

## **Biotext: Deleuze and Bakhtin**

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### **Abstract**

This article revolves around J. S. Anand's *theory of biotext*, theorized as the virtual Third Space which encompasses author, text, and context. It brings together the theoretical notions of Anand (India), Deleuze (France), and Bakhtin (Russia) on a comparative scale, hence a cross-cultural phenomenon. It is argued that biotext is the meeting point between Bakhtin's dialogism and Deleuze's temporal synthesis. Bakhtin defines man in terms of language which is inherently dialogic; hence for him identity is defined in self-other relation. Deleuze bases self-other relation on temporal syntheses and presents it in a constant flux. What interlinks Bakhtin to Deleuze is Bakhtin's view that language is inevitably context-oriented; context, for Deleuze, is a synthetic process which happens in temporal scheme. A process of being thought together, synthesis is argued to be dialogic. Biotext is the Deleuzian virtual realm which crystallizes the dialogic relation between language and context, and is therefore synthetic. Any dialogism for Bakhtin is unavoidably ideological, hence politically partial. It is argued that unlike Bhabhalian Third Space which is dehistoricized and depoliticizing, Anand's biotext conforms, albeit temporarily, to an ideological stance, either of the text, of the author, or of the allegiance provoked by the reader/author's context.

**Key words:** Bakhtin, Deleuze, Anand, biotext, text

### **Introduction**

History of literary criticism is marked with oscillations between the triad elements: text, context, and author/reader. Each critical approach has inevitably emerged out of prioritizing one or two elements and marginalizing the other(s). This has given the literary perspective some merits as well as delimitations. While the approach has opened up new horizons on different dimensions of each one of the concerned elements, it has also limited its scope by ignoring or

missing out some other facets. Addressing all such limitations, J. S. Anand proposes his notion of biotext which is inclusive of all elements involved in the processes of producing and appreciating a literary work. His theory of biotext involves text, context, author/reader giving each element its due concern. Biotext owes this huge potential to its virtuality; Anand relies for the virtuality of his biotext on Deleuze, the postmodern philosopher. For Anand, biotext is a virtual realm which encompasses multiple different possibilities and syntheses. And therefore, each text and each reading is only one of these possibilities actualized due to the existing conditions. Each actualized text (written or read) has itself a virtual side which renders it impervious to multiple other differentiations and possibilities. Therefore, each text is a site of power struggle among different possibilities and is hence asymmetrical.

Text itself is not an independent entity as it evolves out of interrelationships between author/reader and context. Text is the product of contextual demands and author's/reader's responses. Taking these points into consideration, Anand draws on the Deleuzian time notion which is based on the three passive syntheses of past, present, and future. Biotext is similarly argued to have grown out of the three passive syntheses of context (past), author/reader (present), and text (future). While Deleuze's time notion is less concerned with the politico-historical aspects of the event, biotext is highly political and historicizing. The present paper deals with this aspect of biotext and shows how it conforms to some hailing discourses and countersigns some others. The Deleuzian asymmetrical relations in the time notion seem to be apolitical as they are determined by the degree and speed of synthesis; yet biotext could be nothing other than political since it is actualized based on the degree and power of discourses. For this aspect of Anand's notion, this study relies on Bakhtin and his definition of language (discourse) and man. It is argued that biotext is a synthesis in a Deleuzian key tone and each synthesis is dialogic in a Bakhtinian terminology. This argument necessitates theoretical elaboration of both Bakhtin and Deleuze. Then the paper synthesizes these theories in the body of biotext. Giving biotext a discursive and thereby ideological base, this paper takes biotext as the Third Space where all the codes of text, context, author/reader are mobilized but with an ideological tilt. Thus unlike its Bhabhalian counterpart, biotext is highly politicized and historicized.

### **Deleuze: Synthesis**

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Anand takes biotext as the virtual Third Space which synthesizes author, text and context. Paralleled on a Deleuzian time-scheme, author can stand for the present, context for the past, and text for the future (Farsi 2013, 186). The focal point in this model is the idea of synthesis which is highlighted as the interlinkage between Bakhtin and Deleuze, despite their theoretical diversities. In Lampert's words, synthesis is a process of "being thought together" (2006, 17). Deleuze contends in each synthesis of time the other two elements are retained and contemplated. Thus in the synthesis of the present, the past and the future are retained as its dimensions; in the synthesis of the past, the present and the future are retained just as the past and the present are contracted as dimensions in the synthesis of the future. What this implies is the unavoidable co-existence of all three elements as well as their mutual interdependence. Applied to Anand's biotext, this implies nothing other than the unavoidable co-presence of all elements of the triad while no single element is eradicated. Envisaged as such, biotext counter-argues all reductive interpretations that silence one voice for the sake of some other.

Furthermore, the asymmetrical relations between the triad in each synthesis render the synthesis a site of power struggle over the other two retained dimensions. Just as for Deleuze, time is defined in terms of three passive syntheses, for Anand also biotext arises out of the passive syntheses of its triad of author, context, and text. The passiveness of synthesis, as discussed by Farsi, renders time for Deleuze and biotext for Anand dynamic, protean and the locus of becoming, hence multiplicity. Synthesis is passive because it is immanent and immanence, for Jay Lampert, "implies that as soon as there is something then there is everything. As soon as there is anything, there has been a contraction that has folded a multiplicity into a singular presence" (2006, 17); put in other words, it contracts without the interference of any deciding or active consciousness. Lampert accounts for passivity as being "an internal relation rather than a succession of points awaiting action" (2006, 17). In Deleuze's own words, a synthesis is passive as it is "not carried out by the mind but occurs *in* the mind" (qtd. in Hughes 2002, 11). The passiveness of biotext thus modeled makes it immanent and hence multiple. As Farsi shows in her article, this justifies the many interpretations of the processes of reading as well as writing. What is more, the virtuality of biotext implies that multiple other interpretations are still there which have not yet found the way to get possible or actualized.

