

THE REPRESENTATION OF SYNCHRONY IN GOGOL'S "NEVSKIJ PROSPEKT"

It will be demonstrated in this paper that T. Zielinski, in his discussion from 1901 concerning the Homeric epics, anticipated some recent theories in literary science. In particular his definitions of the spatial determination of synchronous actions and the explicitly temporal character of events framing these actions are essential for a correct interpretation of the consistent distinction, made in recent investigations, between plotless structures and plot-structures.

After an explanation of Zielinski's main ideas some aspects of Gogol's story "The Nevskij Prospekt" will be discussed because it is illustrative of this story that the above-mentioned distinction between plotless texts and plot-texts can be expressed there in terms of that made by Zielinski between the spatial and temporal determination of parts of a text in which synchronous actions are presented.

For the correct identification of a literary text Lotman's theory of the plot ("sujet") is essential. The plot is, in his view, based on an event (Lotman 1977(1971),330 ff.). In plotless texts an inventory of a world is given; consequently in them the organization of such a world is *confirmed*. Examples of plotless texts are: calendars, telephone-books, dictionaries, or, lyrical poems. In a plot-text, however, the order represented in a plotless structure is shattered (Lotman 1977(1971),236 f.). Simply speaking: any plot-structure *presupposes* the presence of a plotless structure. It will be explained later on that plotless structures can be explained in terms of denotative systems, and plot-structures in terms of connotative systems. Distinctive of the first is that these are marked by the motif of "immobility" whereas plot-text have the feature of "mobility". Thus, whereas the figures in a plotless text do not cross the borders of the world represented in it, the figures operative in a plot-text do, thus disturbing the order of the modeled world. When a literary figure has crossed the above-mentioned border two things may happen: his or her mobility can continue or come to a standstill. In the last case the literary figure becomes as immobile as all figures distinctive of plotless structures. To summarize: plotless structures are spatially determined, and plot-structures temporally (Lotman 1977(1971),241).

A distinction similar to that of Lotman between plotless texts and plot-texts is made by Genette when he opposes *narration* to *description*. Genette in his turn emphasizes that the *description* (which may be considered as running parallel to Lotman's plotless structure) lies at the basis of the *narration* (which may be considered as running parallel to Lotman's plot-structure). Genette too draws attention to the feature of "immobility" which is distinctive of the description, whereas mobility marks, in his eyes, *narration*¹. Thus, whereas *narration* is used for the representation of events in their quality of (temporally determined) processes, a *description* is used for a representation of men and objects studied in their simultaneity. It seems to suspend the flow of time and impel the story to display itself in space (Genette 1969,59).

In fact a standstill in the development of the plot-text has to be "justified". Such a justification is carried out either by the literary figures (or by the narrator) who may see, or do, something by which the action of the plot-text is halted. Thus an opportunity is created for the narrator to give necessary information in descriptions. In fact there are several objects

which may be used as motifs with a *topos*-function in this connection. Such objects are, for instance, mirrors (these reflect the people's outward appearance and can consequently be used in order to describe these), portraits (justifying the literary portrait which may consequently be given of the modeled persons), windows (on these the description of a landscape can be made dependent) (Hamon 1981,186). The role of the literary figures for the justification of descriptions is essential indeed. The motif of "forgetting" has an important function in this regard².

The parallel between a plotless text and a plot-text can be expressed in terms of simultaneity determined by a spatial and a temporal dimension which mutually exclude each other. Chapter 24 of Aristotle's "Poetics" is illustrative in this regard because it is stated there that, whereas in tragedy there is no possibility of imitating more than one development at (as of) the time they are taking place but only that enacted on the stage by the actors, in the epic it is possible to compose many events at (as of) the time they are being carried forward, because the epos is a narrative (*Poet.* 59b24-28; see Else 1957,608). Aristotle's observation is essential exactly because it says that tragedy is perfectly capable of presenting simultaneous events consecutively and that the epic can do no more (*idem*, 1957,607).

Given the fact that in all literary works simultaneous actions can be rendered consecutively only, for the representation of the beginning of an action B, synchronous to an action A, an event similar to that which determines a plot-text (in Lotman's definition) is required. This is evident from the fact that simultaneous actions are marked by what Zielinski called the law of psychological incommutability (*psychologische Inkommütabilitätsgesetz*). The essence of the law of psychological incommutability in the representation of synchronous actions consists in the fact that, when an event takes place in a certain space, the newly introduced temporal dimension supersedes the spatial dimension. However: this situation lasts a few moments only. As soon as human perception has grown accustomed to the new situation, the spatial dimension resumes, as it were, its original rights. This has particular consequences for the representation of movements. Distinctive of a movement, in Zielinski's view, is that only its beginning and end are events which bring about the above-mentioned temporally determined change. The "middle part" of the movement, however, is experienced by human consciousness as belonging to some new, spatially determined, situation but not as an *event*. Summarizing, the law of psychological incommutability is based on the fact that the human eye is unable to grasp simultaneous actions simultaneously (Zielinski 1901,411).

The similarity of Zielinski's distinction between spatially and temporally determined dimensions in the representation of simultaneous actions on the one hand to Lotman's between plotless structures and plot-structures, and to Genette's between description and narration on the other, is evident. It was observed above that both Zielinski and Lotman emphasize the key role of the event. In Lotman's view it upsets the existing order in a plot-structure. Zielinski marks the event as the beginning or the end of simultaneous actions. Consequently, both scholars emphasize the essence of the motif of "mobility", which is inherent to any event.

In Zielinski's view Homer presents simultaneous actions after what he calls the analytical-desultory procedure. Accordingly an observer is supposed to study an action A until it has got the character of an uniform movement, in which the spatial dimension dominates. Then the observer turns his attention to a synchronous action B which he studies in the same way. At the moment the observer jumps from action A to action B he has made himself aware of the phenomenon of simultaneity (Zielinski 1901,413). In other words: the analytical-desul-

tory procedure for the observation of simultaneous actions can be rendered schematically as follows:

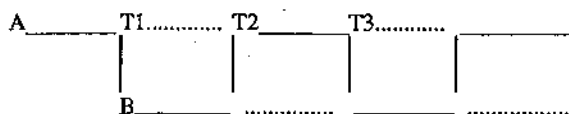


Fig. 1. The representation of simultaneous actions after the analytical-desultory procedure.

From the figure it is evident that, during the period in which action B takes place (T1-T2), action A is supposed to develop itself as a uniform movement, and that, when B ends, the attention of the observer shifts again to action A. At that moment (T2) action A is again presented as autonomous, and not as a mere part of a uniform movement conditioned by the period during which action B takes place. However, when action B resumes its course (T3) the observer's attention shifts again to it, and action A is again presented as a mere uniform movement.

Thus the use of the analytical-desultory procedure implies that the presentation of an action A as a uniform movement when the attention shifts to a synchronous action B, should be justified somehow. As far as this motivation of such "void spaces" in the narrative is concerned, attention should again be drawn to the above-mentioned standard motifs (or: *topoi*, in Hamon's terms), such as the window, the portrait, the mirror, which are used in order to "justify" descriptions. What happens, when use is made of one of such motifs, is that two synchronous actions are described after the analytical-desultory procedure. Consequently, when a literary figure is presented as standing before a window, lost in thoughts, thus enabling the narrator to give a description of the countryside, he carries out, as it were, an action A which is transformed into a uniform movement (distinctive of which is that it is spatially rather than temporally determined). The "void space" which is created artificially in this manner, is, thus, filled with the narrator's description. At the moment this "frozen position" starts (at the moment T1), the observer's attention shifts from it to the beginning of the "simultaneous" description of the countryside behind the window.

