomson's face is "not altogether changed" (*MB* 5). In this precisely constructed context

[58] Bakhtin, *DI*, 253.
[59] Frye, *Anatomy*, 115-131, discusses the relationship between the word as symbol and as literary expression.

Thomson introduces their evening entertainment: a "truly mysterious … highly genteel … melodramatic" (*MB* 6) document the nature of which appears to be decided by the circumstances of its appearance before it is opened. The two men discuss their prior knowledge of the family's history before opening the packet, emphasising both the preconceptions they bring to Mackellar's account and the hundred years which has elapsed since the recorded events took place. Having just demonstrated the influence of the reader's approach on the interpretation of a text and the distorting effects of time, Stevenson positions Mackellar's narrative in a frame which runs directly against the grain of his stated intention: to present "the full truth of this odd matter" (*MB* 9) to the world. This objective renders the text a necessary failure, as "it is just as impossible to forge an identity between myself, my own "I," and that "I" that is the subject of my stories as it is to lift myself up by my own hair."[60] An author can never accurately represent the past, just as he can never step into the text and become his own story, he must remain external to the chronotopes he creates and use the world of his text to represent his ideas as best he can. The editors' final decision to publish the text as it stands is not entirely accurate, as to do so would be to remove the editorial adjustment made by Stevenson in the final fragment, and to exclude the preface: another hint that the reader beware of taking the author at his word; even in the space of three pages stated intention and published reality are demonstrable of a significant departure.

Pitfalls of Communication

Despite this opening warning against lending the written word too much authority, the power invested in writing is evident in the grim triumph which accompanies the arrival of Henry's documentary proof that James is deceiving his family. The incident also illuminates the extent to which writing can act as a mask, allowing the author to manipulate his reader. Henry exchanges letters with "a gentleman of his acquaintance – I will name no unnecessary names, but he was one of a high place" (*MB* 87), to determine the truth of his brother's political position. The extract read out to the dinner party runs: "it was never meant his own family should continue to endure the suspense you paint so feelingly" (*MB* 88), indicating that, in the medium of the written word, Henry is prepared to write as manipulatively as his brother speaks. Furthermore, just as James appears to have justified his actions, Henry carries his advantage further by fabricating a date in the letter to undermine James's defence. Harnessing the power inherent in an undisclosed document, Henry shows himself to have

[60] Bakhtin, *DI*, 256.

"something of his brother's spirit" (*MB* 88), using words impressionistically rather than for the propagation of the truth while also providing an uncomfortable parallel with the distorting effect of Mackellar's suppression of evidence.

The novel introduces several literary forms and modes of critical engagement through the attitudes inherent in different characters' approaches to communication, containing examples of factual and fictional documents, oral narratives and the speech that reverberates around them in everyday life. Pearson understood this focus as a direct comment on the nature of the text: Mackellar's narrative "begins with, and attempts to sustain, a particular definition of the Master – the manner in which he claims to know the Master as a text – is exactly what Deconstruction objects to in Structuralist literary criticism and exactly what the Master himself disallows."[61] Over the course of the novel, Mackellar metamorphoses from upholding a theory of communication that understands the text as truth and seeks to record the events of 1745 colourlessly and clearly, to a position of acceptance that words are volatile and can never represent actions without introducing the need for interpretation. Examining the complex relationship between Mackellar's intellectual epiphany regarding the communicative process involved in reading and authorship, the critical stances of the other characters and Stevenson's manipulation of reading to communicate more than just literary taste, produces a coherent argument for the importance of exercising critical interpretative faculties in the process of decoding any act of communication.

James inherits his father's "love of serious reading" (*MB* 10) and skill as a character-performer without being prohibited by the moral obligations associated with familial duty. Rather than adopting the traditional values of inheritance, family, honour and respect disseminated through the pages of the classics, James develops a literary taste for modern novels and romance, which give him a more controversial set of ideals. At his parting from Alison, he substitutes the expected sentimental monologue with a flippant quote from the Cavalier poet Richard Lovelace, an aesthetic choice which is burdened with moral implications by Mackellar when he notes James reading *Clarissa* aboard the *Nonesuch.*[62] Mackellar identifies James with the heartless Lovelace through his reading habits, drawing on the power of literary allusion to stigmatise the Master's character.[63] Mackellar comments "it was singular how little he applied his reading to himself; it passed high above his head like the summer thunder" (*MB* 156). Whereas Lord Durrisdeer reads deeply and allows the content of his reading matter to structure his thoughts and behaviour, in line with

[61] Pearson, 198.
[62] See Poole, *MB*, n232.
[63] It is also worth acknowledging the use of Sir Toby Belch from *Twelfth Night* and Milton's Satan in *Paradise Lost* which bring different dimensions to Mackellar's description of James's devilry at various points in the novel.

