The Centrifugal-Centripetal Continuum: Towards a Consummation-Oriented Ambivalent Answerability in a Bakhtinian Reading of Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest*

Aydin Behnam

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Kontinum "Centrifugal-Centripetal": Menentukan Jawapan yang Ambivalen yang Berorientasikan Kesempurnaan di dalam Pembacaan Karya Faulkner *As I Lay Dying* dan Radcliffe *The Romance of the Forest* dari perspektif Bakhtin

ABSTRAK

Dapat dikatakan bahawa warisan terpenting Mikhail Bakhtin ialah terma "dialogisme". Namun begitu, ketidakcenderungan terhadap daya "centrifugal" dan "centripetal" yang membabitkan dialogisme sudah digunakan oleh ramai orang, termasuk anggota pascastrukturalis untuk memuaskan hati mereka dalam mencetuskan kekeliruan kepada dialog. Oleh itu, suara dalam teks kononnya dibiarkan menerawang tanpa diikat kepada mana-mana kesimpulan kerana pembaca lazimnya khuatir untuk memperkatakan tentang pemuktamadan dalam dialogisme. Tambahan pula, agak aneh sekiranya sukar ditemui analisis mendalam tentang cara menangani pandangan tentang "centrifugal" dan "centripetal" , walhal kedua-dua pandangan ini merupakan teras perbincangan Bakhtin tentang pemuktamadan. Oleh sebab itu, tesis ini cuba mengetengahkan cara untuk memahami maksud penyempurnaan atau pengakhiran suara atau daya dan meneliti kesan pertimbangan ini kepada sfera teoretis dan amalan analisis teks dari perspektif Bakhtin.

Kajian ini boleh dianggap signifikan kerana pertamanya kajian ini berjaya meneliti perbincangan tentang penyempurnaan dan pertanggungjawaban dalam kajian Bakhtin. Kedua, kajian ini juga memberikan perhatian yang lebih kepada dua idea yang mengabaikan idea Bakhtin tentang daya "centrifugal" dan "centripetal". Ketiga, kajian ini menggunakan dua idea ini sebagai alat analitis untuk menyediakan dialog di dalam teks yang berorientasikan pertanggungjawaban yang sempurna. Keempat, tesis ini boleh dijadikan rujukan yang berguna kepada pelajar

kesusasteraan apabila mereka mencari ciri yang dimiliki oleh analisis dialogik sebenar.

Selepas perbincangan teoretis, pembacaan dialogik dua buah novel disediakan. Tujuh *Rabelaisian Series* dipilih sebagai alat dalam bacaan teks. Tujuh pola ini wujud dalam kehidupan manusia dan disenaraikan oleh Bakhtin sebagai: 1. Tubuh Manusia (aspek anatomi dan fisiologi) 2. Pakaian Manusia 3. Siri Makanan 4. Minuman dan Kemabukan 5. Siri Seksual 6. Siri Kematian 7. Siri Perkumuhan. Di samping itu, satu penapis analitikal yang kelapan yang terdiri daripada mana-mana pola yang mungkin mengandungi ciri-ciri "centrifugal" dan "centripetal" diberi tumpuan dan di pilih untuk dimasukkan dalam bahagian analisis.

Akhirnya, dua jenis kesimpulan dapat dikategorikan: kesimpulan teoretis dan analitis. Teori mencadangkan bahawa sekiranya teks mencadangkan ketitaktetapan dan keraguan di dalam jalinannya, teks ini akan bertahan sebagai sebuah novel tetapi sekiranya teks ini bercirikan sebaliknya, teks ini akan musnah dengan sendirinya. Hasil terpenting perbincangan teoretis ialah kerangka kerja untuk pembacaan dialogik yang bergerak ke arah pemuktamadan (yang rapuh). Hasil asli lain bahagian ini ialah penerangan tentang terma "centrifugal" dan "centripetal" yang lazimnya tidak dihuraikan secara mendalam dalam kajian-kajian Bakhtin.

Dalam kesimpulan analitis juga ditemui bahawa sebaik-baik sahaja novel memasukkan unsur humour, secara automatik kelemahan daya yang bertentangan yang wujud mula muncul. Novel Faulkner lebih sarat dengan bahan dialogik kerana stail yang dipilih oleh penulis untuk pengisahan mengizinkan watak mengekspresikan diri mereka tanpa banyak bantuan daripada penulis. Hasil yang paling penting ialah amalan penggunaan dua terma, "centrifugal" dan "centripetal"

dan pemahaman tentang cara kedua-dua terma ini mempamerkan diri di dalam

elemen teks

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ABSTRACT

It can be argued that the most pivotal legacy of Mikhail Bakhtin is the term "Dialogism". However the non-preference of centralising and de-centralising forces over each other with which Dialogism is implicated has been used by many, including the poststructuralists, to suit their own purpose of attributing chaos to dialogue. Thus the voices in the text have been left dangling so to speak and have not been tied up to any ends because the readers are often afraid to speak of finalisation when it comes to Dialogism. In addition, it is peculiar that it is hard to come across an in-depth analysis of the treatment of the notions of "centrifugal" and "centripetal" where these notions are at the core of Bakhtin's discussions on finalisation. Therefore the attempt of this thesis is to come up with a way of understanding what this consummation or finishing off of voices or forces may mean and also to see what effect this consideration will have on the theoretical and practical sphere of a Bakhtinian analysis of a text.