Zielinski pays particular attention to such "void spaces" (effected by the use of the motif of "forgetting") in the Homeric epics. For instance, in the 15th book of the "Iliad", two actions, originally presented as simultaneous, are described as if they take place consecutively. In that passage Iris and Phoebus Apollo are called to the throne of Zeus, where they arrive simultaneously. Zeus instructs Iris to appease Poseidon, who plays havoc among the Trojans. When she has completed her task, the father of the Gods orders Phoebus Apollo to go to the Trojans in order to support him against the fierce attacks of the Greeks (supported by the sea-god). In this manner the phenomenon of epic "forgetting" is realized. The representation of the actions of Iris and Apollo as taking place consecutively implies that the latter's expedition has become unnecessary at the moment he gets the instruction from Zeus to help Hector; it is reported that Poseidon has left the battle field in the meantime: "Go now, beloved Phoibos, to the side of brazen-helmed Hektor/ since by this he who encircles the earth and shakes it / *is gone into the bright sea and has avoided the anger/ that would be ours...*" (Lattimore 1976(1951), 315; it. mine, PMW).

The "omission" manifests itself in the first place in the fact that no information is given about Apollo's activities between the moment of his arrival before Zeus's throne, and that at which he is instructed to go to Hector after Iris has completed her instruction, and, in the second place, in the fact that Apollo's expedition to Hector has become needless after that of Iris, *because* Poseidon is already leaving the scene.

The Old-Russian folk-epos (*bylina*) is illustrative in this connection too. In this genre not more than one figure (in general: the protagonist) is presented as active at one moment. Consequently, the hero is either active, or passive. In the last case his activity is temporarily transferred to another figure. This feature corresponds with that phenomenon that simultaneous events are represented consecutively. Accordingly the heroes in battles in the folk-epos are represented as entering the battle-field *successively*. Thus hero B is supposed to begin fighting only after his "predecessor" A has been taken away from the battle field by the epic narrator. In other words: before turning his attention to a particular figure, the epic narrator completely does away with his "predecessor" who consequently becomes powerless and inactive at that moment (Nekljudov 1972, 142ff.). The representation of one person at a time in the epos as active can be interpreted as the simultaneous representation of more persons after the analytical-desultory procedure.

In the same way in the Homeric epics the battle-scenes are represented as series of single-combats. This specific character of the representation of simultaneous events is emphasized by the fact that in the Homeric epos between the descriptions of two apparently simultaneous events often no time-indicators are found of the kind "at the same time", "meanwhile", etc. (Zielinski 1901, 436).

It will be demonstrated now that in Gogol's story "The Nevskij Prospekt" the above-mentioned phenomenon of "omission", distinctive of the representation of synchronous actions in the Homeric epos, plays an important role as well.

The story consists, schematically, of four parts:

1. a lyrical introduction in which an eulogy of the street is given in a grotesque, typically Gogolian manner,
2. the story of the painter Piskarev,
3. the story of the lieutenant Pirogov,
4. an epilogue in which the street is described in gloomy terms.

Already in the title of the story its protagonist mentioned: the main street of St. Petersburg. Its most important feature is that it is represented as a living creature, in the way typical of Gogol who often presents lifeless objects as living, and, vice versa. For instance, in the first lines of the story the street is presented as the "beauty of our capital". Again a few lines later the narrator exclaims: "How many metamorphoses it undergoes within twenty-four hours!" (Gogol 1945, 51).³ One alinea later the street is called metonymically "the pedagogical Nevski Prospekt" (*idem*, 52). It is reported that "as soon as twilight falls on houses and streets, then the Nevski Prospekt begins *to revive and move again*" (Gogol 1945, 56; it. mine, PMW).

In the epilogue, the conception of the street as a living being manifests itself in the narrator's admonition to keep away from the street-lamp, because the promenader may consider himself happy "when its just stains him with its smelly oil." In the same passage the narrator emphasizes that "it always lies, that Nevskij Prospekt" (Gogol 1959, 43). In the same

passage, in the concluding paragraph the "mobility" of the Nevskij Prospekt is again emphasized: **"O, do not believe this Nevskij Prospekt..., the knick-knacks [in the shop-windows] ... smell of an awful amount of assignation... But except for the street-lamp, everything breathes deception... [The Nevskij prospekt] particularly lies when the night snuggles against to it in a thick mass... and makes the walls of the houses stand out, when the whole city turns into thunder and lightning... (Gogol' 1959,43, it. mine, PMW).* In other words: rather than presenting the observer as a promenader who strolls along the Street, the narrator suggests that he remains immobile while the street "comes along" on its own.

At the end of the lyrical introduction the plot-text starts. This is marked by the fact that the movements of protagonists are centrifugal as far as the Nevskij Prospekt is concerned. In fact both the stories of Piskarev and Pirogov do not take place at the Nevskij Prospekt. Attention should be drawn to Lotman's definition of a plot-structure again, because the above-mentioned process of crossing borders is, in his view, distinctive of plot-structures contrary to plotless structures.

In the story under discussion the beginning and the end of two simultaneous actions are marked, whereas the intermediate parts are "forgotten" in a manner similar to that distinctive of descriptions of simultaneous actions in the Homeric epos. That means that they are represented as spatially determined. Thus two synchronous actions A and B (marking the beginning of the adventures of Piskarev and Porogov) are described as if they take place consecutively, in the process of which the reader's attention is impelled to shift from action A to action B alternately. This method finds its expression in the phenomenon that time proceeds by leaps and bounds rather than gradually. This is already evident in the lyrical description of the street which precedes the plot-text. In fact there the described time (or *Erzählte Zeit*, in G. Müller's definition) from dawn to dusk is presented in the form of temporal blocks, from early in the morning to noon, from noon to 2 p.m., from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m., from 4 o'clock to dusk, and from dusk to the beginning of the day respectively. By the block-like treatment of the various periods of the day it is suggested that they are split into their initial and final situation. Consequently, each final situation is presented as analogous to, but not identical with its initial situation, in so far as it is *both* similar to and different from it. For instance, the difference between the final and the initial situation in the first described period (from early in the morning to noon), consists in the fact that it is first reported that during this period "the Nevskij Prospekt is empty", whereas at the end there are, indeed, people in it. The similarity of the final to the initial situation is expressed by the neutralization of the opposition "absence of people" / "presence of people." The motif "absence" dominates. Thus it is reported by the narrator at the end of the description of the period under discussion that "whatever you may put on, nobody will perceive it."

The description of the following period (from noon to 1 p.m.) is introduced with the information that then "the governors of all nations with their nurslings" enter the street. The suggestion that time proceeds in leaps and bounds originates from the idea that at 11.59 a.m. the street is still empty, whereas exactly at noon it begins to revive. The idea of such a violent supersession of a specific category of human beings by another one is continued in the next passage. The narrator informs that at two o'clock the governors, pedagogues and children **"are at last forced out by their lively parents, who go arm-in-arm with their brightly-coloured, variegated wives with delicate nerves"* (Gogol' 1959,9).

Here again the initial situation of this period and the final one of the preceding one are simultaneously different from and similar to each other. They are qualitatively different; the

preceding period is marked by the presence of governors, the period under discussion by that of fashionable and dressy people. However, quantitatively the two categories hardly differ: it is emphasized by the narrator that the two categories occupy the same available unit of modeled space (the Nevskij Prospekt). The words / forced out / are illustrative in this connection.

The same happens during the period from 3-4 p.m. The narrator informs: "At three o'clock there is a new change. It is suddenly spring in the Nevski Prospekt: it becomes thronged with clerks in green uniforms" (Gogol 1945,56; it. mine, PMW).

Here too a qualitative change without a quantitative one takes place, because the two categories of people have to "content themselves" again with one and the same unit of modeled space. The suggestion that time proceeds by leaps and bounds is raised by the use of the word / suddenly /. Then it is reported that: "After four o'clock the Nevski Prospekt is empty and you will not be likely to meet a single clerk" (Gogol 1945,56).