Enlightenment ideals, James reads for pleasure: "a connoisseur for whom words are empty referents, and the differences between Richardson's novel and the Book of Job are merely a matter of style."[64] Life to him is an experience which only holds value if it is enjoyable; reading is a pleasurable activity which has little bearing on his soul but provides him with verbal flourishes to enhance the artifice – and therefore beauty – of existence. Finding satisfaction in transience and aesthetic impressions marks him out as ideologically akin to Pater and a forerunner of Wilde's Lord Henry.[65]

From the moment James is described, "the mole, the dandified gear, tag him generically and allow us to "read" him as he has "read" Mackellar;" but it is important to remember who is communicating this type.[66] The highly educated Mackellar uses these eccentricities to orchestrate a reading of the Master by carefully filling in the context around him to influence interpretation. Part of this careful staging is evident in the objects he uses to represent an extension of his personality. In total contrast to James, Mackellar's reading material for the voyage is the Bible. This symbolises his self-constructed position as a moralistic, careful reader interested in uncovering the ultimate truth communicated by the text in front of him. For a man who badly wants others to believe that the printed word can be unequivocal, the Bible appears an excellent text to prize; the Christian belief in the infallible truth of the Word of God is committed to upholding the ideal of fact as representable in language. The problem for Mackellar is that Christians only believe that the truth resides in the Bible because it is written by God himself, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit imparted to several human authors over the course of history. The stable meaning and perspicuity of the Bible is, therefore, only realised when it is read by someone who reads each passage in the light of the whole book and does so in the power of the Spirit, submitting their earthly interpretation to that of the authority of God, the author. It is not that the words are any more stable in themselves, but that understanding is inspired by God himself, who is truth, which makes scripture infallible. A Christian is conscious of the author behind the text, making authorial intention the single most important factor in the process of interpretation, and thus introduces the possibility for a right and a wrong reading.[67]

Literature, on the other hand, is not inspired in the same way and does not claim to be true. If Mackellar is clinging to scripture as proof of the printed word as truth then he has misunderstood the nature of his evidence, which leads to his reluctant revelation that not all

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[64] Poole, *MB*, xxii.
[65] See Pater, 207-13.
[66] Clunas, 66.
[67] See D.A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge (eds.), *Scripture and Truth* (Michigan: Baker Book House, 1992), see particularly "Infallible Scripture and the Role of Hermeneutics."

texts are stable and not all events can be recorded accurately in words.[68] His encounter with James in the confined space of the *Nonesuch* encourages him to be more open-minded in his approach to the function and interpretation of words. The ship proves to be a psychological agent of transition for Mackellar, carrying him across an intellectual threshold, causing him to recognise language as unstable. It is only after crossing the Atlantic that he loosens his mental preoccupation with the notion that written language stands as an incorruptible monument to communicating empirical truth. In America, he relinquishes the critical assumptions and theories of narrative he held at Durrisdeer by synthesising three witness statements into a single, brief account and etching an intentionally ambiguous legend on the brothers' tombstone. Importantly, Mackellar neither completely resigns his ancient belief in the power of the written word – evident in his desperation to chisel an epitaph and record his experiences in manuscript form – nor does he allow textuality to dominate his thinking anymore, as his writerly attitude towards other documents and accounts demonstrates.

Mackellar's revelation concerning the nature of the text during his crossing to America has implications for his whole project. The disintegration of his belief in the immutability of the written word as a source of authority denotes a shift in his view of the temporal development of history. The same logic that exposes the text to indeterminacy supports a theoretical paradigm that conceptualises events in history as instantaneous: if words can sustain several different meanings which are only finally pared down depending on the context in which they are uttered, then communication only follows a particular route of becoming as the dialogic conditions emerge, and elicit a spontaneous response. Both these ideas destabilise the future as something which can be anticipated, or even traced back in hindsight as resulting from a causal chain.