Thus the present study can be considered "significant" in that firstly it contributes to the by no means satisfactory scrutinizing discussion of "consummation" and "Answerability" in Bakhtinian studies. Secondly, it pays closer attention to two more otherwise left-out Bakhtinian notions of centrifugal and centripetal forces. Thirdly, it utilizes these two very notions as analytical tools to provide the dialogue in a text with a consummation oriented answerability. And fourthly it can be a valuable reference for students of literature when searching for what characteristics an actual dialogic analysis may have.

After the theoretical discussions, a dialogic reading of two novels was provided. The seven Rabelaisian Series were chosen as tools for the reading of the texts. These seven patterns existent in human life and listed by Bakhtin are: 1. Human Body (its anatomical &physiological aspects), 2. Human Clothing 3. Food Series 4. Drink & Drunkenness 5. Sexual Series 6. Death Series 7. Defecation Series. In addition, an eighth analytical filter which consists of any other pattern that may possess qualities of the centrifugal and centripetal was focused on and singled out for inclusion in the analysis section.

In the end two main types of conclusion were categorized: the Theoretical conclusions and the Analytical conclusions. The theory seems to suggest that if a text proposes a non-fixity and doubt within its fibre, it will survive as a novel but if it refuses to do so it will crumble under its own concrete weight. The most significant result of the theoretical discussion however was the fact that it comes up with a framework for a dialogic reading that moves toward (fragile) finalization. Another somewhat original result of this section was an elucidation of the terms centrifugal and centripetal that are usually not explicated further, in Bakhtinian studies.

In the Analytical conclusions it was also found that the moment a novel allows for humour, automatically the loopholes for the presence of opposing forces start to appear. Faulkner's novel was more pregnant with dialogic material mostly because the style chosen by the author for narration allowed the characters to express *themselves*, without much direct help from the author. The most noteworthy result however was the practical usage of the two terms centrifugal and centripetal and an understanding of how they manifest themselves in the elements of the text

"It is possible to give a concrete and detailed analysis
of any utterance, once having exposed it as a
contradiction-ridden, tension-filled unity of two
embattled tendencies in the life of language."[1]

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1   BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Mikhail M. Bakhtin was born in the "heteroglot" city of Orel, brought up by a

German nanny, lived through two world wars, experienced exile, lost one leg, was

sentenced and nearly sent to camps in Siberia, spent a lifetime reading, writing and

debating, spent long nights discussing language, philosophy and religion over strong

tea and cigarettes, smoked the only remaining manuscript of one of his books, lost

many friends to government persecutions, was denied a full PhD for his astoundingly

groundbreaking work on Rabelais and when he died in 1975 he had left his mark on

the world of academic thought in many diverse fields, many schools of thought and

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[1] "Discourse in the Novel" (272)

movements throughout Europe. Doing research on a man who resembles a character out of Tolstoy novels is an adventure.[2]

It is difficult to ascertain whether Mikhail Bakhtin was a linguist, literary critic, "philologist"[3] semiotician, philosopher, "cultural theorist", "social philosopher"[4] or just a thinker who was very well read in a wide range of fields such as philosophy, linguistics, literature, history etc. and thus had succeeded in sensing, establishing and articulating peculiar relationships between these various fields of knowledge. Different scholars have different ideas on what field of knowledge this Russian thinker and his Circle (see Brandist's *The Bakhtin Circle* 2002) actually specialized in and under which heading he and his writings should be categorized. "Bakhtin was no materialist, and his theories were not wholly incompatible with classical structuralism.…However, Bakhtin's thought is so many-sided and fertile that he is inevitably open to colonization by others" (Lodge-d 88-89); colonization by people who think that he should be grouped "among theorists of ideology rather than theorists of Linguistics and Semiotics" (Stewart 1981, 49) and even critics with feminist tendencies who (although Bakhtin has made practically no distinctive reference to a separate place for women in dialogism) try to highlight Bakhtin's role in underlining the importance of the "silenc*ed*" in language use (49).

The comprehension and digestion of issues surrounding Bakhtin are not made any easier when one is faced with many other problematic aspects of his life and work. Issues like the question of authorship of some of the works ascribed to him but

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[2] For a fuller treatment of Bakhtin's biography see Clark and Holquist's *Mikhail Bakhtin* (1984) which is one of the landmark books in the field of Bakhtin studies.

[3] Holquist (1990) comes to the conclusion that he would call Bakhtin a Philologist rather than philosopher or linguist.

[4] Gardiner 2000, page 43.

signed under the names of Voloshinov and Medvedev, the time gap between the writing and the publication, problems concerning the time and context of translations of his works, the loss of some of his manuscripts and many other issues, contribute to the complexities of the historical, academic and the scholarly Bakhtin. Nevertheless what is certain is that what remains before us of the whole pool of writings by or attributed to Bakhtin (or his circle of "comrades") —a collection of writings that has trickled from his "pen" through his painful and hard years in exile and under persecution, is causing more and more controversy as time goes on. People start seeing new phenomenon and new 'creatures' in this not so massive but certainly deep, dialogic pool of his oeuvre. This is all very good until we, as critics, scholars and students of Bakhtin start creating monsters for this deep lake—more and more abstract concepts and ideas that can never be fully pictured or materialized for easier comprehension. As Bakhtin's writings sow the seeds of thought in our minds, scholarly debate and dialogue create newer breed of Bakhtinian concepts and we find ourselves facing an ever-growing Bakhtin. What is more, the similarities of Bakhtin's ideas with the principles of other critical approaches like Derrida's deconstruction make him susceptible to misunderstanding. His concept of free, never-ending, ever-inter-illuminating voices in a text, has paved the way for some critics to consider dialogic polyphony or heteroglossia to be as chaotic and as decentralized as deconstructive interplay of binary oppositions.