The block-like treatment of temporal units is again emphasized by the suggestion that at 15.59 the street is still crowded with clerks, whereas at four o'clock the street is suddenly empty. The reverse process takes place during the following period; then it is suggested that suddenly the street is thronged with people. It was seen above that this effect is reached by the fact that the narrator uses that procedure which is distinctive of all Gogol's works: he depicts lifeless objects as living, and vice-versa: "As soon as twilight falls on houses and on streets... then the Nevski Prospekt begins to revive and move again..." (Gogol 1945,56).

In fact the block-like treatment of time in the story is distinctive of Old Russian folk-epics and fairy-tales (the conception of the world as a block universe in Old Russian texts will be discussed in more detail in Waszink, in prep.). The spatial and temporal determination of the heroes of such tales can schematically be presented as follows:

1. his immobility in space is correlated with a mobility in time,
2. his mobility in space can be correlated with an immobility in time,
3. he becomes mobile in time (he grows, or becomes older) when he remains at one place,
4. when he stays away for an extremely long time a regressive temporal movement takes place: he becomes younger, as if he returns to the moment of his first action as a hero.

It is evident that the items 1. and 3. and 2. and 4. respectively run parallel (Nekljudov 1975, 187).

In the lyrical introduction and the epilogue the street is presented as the protagonist of the story; it is accordingly considered a living, mobile being. Accordingly the addressee ("you") is supposed to be immobile (after the epic procedure) whereas the protagonists (Piskarev and Pirogov) are, for the moment being, absent.⁴

Their stories are marked by the above-mentioned phenomenon that spatial mobility can be correlated with temporal immobility and vice-versa. The protagonists are immobile first. Thus the earlier-mentioned suggestion that the Nevskij Prospekt carries out a uniform movement is concluded with Pirogov's exclamations which marks the beginning of the plot-text: * " 'Stop!' exclaimed the Lieutenant Pirogov at that moment, 'did you see that?' " (Gogol 1959,13).

Then, however, it is explained that this immobility of the heroes just serves in order to motivate their mobility in the plot-text. This mobility of the protagonist of the story of Piskarev is anticipated by the words of Pirogov: "Go on, your minny..." (*ibidem*).

The situation again changes: mobile objects become immobile and vice-versa. The famous description of the street during Piskarev's pursuit of the dark-haired prostitute is illustrative in this regard: "The pavement *rushed away*, beneath him, carriages with their galloping horses seemed *motionless*, the bridge stretched and broke at its arch..., a hut *tumbled* to meet him..." (Gogol 1945,60/61). See also: "He did not even notice how suddenly a four-storied house *reared up* before him, all four rows of windows shining with light *gazed* at him, and the rails on the porch-steps opposed him with a shock of metal" (Gogol 1959,17; it. mine, PMW).

In these two examples the law of psychological incompatibility manifests itself. Thus it was observed above that at the end of the scene an indication is given of the mobility of Piskarev. This beginning mobility indicates that an event in Zielinski's definition has taken place. However, after the observer (reader) has experienced the strictly temporal determination of this event, and has got accustomed to the new situation, the scene resumes its originally spatial determination. This manifests itself in the phenomenon that the literary figure under discussion is represented as immobile and the streets and the houses as mobile.

The reverse is the case in the scene between that of Piskarev's stay at the prostitute's apartment and that of his stay at home. Then he is qualified as immobile whereas he was mobile during the period preceding that scene: "He *stood motionless* before her and was ready to *forget* himself as naively as he had *forgotten* himself before... [1] [then, when she begins to talk:] Instead of making use of such affability..., he turned like a wild goat and *rushed* into the street [2]. With bowed head and arms *hanging* at his sides, he *sat* in his room..." [1] (Gogol 1945,63; it. mine, PMW).

[1] = plotless text, [2] = plot-text.

This example is particularly illustrative of a pictorial representation because the description of the protagonist's temporally determined "flight" from the brothel to his apartment is, as it were, split into the representations of the starting-point and the end of the expedition, whereas the intermediate distance is omitted, or: forgotten. This effect of "omission" is brought about by the hero's extreme speed (or maximal mobility) when he crosses the distance between the prostitute's and his own apartment. Thus, as a consequence of the fact that this intermediate space seems to be omitted, the suggestion is made that the brothel and the painter's apartment have approached each other *on their own* rather than that the protagonist has crossed the space separating them.

This procedure of "splitting" a movement into its spatially determined starting-point and its end (in the process of which the deictic function of these two represented parts of modeled space is emphasized) is particularly effective in such a motif which may be considered a blend of two not temporally determined states like a dream. The description of Piskarev's first dream about his heroine is illustrative in this connection: "Anxious and worn out he leant against a corner-wall and searched the throng, but his eyes were overstrained and began to show him everything in a blurred way. At last the walls of his own room began to *appear* clearly to him" (Gogol 1959,26; it. mine, PMW).

Thus the walls of the painter's room are presented here as starting an activity on their own, by replacing, as it were, the luxurious apartments as the scene of action. The two spaces consequently seem to occupy the same space. Again: it seems that there is no real distance between them. In fact Piskarev normally does not leave his home because his life is dominated by dreams about his beloved. Only the intention to meet her impels him to activity, that means, mobility.

In the story of Pirogov this association of spatial immobility with temporal mobility, and vice versa, is made in a different manner. It was mentioned above that in the story of Piskarev the protagonist seems to stand still, whereas the street and the houses are rushing. However, in the presentation of the German woman by Pirogov, the motif of activity is reserved for the protagonist as well as his "victim." In general he is active, whereas he is doomed to inactivity when he is confronted with his beloved. These scenes, marked by inactivity on Pirogov's side, take place explicitly at the tinsmith's apartment.

It is illustrative that exactly the descriptions of the spatially immobile scenes are abundant with temporal indicators. Thus the first evening, after Pirogov has intruded into the apartment, he is sent away by the drunken tinsmith, but: "*Next day*, Lieutenant Pirogov appeared *early in the morning* in the metal-smith's workshop" (Gogol 1945,81).

In this example it is evident that the scene is depicted explicitly from the point of view of a person living at that place rather than of somebody who has followed Pirogov during his walk to it. Moreover, when Pirogov orders spurs as a pretext to try to contact the blonde woman, the tinsmith informs him "that he [can] not have the spurs ready for a *fortnight*" (Gogol 1945,82; it. mine, PMW).

During the production-process Pirogov comes along so often in order to be informed about it that "Schiller at last [begins] to weary of him. He made every effort to complete the work on the spurs *as soon as possible*; at last the spurs were finished" (Gogol 1959,38; it. mine, PMW).

Then, it is reported as follows during the production-process of the handle for the dagger by the tinsmith: "one day, walking in the Meshchanskaya and gazing the house which bore Schiller's sign... he [Pirogov] saw the blonde..." (Gogol 1945,85).

The scene is depicted again explicitly from the tinsmith's apartment. The Lieutenant asks the lady when her husband is *not* at home. She answers: "*on Sundays*". Consequently, he returns *next Sunday* (*ibidem*; it. mine, PMW).

When trying to kiss the beautiful blonde Pirogov is caught in the act and kicked out of the apartment. He rushes home to change in order to straight to the General to complain to him of the tinsmith's behaviour (Gogol 1945,87). But then: "... *towards 9 o'clock* he calmed down and decided that it would be a bad thing to trouble the General on a *Sunday*; also he was undoubtedly invited somewhere, and so he set off to spend the *evening* at the house of a certain director... he [Pirogov] spent he *evening* there..." (Gogol 1945,88; it. mine, PMW).

Summarizing, the specific correlation of spatial immobility with temporal mobility manifests itself in the time-consuming production processes of both spurs and handle for a dagger, which are ordered by Pirogov from the German tinsmith. This production-process takes place explicitly at the tinsmith's apartment.