Conclusions

Estates are always poised on the brink of dissolution in Stevenson's fiction – crumbling, near-deserted, half-built, or the object of a fierce struggle between heirs of a diminishing or corrupt line. Narrative is generated by the difficult transition in ownership, both of material possessions and over the interpretation of the text. Meaning is established through threshold moments where secrets are disclosed or repressed and the past interrupts the present or is successfully circumvented, changing the nature of the game. The teller of the tale wields

[68] Clunas, 55-74, charts the evidence for Mackellar's changing attitude towards language and the text as an accurate record of events.

power over history, the records are determined by the shape into which he chooses to cut his version of events. Words are not seen as decisive modes of communication but individual repositories of several possible senses that exist simultaneously and create a variety of interpretative routes which remain in contention for the reader to make a selection. The text is in a permanent state of becoming because of this awareness of multiplicity set out by the author and it is only in the mind of the reader that a choice is made and the eventness of the novel-world can be in any sense finished. On the page, the alternatives retain the full vibrancy of potential. Against this instantaneity, the master chronotope of *fin-de-siècle* decline and ending imagines a ceasing to be which is manifest in the collapse of ancestral lines and great houses. The dwindling future of the estate marks the final threshold over which such inheritance-literature can pass, seeking to bring to a close the tradition of the *Bildungsroman* that defined so much of nineteenth-century fiction. Every ending is suggestive of a moment of rebirth and the end of the master-narrative of the estate must imply the beginning of a new genre. Stevenson answers this challenge by presenting his readers with a novel that scrutinises the assumptions and beliefs that determine how readers interact with narrative, and how writers attempt to influence their readers' interpretations. Rather than being rewarded with a monetary or material inheritance, Stevenson leaves his hero, and the reader, with a greater understanding of the pitfalls that await anyone who wishes to enter into dialogue and reconceive the self through the powerful but ambivalent process of exchanging ideas in spoken language.

Afterword

No, I never met him. But among my most prized possessions are several letters which I received from Samoa. From that distant tower he kept a surprisingly close watch upon what was doing among the bookmen, and it was his hand which was among the first held out to the striver, for he had quick appreciation and keen sympathies which met another man's work half-way, and wove into it a beauty from his own mind.

- *Through the Magic Door*[1]

By redrawing the coordinates of time-space in romance according to the master chronotope of the *fin-de-siècle,* Stevenson advanced a new means of understanding the text as a dialogic act of communication. This is worked out in a variety of principles which are recorded in his essays and are evident in his fiction. He wanted to redefine romance as a serious genre with which writers should engage, paying close attention to the stylistic concerns of authorship without allowing this to detract from the vivid incident of storytelling. The writer should strive to create distinctive imaginary worlds through the text in which he or she and the reader could collaborate in producing meaning, ultimately attaining the discursive experience of talking between friends. Reading these imaginary worlds according to their specific temporal and spatial characteristics, they take on the value of chronotopes. By including more than one way of experiencing time-space within a given narrative, Stevenson creates polychronotopic texts, which often act in different capacities, through which his characters dialogically engage with alternative perspectives and epistemologies, particularly regarding the nature of language and narrative.

Rather than reproducing fiction that followed the established chrontope of chivalric romance, where the hero is closely aligned with, and shaped by, the time-space of his world, Stevenson expands the psychological depth of his characters, using the intrinsic motivic chronotope of the image of man to elevate their status from stereotypes to individual dialogic subjects. This attempt to bring alternative perspectives into conversation through the text anticipated the Bakhtinian principles of dialogism. Stevenson's fiction strives to emulate the conditions of speech by imagining characters with distinct means of understanding their existence, who enter into dialogue with one another in a process of articulating and creating the self and engaging with the worlds they inhabit. In this sense,

[1] Conan Doyle, 272.

each encounter is unbound from developing towards a given end. Rather, the fluidity and spontaneity of becoming is attained. In his more complex romances, this unpredictability is internalised, often by the narrator, so that the individual subject becomes a carrier of the double-word. The explicit discontinuities this introduces between the narrative account and the event is evidence of the subjective centre of experience. By aspiring to write in a manner reflective of the nuances and collaborative instantaneity of speech, Stevenson establishes a model of fictional narrative which is distinctive for its open-endedness, self-reflexivity and deliberate ambiguity. These characteristics encourage the reader in constructing the story suggested by the narrative, and in taking these interpretative decisions, to become engaged in the production of meaning. When Stevenson describes the process of reading as "absorbing and voluptuous; we should … rise from the perusal, our mind filled with the busiest, kaleidoscopic dance of images, incapable of sleep or continuous thought," he refers to the writerly task he leaves with his reader in connecting up the images and choreographing the dance.[2]

The dynamic which governs Stevenson's understanding of the text indicates that he visualises it as acting in several material chronotopes, beyond the dimensions of those worlds inculcated by the author. The first is implied by the influence of the original historical moment of its conception and it is followed by unending reinterpretations according to all the subsequent points in time when a reader translates the text in conjunction with their own perspective on time-space. This awareness is not purely metatextual, but creeps into his fiction as characters engage knowingly with the circumstances in which any narrative is produced. This ironic self-awareness becomes more explicit and exact in its representation throughout Stevenson's career, but as the foregoing thesis has demonstrated, it is an inherent component of the Stevensonian imagination and can be identified as exerting an influence over his earliest work.