David Lodge in his "The Novel Now; theories and practices" believes that in the last twenty years criticism has become more and more dominated by structuralist and post-structuralist theory. "[T]he effect has been to throw academic literary studies into a state of exciting intellectual ferment or terminal crisis, according to your point of view" (Lodge-a, 12). In a world that believes in "democratic" free

speech, everyone is dialoguing about dialogue. In this uproar of dialogues about Bakhtin's works one is bound to get somewhat confused and thus the need for a finishing of dialogue looms from the horizon. As if Bakhtin himself knew that continuous "democratic" dialogue might open the way for chaos, he expressed that a form of "consummation" or finishing off is or may be achievable in a dialogue to bestow an ending to the polyphony of voices in a text.

> At the beginning and again at the end of his career[5], Bakhtin meditated on the different meanings that 'consummation' or finishing off might have; he concluded that if done with care and with the constant awareness that the other, too, was an active consciousness, consummation could be a kind of gift that one participant in the ongoing dialogue of history could bestow on the other. (Holquist 11)

Therefore in an attempt to draw up a map to consummation, the objective of this thesis will be to find a way to arrive at a temporary conclusion in the heteroglossia of a text. While we are still on this subject, at the very outset, I feel that one relevant issue has to be elucidated:

The first sparks of this study originated in an attempt to achieve a resting place for dialogue through Hegelian Dialectics. "Dialectic is defined by Hegel as the power (or energy or force) of negativity. Negativity involves, in general the "opposing of something to its "other." " (Berthold-Bond 1989, 83). Julia Kristeva who introduced Bakhtin to the western circle of literary thinkers by translating him

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[5] Bakhtin's later works and fragments of his writing have been translated by McGee and compiled in *M.M. Bakhtin: speech Genres and Other Late Essays* (1986).

for the first time in the 1920s has mentioned that there is ample resemblance between the Hegelian notion of thesis and antithesis with the Bakhtinian dialogizing of voices in a text and thus she has hinted at the possibility that the consequent "Synthesis" in Dialectics may be producible in the Bakhtinian dialogue:

> Hegelian dialectics depends upon the production of a synthesis out of the clash between a thesis and an antithesis. The synthesis is a 'third term', which not only resolves the clash between thesis and antithesis but takes us to a new 'higher' position or state of consciousness or knowledge. (Allen 46)

But since this issue was touched upon by scholars from the very beginning of Bakhtin's introduction to the West and thus could hardly be considered a genuine, innovative topic and more importantly because "it is well known that Bakhtin was a thinker with little sympathy for Hegelian dialectics" (Holquist 73) the course of the study shifted towards achieving the said synthesis (which now had to be changed to the term "consummation" or "answerability") through centrifugence and centripetence (two Bakhtinian terms which are to be elaborated on in the upcoming sections).

There is one final point is best if handled in the introduction; anyone who has studied Bakhtin enough will know that he emphasizes the context of utterance and the standing point or position of the speaker (contributor) in a dialogue. Therefore when something is uttered, the "who" of the utterance has no less a value than the utterance itself. Therefore although the "researcher" is aware that according to some, scholarly writing (at least in a PhD thesis) usually entails the use of indirect

expressions like "the researcher", "the author", or "one" instead of the pronoun "I", one would be more loyal to Bakhtinian ideals if one were to use the pronoun "I" whenever or wherever a reference to the researcher himself was needed. This would emphasize that the points raised in this thesis are seen from the particular, exclusive point of view of the researcher himself. Therefore in the upcoming sections (especially from chapter two onwards) the researcher hopes that the use of the first person singular pronoun will not be considered an ignorant, unscholarly way of self expression.

1.2   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

To state the problem in the beginning and very briefly, this thesis aims to find a way to achieve or arrive at a consummation in dialogue between different voices or different concepts in a text. Speaking of dialogue the following argument can be followed to elaborate on the problem:

If there is one single word around which most or all Bakhtinian concepts can be organized, that word has got to be the word "Dialogue"; but dialogue where, by who, with whom and about what? Holquist (1990) elaborates on this issue in a short and compact summary he provides of the concept of simultaneity of self-other dialogue in the context of Bakhtinian dialogism:

At the highest level of abstraction, […] dialogue is between the two tendencies that energize language's power to mean: the Manichean opposition between centrifugal forces that seek to keep things apart, and centripetal forces that work to make things cohere. At another level, it is between language at the level of code, i.e. the level of prescribed meanings (where "tree" means any tree), and language at the level of discourse (where

"tree" means *this* tree here and now, with all the cultural associations that cling to trees in this time and in this place). At still another level, simultaneity is a dialogue between the different meanings the same word has at different stages in the history of a given national language, and in various situations within the same historical period. And, of course, simultaneity is found in the dialogue between an author, his characters, and his audience, as well as in the dialogue of readers with the characters and their author. (69)