The association of spatial mobility with temporal immobility manifests itself in the protagonist's extreme speed when he is not at the tinsmith's apartment. The description of the protagonist's pursuit of the German woman is illustrative in this connection: "*They went through the dark Kazan Gates... Pirogov followed*. She ran up a narrow dark staircase and entered a door through *which Pirogov too passed boldly*... The stranger *flitted on* through a side door. He thought for a moment, but then, following the Russian rule, *went straight ahead*" (Gogol 1945, 79; it. mine, PMW).

Then, however, Pirogov's movement comes to standstill. The reason is clear: the object of his pursuit (the German woman) has disappeared. Given the fact that his endeavours to seduce her are presented by the narrator as one uninterrupted action, Pirogov's actions are spa-

tially determined (in Zielinski's definition) when the event which was the cause of his activity has been completed. At that moment Pirogov has to wait until the next event, that is, until the moment she reappears. The above-mentioned intermediary scene, which is spatially determined, is consequently marked by that suggestion of a uniform movement which is, in Zielinski's view, distinctive of an action A as soon as the observer's attention has shifted to another synchronous action B. In other words: the protagonist's activity is temporarily replaced by his immobility. For the moment being Pirogov is confronted with the two drunk artisans, and he is consequently sent away by Schiller. It is the latter's action which is the cause of his immobility; see: "*He halted on the stairs several times*, as though wishing to pull himself together and decide how he could make Schiller feel the full extent of his rudeness" (Gogol 1945,81; it. mine, PMW).

This immobility continues during the Lieutenant's further endeavours to conquer the German lady during his later visits. The spatial determination of these manifests itself in his inactivity then.

It will be studied now how the motif of "omission" is expressed in the representation of synchronous actions, taking place in the modeled time of the lyrical introduction and the concluding alinea. Reference should again be made to the fact that the two protagonists leave the street as soon as they have been introduced by the narrator; their adventures take place elsewhere. These adventures can be considered to be synchronous to the "movement" on the Nevskij Prospekt. Consequently one may wonder: "what does the Nevskij Prospekt 'do' in the meantime?" In accordance with the above-mentioned motif of "omission", which is, in Zielinski's view, distinctive of the representation of simultaneous actions in the Homeric epos, the street temporarily "disappears", and "reappears" as soon as the plot-text has come to an end. This end is illustrative in so far as there the development of the motif of movement is presented in reverse order in comparison with the end of the lyrical introduction where the plot-text starts. It was seen that at the beginning of the plot-text a change takes place from a quiet, steady movement, distinctive of the street, to a complete standstill ("'"Stop!' the lieutenant Pirogov exclaimed at that moment..."). However, at the end of the plot-text (where, in other words, the Nevskij Prospekt reappears), there is a development from quick movement (which marks the plot-text) to that steady, uniform, movement of the street as it functions in the earlier-mentioned plotless text, that is, the description of the street at the outset. See again: "(Pirogov) *rushed* home to change and *go straight* to the general to whom he would describe the rebellion of the German workmen..." (Gogol 1945,87; it. mine, PMW).

This outburst of activity of Pirogov anticipates the steady movement, which is distinctive of the Nevskij Prospekt; this is always crowded with *quietly* walking promenaders. In its turn, the description of the Lieutenant Pirogov strolling along the street anticipates that of the narrator who is represented as quietly strolling along that same street in the concluding alinea as well. Compare the two following examples: "In addition, the rather cool evening made him *stroll along the Nevski Prospect* a while..." (Gogol 1945,88; it. mine, PMW), and: "'This world of ours is wonderfully araged!' I thought, *wandering along the Nevski Prospect* the day before yesterday and calling to mind these two adventures" (Gogol 1945,88; it. mine, PMW).

By this appearance of an observer (in this case: the narrator) it is indicated that action A (the observation of the street in the lyrical introduction), which was interrupted by the event

(B) of the adventures of the two protagonists, is resumed. Thus, having mused about the fate of man in general the narrator concludes from these thoughts that the Nevskij Prospekt cannot be trusted, and warns the reader not to set foot on it. With this warning the story is completed.

The suggestion of the representation of one of two synchronous actions as a uniform movement is relevant to the conception of living beings as lifeless. Attention should again be drawn to the fact that the use of the law of psychological incommensurability for the expression of simultaneous actions presupposes that the spatial dimension supersedes the temporal one. At the first meeting of the painter with the prostitute, he qualifies her as a painting ("an absolute 'Perugino Bianca'"). This suggestion that the woman is a mere lifeless object, which preserves its original beauty during the process of modeled time, is maintained until the end, when the painter sees her back. At that moment he has not seen her for a rather long time:

"She stood before him as lovely as ever, though her eyes were sleepy, though a pallor was creeping over her face which was no longer as fresh, yet she *remained* beautiful" (Gogol 1945,74).

In this sentence the above-mentioned suggestion of a uniform movement is raised. This manifests itself in the fact that the representation of the lady under discussion is spatially conditioned: although already some time has elapsed since the protagonist saw her, she has not changed. As far as the pictorial character of the woman is concerned, the following passage, in which the protagonist's reaction to one of his dreams about the heroine are described, is illustrative: "It would be better if you didn't exist, had no being in the world, were just the creation of an inspired artist! I would not leave the canvas, I would gaze at you always and embrace you, I would live and breathe you..." (Gogol 1945,72; it. mine PMW).

This passage is interesting when it is considered in relation to the exclamation of the painter when he tries to convince the prostitute that she should marry him:

"I will sit at my painting and you, sitting by my side, will inspire my labour..." (*idem*,75).

In other words: in the first example it is suggested that the woman is a mere lifeless product of artistic inspiration, which the painter needs in order to survive physically ("breathe"). In the second example, however, she has an additional function. She serves as a means of inspiration there for Piskarev who is presented as an artist, that is, not as a creature who is just physiologically determined. Thus in both examples the painter is presented as dependent on the prostitute: in the first example it is suggested that he needs the *artistic* (that means, organically dead) representation of the woman in order to survive physically himself. In the second example, however, it is suggested that he needs her, in order to be able to realize "dead" artistic representations of the same kind as the above-mentioned "product of a gifted artist".

Particular attention should be drawn to the function of the deictic words, in so far as these are used in combination in the style-figures of repetition. Jakobson's observation that repetition and parallelism are essential for the expression of poeticity in language is essential in this connection. In the latter's view the style-figure of repetition is an outstanding means to express the notion of poeticity because a repeated word simultaneously refers to its extra-linguistic object (A1) and to its intra-linguistic antecedent (that is, not its object, or: not-A1) (Jakobson 1981(1934),750). It is distinctive of a repeated word that both its extra-linguistic referent and the notion that, when that word is repeated, it refers to an intra-linguistic antecedent, are included into one spatio-temporal block.

To begin with the use of the deictic word /here/ in "The Nevskij Prospekt": the spatial aspect of its referent is emphasized by its repetition. The result is that the suggestion that all kinds of processes which are usually experienced by the reader as taking place successively, are experienced by him or her as taking place simultaneously, because they are introduced by one and the same spatial indicator /here/. The word /here/ is used very often in the lyrical introduction. To quote a few instances:

"Here you meet with unique side-whiskers..." (Gogol 1945,53),

"Here you will find marvellous moustaches..." (*ibidem*),

"Here you will meet with waists such as you have never dreamed of..." (*ibidem*),

"Here you will meet unique smiles..." (*idem*,55),

"Here you will meet with a thousand inscrutable temperaments and phenomena..." (*ibidem*; all it. mine, PMW).

By this use of *anaphora* in this enumeration of man's fines attributes the idea forces itself on the visitor of the street that he does not see all things consecutively, as they are presented in the text, but rather simultaneously.⁵ For the use of *anaphora* the phenomenon of repetition in Kierkegaard's definition is essential. This definition amounts to the fact that it is impossible to evoke past events, because everything which is repeated is *by definition* new, precisely because it is repeated (Kierkegaard 1984(1943)). By the style-figure of *anaphora* (which manifests itself in the above-mentioned examples in the repetition of the deictic word /here/) the "literary law" is obeyed that all described events in a text have to be narrated consecutively, whereas it can at the same time be emphasized that the events themselves take place simultaneously.