Treasure Island, *The Black Arrow* and *Kidnapped* are often discussed as naïve or straightforward adventures which formed the basis for the New Romance that dominated popular culture at the *fin-de-siècle*, but their narratives are already invested with chronotopes at variance with one another that scrutinise romance convention, and contending voices which would become more dominant and fully dialogised in later work.[3] Their novelty can and should be traced as the source for the new enchanted fictions that provided an antidote to the dominant realist mode which stalked modernity. To view this as Stevenson's only influence on literary history, or indeed to limit one's reading of *Treasure Island* to an act of

[2] Stevenson, *MP*, 234.
[3] Saler, 57-67, traces the origins of Science Fiction back to the realist map and objective style of *Treasure Island* coupled with the traditional space of enchantment associated with romance.

re-enchantment through a style influenced by the rational methodology commonly associated with modern science, is to underestimate the complicated attitudes and notions that his fiction draws together. Rather, the protean nature of Stevenson's fictional corpus ought to be appreciated as decentralising the storyteller's role in communicating a narrative through constructing subjective worlds that can only be completed through collaboration with the imaginative efforts of the reader.

This theory of fiction has wider implications for understanding Stevenson's work in terms of identifying the origins of modernism, postmodernism and the establishment of different critical and theoretical approaches to literature itself. [4] His understanding of the nature of time-space and the association this has with language and narrative is also suggestive of later developments in literature and philosophical thought that investigated how the self experienced being in the world (which it has been beyond the scope of this thesis to explore).[5] Most important in relation to Bakhtinian thought, Stevenson's fiction is suggestive of a new master chronotope which was emergent at the *fin-de-siècle*. This opened up the vertical axis along which time-space is conceived to sustain a legion of subjective interpretations simultaneously. The certitude of historical linearity and progress was also distorted through this reimagining, allowing for the parallel experiences of differing temporalities in space and new theories of ending and beginning. The exact nature of this change and the extent of the impact on literary culture is deserving of a research project in itself. Assessing Stevenson's fiction in the light of this demonstrates the currently limited appreciation for his influence in the wider trends of literary history as a theoretician and practitioner of romance. Both his fiction and criticism resists the dominant realist nineteenth-century notion that language is an unproblematic medium through which the world can be accurately represented. Instead, he probes the unstable nature and form of narrative itself, and questions the usefulness of language as a tool for communication.[6]

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[4] For Stevenson's connection with modernism, see Sandison, *Future Feeling*. For a survey of twentieth-century developments in literary theory see Godzich. For an introduction to narratology see Susana Onega and José Ángel García Landa (eds.), *Narratology* (Harlow: Longman, 1996). For more contemporary research in the field see Jan Alber and Rüdiger Heinze (eds.), *Unnatural Narratives – Unnatural Narratology* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011) 4 Jan. 2014 <http://www.degruyter.com/view/product/44256>; David Herman, Manfred Jahn, Marie-Laure Ryan (eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory* (London: Routledge, 2005).