So if one were to imagine literally hearing all this dialogue as it happens in the environment all around, it would be somewhat difficult to make sense of it all. What makes this dialogue even more complex is the existence of tone, intonation and hidden polemic in addressing a reader or a listener. Hidden polemic "refers to or anticipates another speech act without actually evoking it verbally in the text in the manner of stylization and parody" (Lodge-b, 85). "Every literary discourse contains a hidden polemic. It 'senses its own listener, reader, critic, and reflects in itself their anticipated objections, evaluations, points of view. In addition it senses alongside itself another discourse, another style' – the style of peers, rivals and precursors, which it rejects, competes with, seeks to supplant" (86). In fact in Bakhtinian literary analysis, not only is there intonation and hidden polemic involved in a dialogue, but there are also different layers in a literary discourse. Lodge categorises these layers as: "1. *The direct speech of the author*....2. *Represented speech. ...* i.e. the quoted direct speech of the characters; but also reported speech in the pictorial style" and finally "3. *Doubly-oriented speech,* that is, speech which not only refers to something in the world but refers to another speech act by another addresser" (Lodge-c 33).

One reason for this apparent hustle and bustle is that in the realm of Bakhtinian thought an important point is the self-other relationship. In fact Dialogism is a type of philosophy through which one views the world and by seeing the world around, one can comprehend his/her own existence better. One tries to pinpoint his/her position in the universe by establishing a relationship with an "other" so as to be able to find his/her own co-ordinance. It is as if I were standing alone on a huge, blank sheet of white paper that is as big as the universe, physically and conceptually. It is impossible to find out anything about my position in the universe if I do not know where I stand and where I am situated physically and mentally. That is why I try to dialogise with others to get a sense of the self. Also I would need to know that from my point of view alone I can only see a limited "version" of the world around me and I can only have a limited access to my own being. Thus I need the presence of at least a second (if not fourth, fifth, etc.) person to aid me in achieving "transgredience". As Holquist puts it "transgredience…is reached when the *whole* existence of others is seen from outside: not only their own knowledge that they are being perceived by somebody else, but from beyond their awareness that such an other even exists" (32-3). To know oneself one has to try to get to know the other. One has to try to see oneself from the outside. Without the existence of the other and without the relationship with the other, it is impossible to see oneself from the outside. It would be impossible to achieve transgredience (a vision of the *whole* of one's own existence seen from afar). There has to be someone on the outside to reflect our actions back to us. "Without the other, our selves would be not only invisible to us but incomprehensible and *unutilizable*. The other endows us in comprehensibility; the other engenders a self that we can utilize to function in our social world" (Sampson 1993, 106). It's like one needs to have one's photo taken by

an "other" to first of all see his/her "self" and secondly to see the framing around him/her and view for the first time all the things that are situated behind or around him/her. To see ourselves in our environment, in our existential habitat, the self, needs the "other", the "I" needs the "thou". This it is meant when in Bakhtin studies there is talk of the "I-thou" relationship. This is what is intended to convey when one says that Bakhtin was influenced by Neo-Kantianism and his idea of the "I-Though" (Dentith 1995). Therefore to achieve a better understanding of concepts discussed by Bakhtin and concepts in literature or any other field (of humanities), one tends to draw on the "other" to achieve a "whole" image of the issue. One tries to achieve a "surplus of seeing" when trying to comprehend any issue. The Surplus of seeing is very much synonymous with transgredience:

> The aspect of the situation that you see, but I do not, is what Bakhtin calls your "surplus of seeing"; those things I see but you cannot, constitute my "surplus of seeing." You know I have a surplus and I know you have one as well. By adding the surplus that has been "given" to you to the surplus that has been "given" to me I can build up an image that includes the whole of me and the room, including those things I cannot physically see: in other words, I am able to "conceive" or construct a whole out of the different situations we are in together. I author a unified version of the event of our joint existence from my unique place in it by means of combining the things I see which are different from (in addition to) those you see, and the things you see which are different from (in addition to) that difference. (Holquist 36-37)

In short, in order to be able to perceive "my" environment and all that goes on around "me" and to ascertain "my" own standing position in the same "goings-on" around "me", "I" need the "other". This means when it comes to analyzing a literary text, if one intends to achieve an understanding of patterns and concepts, one has to find the "other" of the concept in question from outside the concept itself so that the idea can achieve a kind of wholeness, and not be totally monologic. To cite an example (however simple and superficial), if one intends to grasp the full meaning of a concept such as "light" one has no choice but to look outside the fixed standing position of that concept and go looking for "dark" in order to arrive at a transgredience. This "other" of the concept may be situated outside it or even inside the same concept. Thus one protects the concept from "dying out" and one can hope to comprehend it. According to Bakhtin, this dialogue between the idea and its other will go on and on without any authoritative final word being selected as the preferred one out of the voices in dialogue. But the problem here is: how long is the continuous inter-illumination of ideas in a text going to continue?

Is it not rather chaotic that a literary concept in a text or any self has to dialogise and grow outwards in order to stop from becoming monologic and dead? In a Rabelaisian analogy it is like saying that in order for our digestive system not to dry up we have to eat and eat and eat to prevent the death of the digestive system. This results in the grotesque weight gain of ideas, concepts and patterns in the reading of a text.

There are others who have sensed this problem (including Bakhtin himself) and have tried to find solutions to it. Their ideas will be treated in more detail in the review of literature section but it will suffice to say that mostly, all those who try to find a solution for this constant inter-illuminating, never-resting, ever- thickening

dialogue in a text, resort to another "other" to create another momentary balance in the text; something this research intends not to repeat.