For the specific function of the deictic word /here/ in these examples reference should again be made to the Old-Russian folk-epos. It is distinctive of this genre that the deictic word /*tut*/ is often used. This has both the temporal meaning "now" and the spatial meaning "here", although in the folk-epos it is mostly used in its temporal meaning. When it is used with verbs expressing motion, speech or emotion it generates combinations, the function of which is to link together the temporal consecutivity of the plot-text (Nekljudov 1972,26). In other words: it is probable that the word indicating "here" in the above-mentioned passages has a function similar to that of the word *tut* in the folk-epos, in which it is distinctive of the plot-text, that is, a text marked by motion, contrary to a plotless text.

The use of the deictic pronoun /you/ is of great interest in this connection too. In the above-mentioned examples, by virtue of the fact that it is repeated, the spatial aspect of the narrative is emphasized. In other words: by the word /you/ it is suggested too that the events indicated by it take place simultaneously rather than consecutively. Moreover, the spatial aspect is emphasized by the circumstance that, by its function as a deictic word, it establishes a link between the perceiver and the literary figures. An interesting parallel has been drawn between literature and the plastic arts in this connection. Thus it has been observed that by frontal portraits the effect of a maximal contact between the work of art and the perceiver is reached, whereas in portraits in profile this contact is completely done away with.

The spatial element in frontal portraits is explicit in so far as the eyes of the portrayed person seem to follow us everywhere, at any moment. The perceiver and the portrayed person consequently seem to be closed in one spatio-temporal block. The look of the represented figure is the real Sartrean *regard d'autrui*: we feel annihilated, immobilized, transformed into lifeless objects (Paris 1965,95f.). The maximal contact between the portrayed figure and the perceiver (by virtue of which it is suggested that they are included into one

spatio-temporal block) manifests itself in the phenomenon that there seems to be an ideal cooperation between the *regard d'autrui* and that of the perceiver in frontal portraits. Thus it is distinctive of such perceivers that they do not seem to be immobilized without their own consent (Paris 1965,107; for the essential role of the Sartrean *regard d'autrui* in Gogol's prose, see Fanger 1979,253f. and 294, n. 36).

The link which can be established between the plastic arts and literature in this connection resides in the fact that the procedure, applied in frontal portraits is similar to the use of the deictic word /I/ in literary works, whereas the procedure, applied in portraits in profile, is similar to the use of the deictic pronoun /he/. Portraits of persons partly turned towards us in such a way that, although both eyes are visible, the whole of the face is not, have an intermediate function. In such portraits the spatial aspect is not explicitly emphasized. There is no suggestion that we are just locked into one tempo-spatial block with the represented figure. The eyes on such portraits seem to escape our look. Although the spatial element still plays an essential role in these portraits, so does the temporal aspect. Thus, although represented figures, which are only partly turned towards us, do not look at us *now*, they may do so the next moment. Consequently, the deictic word /you/ is appropriate for the qualification of such figures, because it seems that the perceiver has to draw the attention of the portrayed person by calling him or her.⁶

To conclude: on portraits in profile the persons usually do not look at the perceiver at all. Consequently, all links between them seem to be broken (Paris 1965,115). Thus a figure painted in profile seems to be maximally mobile, or, temporally determined, in so far as it seems to roam freely in space, not linked to the painter. The *regard d'autrui* is, therefore, not almighty any more in so far as the painter has, in order to immobilize the modeled figure, to catch him or her first (Paris 1965,116). The personal pronoun /he/ is appropriate for the indication of such a represented figure, given the fact that this pronoun was correctly defined by Benveniste as indicating a "non-personne".

In the above-mentioned passages, in which the deictic spatial marker /here/ is used in combination with the deictic pronoun /you/, the suggestion is raised that the perceiver stands in a position half turned toward the narrator, who moves in a fantastic, grotesque world, in which autonomously acting parts of the body as well as garments are active. For the moment being the perceiver, who is presented as a portrait himself, does not see this world himself, but his attention is drawn to it by the narrator's use of the pronoun /you/. Thus it is suggested that at a (temporally determined) moment x the narrator will indeed catch the reader's perceiver's attention. Consequently, the situation will become spatially determined only then; only then both narrator and perceiver-reader will have become included into the modeled world with its fantastic "figures".

The question can be posed whether a consistent division can be made in the story between its plotless parts and its plot-texts, given the circular character of the story.

The story "The Nevskij Prospekt" is the report of what may be called two anti-heroes, the endeavour of both of which to realize their respective ideals is not crowned with success. This failure is expressed by the fact that they are presented as figures illustrative of plotless texts in Lotman's definition. It was observed earlier that such figures do not cross the boundaries of the plotless structure in which they are operative. That Piskarev and Pirogov are operative in such a plotless structure becomes evident from the circular character of the story. Thus they hardly arrive into a new space after having crossed the border of that space

in which they are operative first: rather do they return to their starting-point. In other words, they are suggested to have the feature of immobility, which is, as was explained above, distinctive of plotless structures. In the story of Piskarev this feature of immobility is presented in the following way: the painter merely evokes beautiful dreams about the woman of his heart, by making use of opium. He is presented as hardly active *in space*. However, when he is active, that is, when he takes the initiative to visit the dark-haired prostitute at her apartment, the result is that, although the woman offers herself to him, he does not accept this offer but runs away. The result of his second initiative to call on her is that she rejects his proposal to marry her. Consequently, having arrived at home, the painter commits suicide (Gogol 1945,75).

The above-mentioned two events in the story of Piskarev, in which the activity of the painter is expressed, frame the "immobile" part of it, which consists of a description of his dreams. However, it was observed above that the framing events are depicted as spatially determined as well. Thus it was seen that the painter's "flight" home (marked by mobility) after his visit to the brothel is presented as "split" into its starting-point and its end. In other words: it is suggested that the painter is immobile even during his active moments whereas the lifeless objects are presented as mobile then. The suggestion is raised that the pursuit of the beloved lady is spatially determined by the use of the motif of "dream", that means, "un-consciousness".

The plotless structure of the story of Piskarev manifests itself in the circular character of the modeled space in which the protagonist is operative, as a consequence of which he returns to his starting-point. This starting-point is the painter's own apartment rather than the Nevskij Prospekt with a description of which the story begins. In fact Piskarev, and, more in general the class of painters in St. Petersburg, are qualified as strangers there. Typical of them is that they practise their art mainly *at home*: "The artist is for ever enticing home some old beggar woman... he paints the perspectives of his room which contains all manner of artist's rubbish... They often nourish a genuine talent, and if only the fresh breeze of Italy would blow upon them, this talent would probably develop as freely, boundlessly as a plant which is at last taken out of the room into the clean air outside" (Gogol 1945,59).

Piskarev is no exception to this rule that the painters in St. Petersburg hardly leave the suffocating environment in which they always live. Thus it is distinctive of Piskarev that not only are his artistic leanings frustrated, because he does not grasp the opportunity to leave his home and go to Italy where he may become a really great painter, but that he is even unable to approach a mere prostitute who lives in another part of the city.

The modeled space in the story of Pirogov is of a similar circular kind. The latter has an outspoken frivolous character; in this respect he is illustrative of the Nevskij Prospekt. Accordingly, it is Pirogov rather than the unhappy artist Piskarev who returns to the Nevskij Prospekt at the end of the story where the street "reappears" too. ("In addition the rather cool evening made him stroll along the *Nevski Prospect* a while"; Gogol 1945,88). It is distinctive of Piskarev, on the other hand, that he returns to his own apartment, only to commit suicide there.