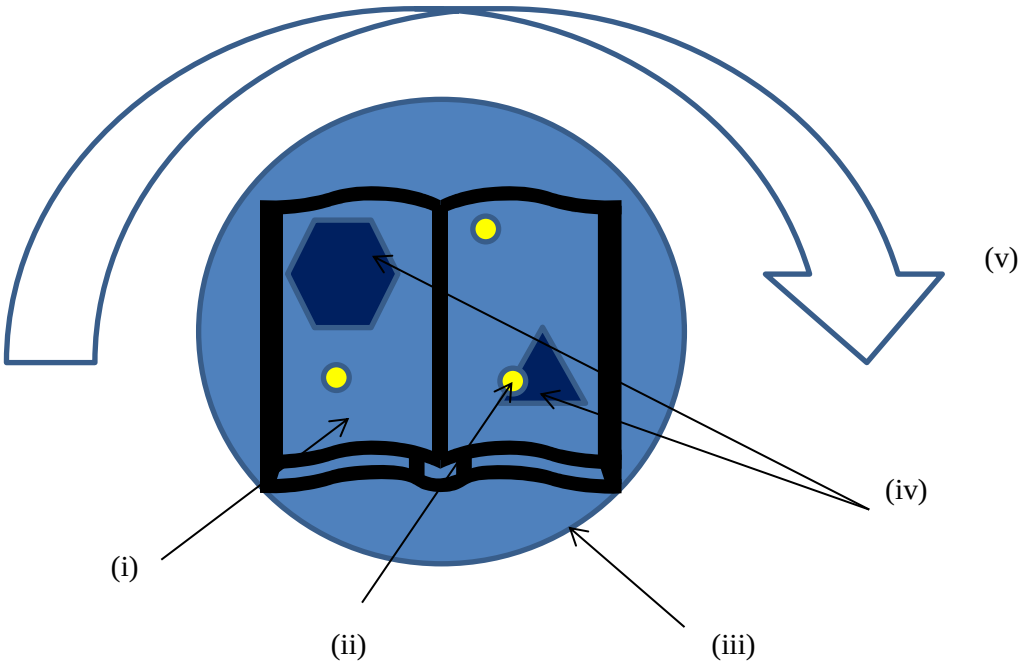
[5] Work of writers such as Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim*, ed. Cedric Watts, (Peterborough: Broadview P, 2001), Henry James, *The Figure in the Carpet and Other Stories*, ed. Frank Kermode, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986), Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*, ed. and introd. Patricia Ingham, (Oxford: OUP, 2002), Wilde, particularly *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, "The Decay of Lying," and "Pen, Pencil, and Poison," in *Works*, vols. 3 and 4, which examine the relationship between the critic and the work of art.

[6] See Alan Palmer, "Realist Novel," in Herman, Jahn, Ryan, 491.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Chronotopic Types in the Polychronotopic Text



(i) Major Chronotope (close equivalence to genre, the chronotope from which the text derives the main orientation of its time-space or "Fictional World")

(ii) Motivic Chronotope (character perspective/objects with self-contained temporal significance; generally more mobile)

(iii) Material Chronotope (the world of the author/reader's historical context)

(iv) Minor Chronotope (fixed spaces in the text where time behaves differently from the prevalent major chronotope)

(v) Master Chronotope (cultural conceptions of time-space)

Appendix 2

Glossary of Bakhtinian Terms

Subject – characters imagined by their creator-authors as having fully-formed and dynamic worldviews which evolve and change according to their textual encounters.

Dialogism – the inclusion of several distinctive subjects in a single text who engage in active debates through which their different perspectives are refined and sharpened. In a dialogic text, none of the depicted subjects holds views which coincide with the author's personal opinion, making it impossible for a reader to discern an unequivocal "message" offered by the text. Characters can be internally dialogic, in that their performed role can be contrary to their thought life, or the narrative can incorporate moments of the self's indecision and struggle.

Speech Genre – variations in the specific associations of language which give the spoken word its context and, therefore, shape meaning. Each utterance is unique because it is produced through the combination of several variables which are style, register, composition and sense. Each of these variables is itself determined by the context in which the conversation occurs making each exchange between subjects distinct and unique. The sphere in which these utterances take place develops its own relatively stable type of language use which becomes the *speech genre* – to give an example, in a court of law, every case is argued individually, according to its own distinct set of evidence (the unique utterance) but the form adopted by the barrister in defending his client will be of a type which is distinguishable in any given case (the speech genre).

Finalizability – the portrayal of a character as a finite entity which behaves consistently and predictably.

Eventness – encounter between two dynamic subjects who engage in an act of communication which in some way transforms their sense of self or perspective on the world in unpredictable ways.

Unfolding – the process of a determinable pattern unfurling in accordance with expectations.

Becoming – the process of defining one's self according to interactions with others through a dynamic and unpredictable exchange of ideas.

Situatedness – an individual's experience of inhabiting a specific spatial and temporal context in relation to others and the environment.

Master Chronotope – the temporal and spatial rules upon which a culture bases its understanding of the world and humanity's place in it, both inside and outside the text.

Major Chronotope – the temporal and spatial rules by which the fictional world is structured within the text.

Minor Chronotope – this chronotope acts within – or hierarchically under – the major chronotope. The minor chronotope tends to be contained within the major chronotope of the fictional world, for example, the *Hispaniola* is a minor chronotope within *Treasure Island*.

Motivic Chronotope – a chronotope that is independent of the major and minor chronotopes of the fictional world and behaves according to a different arrangement of time-space, often localised to an object or a character. For example, the narrator of Olalla is a motivic chronotope acting in but detached from the minor chronotope of the *residenzia*.

Material Chronotope – the historical time and physical space occupied by the reader and the author when they encounter the text.

Polychronotopic – the inclusion of multiple chronotopes within a single text. These chronotopes may complement one another or provide contrasting ways of imagining and existing within time-space.

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