The issue to be addressed here is the chaotic, rather deconstructive interplay of self-other in a text. Because as Dentith (1995) states Bakhtin's aesthetic does seem to have "strong ethical imperative" (43) and he is far from deconstructive chaos which usually denounces authorial responsibility. This thesis tries to find a solution to this chaos by shifting the focus from self-other to answerability within the concept and consequently within the text itself by focusing on the concepts of centrifugal and centripetal forces at play, in the text. More detail will be provided in the chapters to come, especially in chapter three which will be dedicated entirely to an argument on answerability, consummation, centrifugal and centripetal forces.

1.3   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study has two objectives that haul along a few other subsidiary objectives as well. First and foremost the focal objective of this study is to introduce a theoretical method for achieving self answerability in a Bakhtinian dialogue. Viewed differently it can also be stated that the researcher has already theoretically formulated a rough method for achieving dialogical consummation and the aim of this thesis is to argue for, support and finally prove that this method is viable and applicable in a literary context. This will entail a study on and an analysis of the concept of consummation in past literatures. After the argument and the elucidation of the method for achieving consummation, a consummation-oriented reading of two novels will be presented in Chapter Four and Chapter Five. This will comprise the second objective of this study which is the providing of a framework for a Bakhtinian reading of a text and the application of this framework on texts. This will be accomplished through the analysis of William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and

Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest*. The tools to be used for analysis are to be introduced in the methodology section of this chapter.

1.4   SCOPE and Limitations

In discussing the issues raised by Bakhtin and also in reviewing the past literatures, the main objective of this research will be to focus the discussions around the concepts of centrifugal and centripetal forces. These two terms are what the whole discussion will revolve around. Their binary nature will be the criteria with which to locate the binaries in the text and to compare and contrast them. Many other terms that Bakhtin has discussed, will remain largely excluded from this research and they will have secondary importance to the terms centrifugal, centripetal, answerability and consummation.

Also, in chapter four, the theoretical frame for reading the novels will be applied on two novels: William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and Ann Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest*. The dimensions in which they will be dialogically read have been mapped out in detail in chapter three. Also the reason as to why these two novels have been selected can be found in the same chapter.

1.5   SIGNIFICANCE of the Study

First and foremost, of the many studies done on Bakhtin and numerous books and articles written on and about his legacy of dialogism (and other concepts such as the chronotope[6], heteroglossia, polyphony etc.) many have focused on elaborating and clarifying "core", basic elements in Bakhtinian studies. Others have preferred to criticize and find weak points in the body of Bakhtin's work. There have also been attempts to affix corrections to Bakhtin's writing in order to justify some of its

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[6] See Keunen (2000).

shortcomings and internal contradictions. Keeping in mind all the diversity of work written on Bakhtin, it is interesting and peculiar that going through many articles and books it is not very easy to come across an in-depth or even a minor analysis of the definition, explanation and treatment of the notions of "consummation" "Answerability", "centrifugal" and "centripetal". Many books and collection of articles on Bakhtin lack the accuracy or the concern to even list the word "consummation" on their index list, partly because they do not pay enough attention to it and partly because they may not even consider it worthy of treatment. It is sometimes left out all together and seen as secondary or inferior to the dialogue itself. Therefore the attempt of this thesis to try to come up with a way of understanding what this consummation or finishing off may mean and also to see what effect this consideration will have on the theoretical and practical sphere of a Bakhtinian analysis of a text is, if not unique, quite called for.

Secondly, the two categories of centripetal and centrifugal elements in a work of literature seem to be taken for granted by both Bakhtin and many other critics regarding their definition and stability of meaning. Critics have tried to "patch" pieces into Bakhtin's work to solve the problem of what centrifugal and centripetal could mean in a broader context. They often have not sought to find remedies for the potential chaos in dialogue by utilizing Bakhtinian own terminology and concepts. These Bakhtinian thinkers that make up a whole circle of modern Bakhtin scholars have seldom used Bakhtin's words as a tool to repair Bakhtin. This thesis will attempt to clear a path toward consummation, using Bakhtin's own terminology and concepts in a slightly different light, thus using Bakhtinian terminology as a remedy for Bakhtinian issues.

In addition, of the internet and library searches and also enquiries made on this topic from scholars in Iran, Malaysia the United States (via email) and Canada (in person and at the 13th International Mikhail Bakhtin Conference where parts of this thesis were presented as a paper), it has emerged that such in depth reading of novels using "centrifugal" and "centripetal" tendencies as tools for analysis is apparently a unique, new research approach. Furthermore, speaking from the view point of a student of literature who has always had countless theoretical books at his disposal but been in dire straits when it came to locating thorough sample analysis of a text according to those theories, I believe that such an in-depth analysis of two novels according to Bakhtinian theory, would be an invaluable source for students of literature.

Thus the present study can be considered "significant" in that firstly it contributes to the by no means satisfactorily scrutinizing discussion of "consummation" and "Answerability" in Bakhtinian studies. Secondly, it pays closer attention to two more otherwise left-out Bakhtinian notions of centrifugal and centripetal forces. Thirdly, it utilizes these two very notions as analytical tools to provide the dialogue in a text with a consummation oriented answerability. And fourthly, as it was said before, it can be a valuable reference for students of literature when they need samples to learn what characteristic an actual dialogic analysis may have. Considering all the points mentioned above I believe that the present study is by no means redundant in the context of Bakhtin studies and definitely needs to be carried out.