In fact Pirogov is in all respects Piskarev's opposite, or negative double (for the role of doubles in this story see Waszink 1988,116f.). This opposition is even spatially expressed in so far as it is emphasized by the narrator that that class of people of which he is a representative spends most of its time outdoors. (Whereas Piskarev as well as his colleagues have the habit of not leaving their homes.) The following example is illustrative: "They [that is, people

like Pirogov, PMW] never miss a single public lecture, whether it is about book-keeping or even about forestry. You will always meet one of them at the theatre.. They are always at the theatre" (Gogol 1945,77).

As far as the two "heroines" are concerned: parallels can be drawn between them and the male protagonists as they are typical of plotless structures as well. Thus the dark-haired beloved of the painter, in her quality of prostitute, has the same feature of "frivolity" which is distinctive of the Nevskij Prospekt. At the beginning of the plot-text she is reported to *leave* the street. However, this action on her part of crossing a spatial border does not mean that she enters a new semantic field: she goes to her apartment, which is a brothel. In other words: she goes to a place which is marked by the same feature ("frivolity") as that part of modeled space where she comes from: the Nevskij Prospekt. In fact this is marked by frivolity which costs a lot of money; in the concluding alinea the narrator observes that the shop windows in the street contain "knick-knacks... which are wonderful, but which smell of an awful lot of assignations" (Gogol' 1959,42f.).

Something similar holds, in a more complicated form, for the German woman, who is pursued by Pirogov. She is first presented as being marked by the feature of frivolity: "She paused before each window and glanced at belts, kerchieves, ear-rings, gloves and other idle knick-knacks standing in the window, stared in all directions and glanced over her shoulders. 'You're mine, my dear!' Pirogov said confidently..." (Gogol 1945,76).

However, she is a German woman, and this quality is associated with the feature of "solidity". This is particularly evident in the portrait of her husband (the tinsmith Schiller) in which a parallel is drawn between the qualities "German" and "solid" on the one hand, and "Russian" and "frivolous" on the other (Gogol 1945,84). This association is already made in the lyrical introduction of the story, which precedes the story of Piskarev. The following passage is illustrative: "... but the old collegiate registrars and titular and aulic councillors mostly sit at home, either because they are married people, or because the German cooks who live in their homes prepare their meals so well" (Gogol 1945,57).

It is obvious here that the qualities "German" and "married" are both associated with spaces other than the Nevskij Prospekt. Thus, whereas the tinsmith's wife has the feature of frivolity only when she is operative in the Nevskij Prospekt, this feature does not play a role as far as she is a German, married woman: it was seen in the above-mentioned example that the two qualities "German" and "married" are associated with solidity.

Thus the German tinsmith's wife figures as a neutral person, or zero-figure. It is, therefore, impossible to say that she enters a completely new semantic field (in Lotman's definition) as soon as she leaves the street and enters the distance which separates her from her home, where she lives in her quality of a solid, German wife.

Summarizing, there are indications that no consistent distinction is made between plotless texts and plot-texts in so far as it can hardly be said that the protagonists are unique figures who shatter the borders of modeled space, represented in the plotless text-parts.

To return to the phenomenon of "omission", distinctive of the analytical-desultory method in Zielinski's definition: the adventures of Piskarev and Pirogov are presented as taking place synchronously. The story of Piskarev is told first. After the report of his death the narrator jumps back to the moment the two friends leave each other. In so far the narrator makes use of the method which was called by Zielinski the reverting method. In a story told

according to this method the narrator simply relates two synchronous series of adventures as if these took place successively, which implies that the element of *showing* in narration is completely abandoned: it is impossible to grasp *with the eye* a past event (Zielinski 1901, 418).

However: when the narrator begins narrating Pirogov's story, he does not completely abandon the analytical-desultory method. In other words: the suggestion of a visual representation of the reported events is, in a way, maintained. The following passage, taken from the description of Piskarev's funeral, is illustrative: "Not even the Lieutenant Pirogov came to see the corpse of the unhappy creature to whom he had extended his great patronage when he was alive. As a matter of fact he had *no time* for such things: *he was busy with an amazing adventure*" (Gogol 1945,76; it. mine, PMW).

In other words: the narrator begins informing the reader that at the time Piskarev's adventures have come to an end, Pirogov's have not yet. By the use of the analytical-desultory method the suggestion is raised that the events described in the story of Pirogov comprise a larger time-span than those in the story of Piskarev. Thus it seems that, although the two series of adventures of Piskarev and Pirogov take place simultaneously at *different* places, a visual representation of the two series of adventures remains nevertheless possible, because the eye seems to "travel" from the place of Piskarev's adventures to that of Pirogov.

The use of the words /I think/ (/kažetsja/) is illustrative of the fact that the narrator does not make an explicit use of the reverting method according to Zielinski's definition in the story of Pirogov. The following example is illustrative in this connection: "*I think* we left Lieutenant Pirogov when he parted with poor Piskarev and followed the blonde" (Gogol 1945,76; it. mine, PMW).

By the words /I think/ (/kažetsja/) the element of "showing" is preserved in the literary presentation, because they indicate the presence of a narrator, who seems to be visualized in this way. By this suggestion of his visibility the narrator differs from the epic singer, who applies what may be called direct deixis: he uses gestures, modulations etc (Rösler 1980, 315). In other words: the Homeric rhapsode "performed" all figures who were operative in the epos, but had no "face of his own", because it was his mere task to convey, in oral form, a story with a plot (*muthos*) which was generally considered to be historical. The element of showing, distinctive of the Homeric epos is absent in modern narration where the procedure of *direct* deixis, used by the epic singer, is replaced by deictic words, intended by the narrator to orient the reader during the reading-process. In the above-mentioned example the preservation of the element of showing manifests itself in the phenomenon that the reverting method (distinctive of modern narration) is, as it were, undermined because the narrator immediately questions the correctness of his statement. Thus it seems that Pirogov's adventures, as far as these precede Piskarev's death, are brushed aside, as a consequence of the use by the narrator of the words "I think" (/kažetsja/). In this way the suggestion is made of the earlier-mentioned phenomenon of "omission".

The expression /kažetsja/ ("seemingly") has a similar function in the description of the pursuit of the prostitute by the painter; see: *"*He hastened with a secret trepidation after the object of his desire, who had made such a strong impression on him, and he was, seemingly, /kažetsja/ amazed about his own impudence*" (Gogol' 1959,15; it. mine, PMW).

In this example it is evident from the fact that the personal and possessive pronouns of the third person are used in combination with the adverb /seemingly/ (which has, in this context, the value of an interjection ("I think")) that in particular the possessive pronoun /his/ is

ambivalent. Thus it refers grammatically to the protagonist, and semantically to the narrator. This ambivalent character manifests itself in the fact that the difference between the narrator (who should properly be indicated by the deictic marker /I/, given the fact that the interjection "I think" is used) and the protagonist is, as it were, neutralized. Consequently, by the use of the expression /I think/ it is indicated that the passage is written in free indirect speech, which implies that it is left undecided whether the protagonist considers *himself* impudent or whether the *narrator* does. In other words: by the use of the interjection /I think/ the voices of both the protagonist and the narrator are audible in this passage, and the element of showing is not completely done away with in the narrative.⁷

That the motif of omission plays a key role in descriptions made after this method is evident from the words of the narrator after the conclusion of the plot-texts. It was observed above that the end of these should be marked by a (temporally determined) event in Zielinski's definition. Such an event indicates that the situation preceding the adventures of the protagonists is on the one hand restored and has changed on the other. The situation is spatially restored (the scene is again replaces to the Nevskij Prospekt), but it has changed temporally. The negative judgement of the street in the epilogue is temporally determined because the scene takes place in the evening and the night, whereas the scene in the lyrical introduction (which is positively judged) takes place mainly during the day.