1.6   METHODOLOGY

The general theme of the method of reading in this thesis can be categorized as Bakhtinian. There will be different terminology used when explaining notions and analyzing the text, however almost all of them are Bakhtinian terms that are usually

utilized by all researchers when they discuss such topics. However, the main concern will be on the notion of consummation and the centrifugal and centripetal forces. The theoretical discussion in chapter three will aim to problematize the issue of consummation and answerability and to present the research with the tools and the method of analysis. The general terms under which the other more specific tools are categorized are the terms centrifugal and centripetal. However these words are broad and theoretical and their meanings and significance may differ greatly in different context. Therefore more tangible frames of reference are needed to read the text and scrutinize it with. Since there is always the danger of being too subjective in the choice of analytical tools and terminology, the safest way was to use tools that would not be a first time formulation. This means that the research would have to employ terms that were already utilized by a credible theorist or analyst. Who would be more credible to borrow from than Bakhtin himself? Thus the tools have been borrowed from his own analyses in a slightly different field. These tools are a series of seven "series" Bakhtin discovered Rabelais' work; series that he found to be prevalent in Rabelais's works such as *Gargantua and Pantagruel*. These seven patterns existent in human life and listed by Bakhtin are:

1. Human Body[7] (its anatomical &physiological aspects)

2. Human Clothing

3. Food Series

4. Drink & Drunkenness

5. Sexual Series

6. Death Series

7. Defecation Series

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[7] See Sellers-Young (2002).

In reading the two novels selected for analysis, the seven series, plus the eighth which consists of any other pattern that may possess qualities of the centrifugal and centripetal will be focused on and singled out for inclusion in the analysis section.

After the concepts and patterns have been sought out according to the eight series above, they will be discussed and argued upon to see if each of these series contains its own "other" within itself or not. If so, then there will be an argument as to how this aids the concept in achieving answerability.

The novels that will be focused on are William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and Ann Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest*. The justification for the choice of these novels has been provided in full detail in chapter three.

1.7   DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

In spite of the fact that the backbone of the present study is mainly the Bakhtin circle and that the work produced and signed Bakhtin, Voloshinov and Mededev are subject to usage and interpretation, nevertheless one of the objectives of this study is to provide an argument towards answerability, using the two key notions of centrifugence and centripetence. Thus the review of literature section would or should naturally comprise of not only a summary or rewording of all Bakhtinian work by and on him but selected segments of his body of work that relate specifically (directly as well as indirectly) to the above mentioned concepts. The concepts that are chosen for elaboration and study in the present research are not usually the basis of Bakhtinian scholarly research. That is, compared to other more well-known terminology and Bakhtin jargon, these concepts have not been the centre of attention and thus have not received the treatment they deserve. This may be due to the fact that the more privileged terms such as polyphony, heteroglossia,

chronotope, carnival etc. seem to have more room for further interpretation and analysis and seem to scholars more fruitful when chosen as the topic of a paper or a book. Consequently finding enough material on the specific notion of consummation may not prove too easy. In fact in most of the work on or by Bakhtin there seems to be either a lack of adequate definitions provided for consummation and answerability or when a form of definition does exist, this meaning is so much entangled with other disciplines of human sciences such as philosophy that it makes it either necessary to go off track to read, understand and reword it in the thesis (something that distances the research from its being an "Literature" study) or to try to interpret the implications scholars have made and to figure out definitions to rely on, by coining definitions out of the different practical applications or references scholars have made to what they believe to be a "finishing off" in some aspect of a novel or fiction. Furthermore as Ken Hirschkop puts it in his "A response to the Forum on Mikhail Bakhtin" , "internal contradictions dictate that arguments over concepts like "dialogism" and "heteroglossia" cannot be settled by a definitive decision as to what they 'really' mean" (73). Thus before we go further in reviewing past literature related to our study, we will need to define some key terms as treated in the past literature of Bakhtinian studies;

1.7.1   Consummation

Let us first take a look at what the word means literally and then I will go on to contextualize the definition of this term. Consider the following primary definition of consummation by Michael Holquist[8]:

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[8] This explanation was provided by Michael Holquist himself in an e-mail after I conducted a correspondence with him to obtain answers to some questions regarding the term "consummation".

[…] "consummation." The Russian term Bakhtin uses ("zavershit'") is a relatively uncomplicated verb frequently used in every day conversation meaning simply to 'finish', 'to finish', or 'complete'. Russian has a strong division of aspect in its verb system, marking whether something is completed or not. 'Zavershit' is the perfective form of the verb that is often translated into English as "to finalize." After long consideration, my friend Vadim Liapunov, a great scholar and translator, and I decided to use "consummate" better to convey the final degree of finalizing (in the German philosophical tradition which so influenced Bakhtin, the technical term is "Vollendung." "Consummation is an important construct in the early, philosophical works of Bakhtin (reply e-mail to researcher Oct. 11 2007)

Now what could this mean in the context of Bakhtinian dialogism? I did state before that Bakhtin believes in an ongoing dialogue between self and other. This dialogue is carried on with the purpose of inter-illumination between different voices. Looking at an issue from different vantage points contributes to the dialogue, enriching it and adding to it. It was also clarified that the notion that a dialogue could continue eternally without any perceivable end in sight makes some thinkers (David Lodge is only one example) uncomfortable. Thus in trying to find an ending or finishing off we come across the term "consummation" and there is hope that this will lead us away from chaos and that we can "finalize" a dialogue even if this finalization is short lived. Therefore wherever the term "consummation" or its quasi-synonyms such as "finalization", "finishing", "finishing off" are used I mean a kind of ending, a kind of resting place, a stoppage, a pause to the dialogue that would serve as a station for the moving train of thought and of self-other conversation as well as the

internal conversation and answerability within a concept. It has also been observed that different writers and Bakhtinian thinkers have used different vocabulary and terminology to refer to consummation or "to consummate". A brief compilation of these words are as follows:[9]

Aestheticize, formalize, objectify, finish off, enclose, limit, represent, reify, manifest, a poetics. The terms above are by no means synonymous with consummation but they do contain aspects or "sides" of the word and may be used instead or in relation with the term "consummation" throughout this study. It would also be useful to consider also the following definition of architectonics and consummation by Bernard-Donals.