The narrator's walk in the street in the above-mentioned passage serves as one of those *topoi* which justifies, in Hamon's view, the description of this association of temporal and spatial indicators with qualifications. The movement of the narrator is presented (in accordance with Zielinski's view) as uniform, running parallel to the represented synchronous actions in the plot-texts (the stories of the two protagonists). This synchronous action of the narrator is presented as spatially determined: in the epilogue he is operative in the same *space* as in the lyrical introduction.

Summarizing, because the narrator is operative in the framing parts of the story, it is suggested that he is immobile, that means, that he is a figure, illustrative of plotless texts in Lotman's definition, in the same way as the protagonists, because all of them are evidently unable to shatter the borders of the space in which they move. More specifically, the motif of "forgetting" manifests itself in the narrator's information in the concluding paragraphs: "I always wrap my cloak more firmly about me when I walk on it, and try not to gaze at the objects I meet with" (Gogol 1945,88).

This observation clashes with that, made in the lyrical introduction in which the motif of "vision" stands central. There the words /you'll see/, /you'll meet/, etc. are often used. These words presuppose that the narrator has seen all phenomena on the Nevskij Prospekt, to which he draws the attention of the reader, *himself*. Thus an instance of (conscious) forgetting on the side of the narrator presents itself here.

An illustrative example of the use of epic forgetting as a literary *topos* is given in the description of Pirogov's first confrontation with the German artisans Schiller and Hoffmann. The narrator applies a device there similar to that in book 15 of the "Iliad", 220ff. The description there takes place after a combination of the reverting and the analytical-desultory methods. The use of the *topos* in Hamon's definition manifests itself in the narrator's contention that Pirogov is astonished about the extraordinary grouping of the figures (Gogol 1945,79). This amazement enables the narrator to describe the situation as well as the conversation of the two Germans. In this passage that phenomenon is seen at work which is distinctive of the analytical-desultory method: the represented actions are marked by that

incorrect protraction which are striding along in a uniform movement (Zielinski 1901,416). In fact it is only possible to use the time between Pirogov's entrance and the tinsmith's reaction to it as a *topos* in Hamon's sense, that is, as an opportunity to describe the situation, when that period is protracted, because it is reported that the tinsmith reacts to Pirogov's entrance *immediately*: "I don't want a nose! Cut off my nose! Here it is!" [exclaims Pirogov]. And if it had not been for the sudden appearance of Lieutenant Pirogov, there is no doubt that Hoffmann would have cut off Schiller's nose just like that, because he was already holding his knife in position, as for cutting a sole" (Gogol 1945,80).

In other words: whereas it was observed above that in the passage from the "Iliad" the time required for Iris' expedition to Poseidon is, as it were, compressed in order that it might become acceptable that her action and that of Phoebus Apollo take place simultaneously, the reverse happens in the above-mentioned scene, where the period between the protagonist's entry and the tinsmith's reaction has to be protracted. The word /sudden/ in "the sudden appearance" is illustrative in this connection. It is evident here that the suggestion of the simultaneity of the two events is reserved for the reader, in order that he may grasp the whole of the situation, rather than for the literary figures, because the events are presented as taking place consecutively.

It is a typically Gogolian procedure that a part of a plot-text is detached from its underlying plotless text. Consequently, the plotless text is not subordinate any more to the plot-text; rather are the two considered co-ordinate. For an explanation what is meant the difference between denotative and connotative systems is relevant. It should be kept in mind that the denotation of a sign is that object from reality, either abstract or concrete, to which it refers according to a particular code. A connotation of a sign, however, is that abstract or concrete object in reality to which the sign refers according to a code which is derived from another sign. Thus, for instance, the sign /red/ denotes "red", but connotes, "stop" (Eco 1976,55f.). Furthermore: a language is a typical denotative system, whereas literature is a connotative system (Barthes 1983 (1964,75f.)).

As far as plotless texts and plot-texts are concerned: whereas there exists a relation of denotation between a plotless text and its referents, there is a relation of connotation between a plot-text and a plotless text. What is essential in this connection is that, contrary to a relation of denotation, any relationship of connotation has a potential character. Thus, the word /red/ always denotes "red", but it may *sometimes* connote "stop", depending on the context. In another context it may connote, for instance, "freedom" and, again in another context, "blood", or "murder". Again in another context it may just refer to its denotation "red". It is this potential character of a connotation, which implies that, when speaking about the denotation of a particular sign, one does not automatically deal with one constant connotation as well.

When a connotation of a word would lose its potential character, that means, when a word would not depend on the context in which it occurs, this would mean that its denotation and its connotation are equivalent. In other words: then there would not be a hierarchical, temporally determined, relation between denotations and connotations. Rather would these be operative as two co-ordinate units. For instance: in that case the word-sign /red/ would not *sometimes* connote "stop" and *sometimes* "danger" etc., but it would have *always* all of its connotations simultaneously. Or, the meaning of a word would be split into two sets of co-ordinate *denotations*, the second of which would coincide with its original set of *conno-*

tations. This would imply that the temporally determined relation between denotations and connotations is replaced by a spatially determined relation, exactly because of the fact that denotations and connotations have become equivalent. This spatial determination becomes evident when this equivalence is expressed in the form of a syllogism:

"red is a colour" (1),

"/red/ connotes 'stop'" (2).

In this syllogism the temporal opposition between *different* moments T1, T2, and T3 would have been done away with at all. From this the conclusion would have to be drawn that particular colours *always* connote "stop", which is nonsense.

A parallel can be drawn between the denotation of a word in a language-system and a plotless structure in literature on the one hand and connotations of words and plot-structures on the other. The potential character of a plot structure is illustrative in this connection. It was observed by Lotman that a plot-structure is marked by the presence of a literary figure who crosses the border of a semantic field or plotless structure, taking on its particular character by doing so. The similarity of the literary hero to the connotation of a word in language can, consequently, be explained as follows: two different words, for instance /red/ and /stop/, have, by virtue of their denotations, a particular function in a plotless structure. However, by virtue of their connotations they may have a function similar to that of a literary hero in so far that they may enter another semantic field: that indicating the notion "stop!" This, in fact, is the *denotatum* of the word /stop/, which may, in its turn, have connotations of its own. Consequently the word-sign /red/ "annexes" the denotatum of the sign /stop/ in its quality of one of the connotations of that sign.

In the same way in a literary work a hero may be operative who, having entered a particular plotless structure, meets, after his entrance, a representative illustrative of that plotless structure. Such figures are, in Lotman's view, marked by immobility. The hero may adapt himself to his new environment then to such a degree that he becomes a representative of a plotless structure himself, whereas the person, whom he had met, takes on, in his turn, the function of the hero which manifests itself in the fact that the latter may cross, in his turn, the border of "his" plotless structure. Attention should, in this connection, again be drawn to the Russian *bylina*, in which such an exchange is usual.

As far as the phenomenon is concerned that the function of literary figures can be expressed in terms of denotations and connotations, more attention should be drawn to the role of the doubles in it. The story consists of two halves which run parallel as far as in each of which a pair of opposite figures is operative. (See, in this connection, Waszink 1988, 116f., too.) Thus the pair "Piskarev"/"dark-haired prostitute" is opposed to the pair "Pirogov"/"blonde German woman". In each of these two pairs the motifs "lascivity" and "virtue" is realized. Thus the virtuous Piskarev is opposed to the lascivious prostitute, and the lascivious Pirogov is, in his turn, opposed to the virtuous German woman. The above-mentioned opposition would be neutralized if either the prostitute and the German woman, or Piskarev and Pirogov would change places. Then two similar people (either both virtuous or lascivious) would be placed in a juxtaposition. The essence of the story, however, lies in the fact that the two figures are not opposed to another only; they share many character-traits as well. Thus, Piskarev is presented as a modest, quiet artist who lives for art only, and Pirogov as a bogus lover of arts. However, there hardly is a genuine difference between the two men as far as it is emphasized by the narrator that Piskarev hardly is a *creative* artist.

In her turn the German woman is not virtuous and solid only; reference should again be made to the fact that she is superficial too. The narrator emphasizes that, during Pirogov's pursuit, she behaves, for the moment being, much more like a prostitute than her opposite, the dark-haired ideal of Piskarev.

To express the qualities of the literary figures in terms of denotation and connotation: the artist Piskarev denotes "the virtuous artist Piskarev", but connotes "the bogus art-lover Pirogov". Pirogov, in his turn, denotes "the lascivious Pirogov", but connotes "the artist Piskarev" (who is not a creative artist either). The prostitute denotes "the lascivious prostitute", but she connotes "the solid German woman (with her superficial character-traits)". To conclude: /the German woman/ denotes "the virtuous German housewife", but connotes "the prostitute" (because she shares with her some superficial character-traits).

What is essential is that the "connotations" of each of the literary figures in a plot-text are operative in semantic fields different from those in which the "denotations" of these figures are found.

Returning to the phenomenon that the procedure by which denotations and connotations of words are split into two sets of co-ordinate denotations in the above-mentioned manner: in Gogol's prose plotless texts and plot-texts are often treated as equivalent. This amounts to the fact that, for instance, information given about a particular person in a plotless text reappears in the plot-text as being inherent to that person, although in the specific context of the plot this information does not make sense at all. In the same way in a context which deals explicitly with colours, the connotations of /red/, such as "freedom" or "danger" are senseless. The following passages, in which information, given in the plotless text reappears in the plot-text in the above-mentioned manner, are illustrative in this connection: "And to this type belonged the young man we have described, the painter Piskarev, shy, retiring, but bearing in his soul the sparks of feeling, which were ready to leap into a flame at a propitious moment. He hastened with a secret trepidation after the object of his desire who had made such a strong impression on him..." (Gogol 1945,59/60).

By the juxtaposition of the remarks about the painter's character "shy", "returning") and the information in the plot-text ("he hastened") it is suggested that the sparks of artistic feeling, distinctive of the painter, will burst into a flame even during such a rival activity like pursuing a prostitute.

The same is the case in the portrait of the Lieutenant Pirogov; see: "Pirogov, generally, had a passion for everything elegant... But enough of Pirogov's qualities. Man is such a wonderful being that one can never enumerate all his good qualities and the more deeply you look into him the more new peculiarities you find and their description might be endless. And so Pirogov continued to follow the stranger..." (*idem*, 78; it. mine, PMW).

By the juxtaposition of information from the plotless text and the plot-text it is suggested that Pirogov, "loaded" with all his good qualities as he is, is following the blonde woman.

A last example from the description of the tinsmith Schiller is illustrative too: "Then *this* was the character of the worthy Schiller, who was finally placed in an extremely awkward position" (*idem*, 84; it. mine, PMW).

The word /worthy/ is illustrative in this connection. It is supposed to summarize the information given in the preceding plotless text, and is consequently transported toward a context in which it does not make any sense at all.

Thus it may be concluded that the above-mentioned phenomenon of epic "forgetting" in Zielinski's definition, used as a literary procedure in "The Nevskij Prospekt", is elaborated by Gogo' to such a degree that the essential distinction between denotations and connotations is even made subject to it.

Notes

- ¹ See: "On peut donc dire que la description est plus indispensable que la narration, puisqu'il est plus facile de décrire sans raconter que de raconter sans décrire (peut-être parce que les objets peuvent exister sans mouvement, mais non le mouvement sans objets)" (Genette 1964,57).
- ² "La pose (posture) du spectateur réclame une pause de l'intrigue, l'oubli de l'intrigue un 'oubli' du personnage, la 'perte de vue' une perte du voyeur, l'abandon du mouvement narratif un abandon du personnage qui 's'absorbe' dans le spectacle. A la limite, il devient un 'on' anonyme, et peut n'être représenté métonymiquement que par un 'regard'" (Hamon 1981,190).
- ³ A phonemic transliteration of the Russian names has been used. The translations are, in principle, taken from Gogol 1945. Consequently, the transliteration-method used there has been followed. Sometimes, however, the translation is, in my eyes, not literal enough. In those cases I have given translations of my own. These are marked by an asterisk.
- ⁴ As far as the specific correlation of spatial and temporal mobility is concerned, attention should be paid to the implications of a translation of the representation of an action in the spatial arts to that in a temporally determined art (in Lessing's definition), like literature. In this connection Klee's observations are essential. This painter emphasized that the representation of an action in painting is marked by intensity and spatial limitedness, whereas its background is qualitatively non-intense, and spatially, extensive (*geringe zständliche Intensität und große zständliche Ausdehnung*; P. Klee, *Tagebücher von Paul Klee 1898-1918*. Hrsg. und eingel. von W. Klee. Zürich, Europa Verlag, 239, Nr. 832). From this observation it is evident that temporal immobility (distinctive of the representation of an activity in the Old Russian epos) can be rendered in a painting by spatial limitedness, and spatial mobility by an extensive area of a background. By the same token, the reverse ("a process of temporal development (growth) at one and the same place") should be rendered in a painting by a non-intense, spatially extensive, field against an extremely small background, painted in flaming colours. And indeed, the suggestion of "growth" is extremely suggestive in such a representation in so far as the painting seems to shatter its frame, exactly as a consequence of a process of growing.
- ⁵ It is this feature which effectuates the suggestion that events which are narrated consecutively are really taking place simultaneously. The following passage from Puškin's "Evgenij Onegin" is illustrative in this connection:
 "He (Evgenij, PMW) once again started to read without discernment,
 He read Gibbon, Rousseau,
 Manzoni, Herder, Chamfort,
 Mme de Stael, Bichat, Tissot,
 he read the skeptic Bayle,
 he read the works of Fontenelle,
 he read some of our native authors,
 without rejecting anything —

(Eugene Onegin VIII, 34. In Eugene Onegin. A Novel in Verse by Aleksandr Pushkin. Tr. from the Russian, with a Commentary by Vladimir Nabokov. Princeton University Press, 1975(1964), 301; it. nine, PMW).

The suggestion that all above-mentioned authors are read simultaneously by the protagonist although they are enumerated in consecutive order is made by the fact that, when the words /he read/ are used for the second time, they do not merely refer to the object of the reading-process at that moment ("the skeptic Bayle"), but rather anaphorically, to the same words when they are used for the first time as well. This implies that they also refer to the object of the reading-process in that context ("Manzoni, Herder, Chamfort, Mme de Stael, Bichat and Tissot"). In their turn, the words /he used/, when used for the third time, refer anaphorically to the object mentioned in their own and the preceding context ("Fontenelle" and "Bayle").

- 6 "L'autre n'existe là, problématique, qu'en une recherche toujours reprise, toujours déçue. Son mode est donc le vocatif" (Paris 1965, 113).
- 7 Attention should be paid to the non-communicative character of indirect speech as a consequence of which it seems that in a text in which it is used man speaks to himself only (V.N. Vološinov, Marksizm i filosofija jazyka. The Hague (etc.), Mouton, 1973 (1930), 145). In other words: in the case of indirect speech it is suggested that there is no difference between the space-time continuum of the narrator and that of the literary figures. Thus an explanation can be given of the fact that an author who uses this style-figure seems to air his own ideas rather than to represent those of his heroes. Flaubert's novel *Madame Bovary* is illustrative in this connection in so far as the author, by his use of free indirect speech, left undecided whether he rendered his own thoughts or those of Anna Bovary. A law-suit resulted in which the author was accused of airing "immoral ideas" (see H.R. Jauss, *Literaturgeschichte als Provokation*. Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkamp, 1973, 203ff.).

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(The original publication dates are added in brackets.)

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