Bernard-Donals tries in his 1994 book *Mikhail Bakhtin, between Phenomenology and Marxism* to explain the tasks of an aesthetic analysis in relation to a work of art or a work of literature. In doing so he offers a brief definition of architectonics and consummation. Bernard-Donals explains that the first task of aesthetic analysis "is the aesthetic study of the distinct nature of a given work and its structure, or a work's consummation, which Bakhtin calls the "architectonics" of the aesthetic object" (13). From Bernard-Donals' apparently simple but quite complex statement that is based on his understanding of Bakhtin's writings, one may derive basic definitions for two Bakhtinian terms. These two terms that are the main focus of this study, are the terms architectonics and consummation. Bernard-Donals seems to be saying that architectonics is what is revealed in the process of the aesthetic

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[9] Most of the terms listed are either direct quotations or inferences from different texts, the most prominent of which is Holquist' *Dialogism* and also Natalia Bonetskaia's "Bakhtin's Aesthetics as a Logic of Form" printed in *Contexts of Bakhtin* by Shepherd, 1998.

study of a work and consummation is in fact what is revealed to be the distinct nature and structure of the work in question. He is looking at this issue merely from the point of aesthetics and his definition does not contain the broader definition one may seek to find in order to enrich the defining of the key terms in this thesis. However his view on the matter does shed some light on where to start looking for the traces of consummation and architectonics. It seems that at least one side of consummation is associated with the limited, material part of the work of art or a work of literature. This ascribing of material tangibility is also seen in Bernard-Dobals' listing of "second task of aesthetics". He believes the second task of aesthetic analysis to be "[w]hat is accessible to Formalism" or "what Bakhtin calls "material aesthetics" (since it deals only with the material out of which an aesthetic object is constructed" (13). Therefore one may conclude that the architectonics of consummation is tightly knit into the material structure of a work of literature, and what makes that structure unique, and its nature "distinct", can be at least partially traced in the material text. Therefore, scavenging through the basic raw plot, characters, dialogues, themes, patterns, tensions, paradoxes, motifs etc. should be one way of sniffing out the architectonic process (or the how) of a work's consummation; a "consummation completes cognitive and ethical aspects of an object by placing those aspects into relation with the individual human subject, the active consciousness" (14).

Thus consummation can manifest itself in many ways in a text. The manifestation of consummation depends on characters, plot, narrative techniques, ideologies, themes and much more in say a novel, but for the sake of example one can state the concept of death as an eminent and straightforward example of consummation. Further detail and elaboration will be provided on this issue in subsequent chapters of the thesis.

1.7.2 Centrifugal and Centripetal

These two words are usually best defined together and as a pair of binaries. They are usually used in their adjectival form and are commonly accompanied by the word "force" or "tendency". Like so many of Bakhtin's terms they have been borrowed from experimental sciences like physics and have acquired a somewhat different usage in discussions of dialogism as well as keeping shades of their original meaning. In the context of Bakhtinian dialogism there are constantly forces exerting "pressure" on each other to have a say in the universal dialogue as well as in the internal battle between the forces and elements of the text (in our case the text is a novel). Holquist tells us that there are two main forces in a dialogue; centrifugal and centripetal

> the opposition between normative stories and particular plots in the sphere of narrative manifests itself in the larger contest between centrifugal and centripetal forces that is the dialogue of dialogues in our heteroglot world. (120). Centrifugal forces […] seek to keep things apart, and centripetal forces […] work to make things cohere. (69) [They] interact most powerfully with each other at the level where their mutual struggle creates the kind of space we call texts, space that gives structure to their simultaneity… centripetal and centrifugal forces that shape discourse. (70)

To further contextualize the two terms it must be said that the following relation can be established between these two forces and related concepts;

It seems that tradition, custom, fixities, rules, laws, dominant ideologies, authority and authoritarian words and thoughts, conservative tendencies, anything of

or about the elite (higher class), mystification, stability etc. are monologic, one sided and thus centripetal. On the other hand innovations, new ideas, emerging and residual ideologies, mutiny, disobedience, dissidence, subversion, folk culture, grotesque[10], basically anything new, are dialogic, (at least) double-sided and thus centrifugal.

Having clarified the above points one small problem remains. It was mentioned that more often than not, the adjectival form of the words centrifugal and centripetal is used in many of the works on Bakhtin. But in the discussions to come other forms of these two words will inevitably be needed for usage. The problem is that Bakhtin has retrieved these words from the world of physics and inserted them into his philosophy of world view. There will be the need to utilize their noun forms as well. However in most of the dictionaries that were checked, including *The Oxford Dictionary*, *Longman* and *Webster's* dictionaries do not offer a noun form for these words. There is the word "centrifuge" but it usually refers to a certain apparatus in physics experiments. The word "centripetal-ness" can be used but it seems that a more sophisticated, more academic sounding word can be found. The problem is even greater for the other word (centripetal) which is even scarcer in usage in similar texts. However, the word "centrifugence" does exist as an entry in the unabridged Webster's Dictionaries and sounds "rich" enough to convey what discussions of this research intends to convey. Therefore these two words will be used in their noun form as well, one of which already exists (centrifugence) and the other which is proposed as centripetence.

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[10] For a discussion on how grotesque can be utilized to achieve liberating effects in the classroom and also how it can in turn change character and become a limiting hierarchy see Weinstein and Borda's (2009) "Resuscitating the Critical in the Biological Grotesque".

1.7.3 Architectonics

Tzvetan Todorov in his *Dialogical Principle* claims that architectonics is "a term introduced by Hildbrand" (38). "In general, architectonics concerns questions about building, questions about how something is put together." (Holquist 149).But what could architectonics mean in a Bakhtinian discussion of a text? It was pointed out before that a text and particularly a literary text is structured out of different voices that exist side by side or face to face, dialogizing and thus making up an arena for discussion, an arena that is preferably the field of equal opportunities for all existing voices in a dialogue; an arena which is called the text. As Voloshinov puts it in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, "Each word, as we know, is a little arena for the clash and crisscrossing of differently oriented social accents. A word in the mouth of a particular individual person is a product of the living interaction of social forces" (41). If these accents/voices/words inhabit the text, to put it rather simply, they have to "get along" even if they have their disagreements. They cannot keep battling each other constantly or there will be too much tension in the text. They must shape themselves (or rather the artist must shape those voices in a way) so that they can fit on the same canvas. The voices need to make up a whole, a picture; not a fixed, unchangeable picture but a fluid cloud-like drifting picture that has a somewhat discernable "shape" at any chosen moment in time but a constantly different shape through time. Architectonics is "how" these pieces—the voices—shape themselves, bend themselves, curve and slightly reshape their form to allow other pieces of this puzzle i.e. dialogic text, to materialise. Therefore in the present work, the study of the "architectonics of consummation" or "architectonics of answerability" essentially means to find out how or by what process or method "finishing-off" or finalization of dialogue is achieved in the heteroglot "community"

of voices in a text. Bernard-Donals (1994) believes "Architectonics" to be an "aesthetic study" (13) of a work. In his definition, Architectonics of Consummation would mean an "aesthetic study" of the "nature" of a work and its "structure" (13).

The different definitions provided above, call attention to the many ideas and arguments, different thinkers have on Bakhtin that deserves proper attention. In the next section, there will be a short reference to other works on Bakhtin.

1.8   CONTEXTUALIZING the Study

Having mentioned the three main terms to be used frequently in the thesis, now there is a faint idea at hand as to the rough outline of areas of focus in the present study. There are a few key areas that the literature review has to focus on. The first area is the notions of centripetence and centrifugence. The second is architectonics and the third is consummation and answerability. The points having been clarified, it would be useful to have a brief look at these areas. However this is merely a sample and the full treatment of topics will be provided in the next chapter.

1.8.1   Centrifugence and Centripetence

Dentith (1995) who has provided the reader with a worthy introduction to Bakhtin does mention centrifugence in passing and only in discussions of Bakhtin's interest and focus on "novelness". Also he limits this centrifugence to the centrifugal forces of language: "Bakhtin is celebrating the novel insofar as it aligns itself with the centrifugal forces of language and becomes a mobile, linguistically various, anti-dogmatic, relativising and dialogistic form" (54).

Holquist in his *Dialogism* (1981) provides more explanation and clarification on the issue (although it is still not sufficient). Firstly he does correctly identify that centrifugence and centripetence are at the "highest level of abstraction" in dialogism

(69). In this stance it would be timely to draw attention not just to the word "abstraction" in Holquist's description of the position of centrifugal and centripetal but to call attention to his "the highest level". Because as it was said and as it will be explained further in the subsequent chapters of the thesis, Bakhtin holds these two aforementioned concepts to be general categories at the top of his hypothetical theoretical outline, under which other Bakhtinian terms can be categorised. Therefore the two terms are at the top and can be considered as the starting point of a research tree on Bakhtin (something many researchers have not paid attention to and exactly what this study intends to do).To return to Holquist's quotation: "highest level of abstraction". The first part of it was explained. Now to clarify the "abstraction" I need to seek help from another piece of quotation by Holquist.

In a quote stated earlier, Holquist puts forward this important point that "the idea of heteroglossia comes as close as possible to conceptualizing a locus where the great centripetal and centrifugal forces that shape discourse can meaningfully come together" (70). By mentioning the fact that a locus is almost unattainable, Holquist is referring to the "abstractness" of nearly all Bakhtinian notions. Dialogism is a philosophy. It is a way of looking at the universe. It is a worldview. It is very abstract in its nature and by nature. There are very few ways of rendering it (even partially) material, tangible. The centrifugal and centripetal forces pulling at each other and creating tension are like two surfaces that penetrate against each other and produce sparks that become visible in the darkness of the abstract world. The two forces operating against each other create a "locus", a place, a location for the whole "battle" to exist or at least to show itself. Therefore the centrifugal and centripetal forces play a great role in helping these vapors of dialogic notions to crystallize as more tangible or visible drops (to extend the rather corny analogy, crystallised,

25