Time for Deleuze and biotext for Anand both owe their dynamism to their virtual state. Specifically, in Deleuze's time-scheme, the synthesis of the past termed as pure memory is virtual. This in itself cherishes its own implications and rewards for Anand's biotext which has been discussed at length by Farsi (2013). Generally, however, Deleuze believes in the distinction between the actual (possible) and the virtual and contends that the real comprises both. Put in simpler register, to any actual entity there is a virtual side which remains awaiting the requisite conditions to get actualized. For Deleuze, the virtual is "the transcendental condition of possibility of all empirical, individual entities" (qtd. in Bogue 2010, 21). Such a transcendental condition can, in Bogue's analysis, be actualized based on three models. Deleuze borrows the first model, called individuation, from Gilbert Simondon, the philosopher. Simondon, who draws upon the chemical formation of crystals, believes in the precedence of the process of individuation. For him, the emergence of individual crystals is the end result of the process of individuation, not the explanatory cause of the process. Simondon opines the chemical solution is in a metastable state, "a state in which energy is unevenly distributed and available for metamorphic activity" (Bogue 2010, 22). For Simondon, a metastable state is characterized by multiplicity as it constitutes "a 'more-than-one', a being beyond that of the individual, an excess of being capable of multiple differentiation" (Bogue 2010, 22). Accordingly, Deleuze views the virtual as the metastable site which renders the actual potential of multiple other possibilities. The points that motivate us to interlink Deleuze and Bakhtin lie in Simondon's belief in the "interactive complex of self-forming matter-in-formation" (Bogue 2010, 22) and the negotiation of power which makes all individuated entities "the products of hierarchically sustained systems of metastable entities engaged in a perpetual co-structuring process of open-ended individuation" (Bogue 2010, 22-23).

A second model that Deleuze deploys in characterizing metastable sites is that of "singular points", or "singularities". Every parabola has a singular point which is the focal or central point with respect to which the other regular points are organized. In each parabola, the change of the shape and the regular points is possible; yet the singular point remains always at the center and is thus the virtual site for the actualization of multiple parabolas. The position of the singular point cannot be known before it is actualized in a given situation. The singular point, in Bogue's words, resembles "a metastable locus of incipient individuation" (2010, 23).

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The third model is that of a line of continuous variation. In Simondon's terminology, the liminal gate that constantly opens and closes in order to control the flow of electrons from one terminal to another in a triode tube is the virtual zone that constitutes a continuous molding or modulation (Bogue 2010, 23). Likewise, for Deleuze the line of continuous variation remains immanent within each actualized or individuated entity and thus marks it with potential multiplicity. Based on these three models, Deleuze votes for the virtual and immanent side of/to every actualized entity. However, what is of interest to this paper is Deleuze's belief that the virtual is characterized as "a plane of consistency" which runs against the "plane of organization" of the actual. As Aldea defines, a plane of consistency is "nothing but thought cutting through the virtual, 'capturing' a slice of it" (2011, 23). Capturing a slice of the virtual is nothing other than "becoming" and becoming is the other node that draws rapprochement between Deleuze and Bakhtin. For Deleuze and Guattari, the plane of consistency is a plane "upon which things are distinguished from one another only by speed and slowness" (qtd. in Bogue 2010, 25; Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 254) and by their corresponding "degree of power" (Bogue 2010, 26; Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 256). A degree of power, as elaborated by Bogue, "is determined by an entity's affects – its power of affecting and being affected – and 'Affects are becomings'" (Bogue 2010, 26; Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 256). Viewed in this light, becoming is the process that happens and is guided by the asymmetrical power relations, determined in a given condition, between elements. However, the resultant individual that appears after becoming is not fixed and unchangeable as it potentially and immanently contracts in itself multiple other possibilities which can get actualized as soon as conditions disturb the dominant power relations. What Anand achieves by his synthetic, processual and contractual vision of the virtual biotext is its indeterminacy which renders each actual element – be it author, reader, text, or context – impervious to continuous variation. The present paper reconsiders all these Deleuzian notions through a Bakhtinian lens and thereby sheds new lights on Anand's biotext.

### **Bakhtin: Dialogism**

Both Bakhtin and Deleuze have been influenced by the philosophical contributions of Bergson. While Deleuze focuses mainly on time and argues for its precariousness and thereby renders context or situation protean, Bakhtin and Bakhtin Circle concern themselves with space

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and pin man down through language in his context. They try to carve out a radically new view of language and intertextuality both in literature and everyday life. What lies at the core of their revolutionary view is Bakhtin's phenomenology of consciousness which evolves out of the inevitable self-other relation. Human consciousness, for Bakhtin, "is not a unified whole, but always exists in a tensile, conflict-ridden relationship with other consciousnesses, in a constant alterity between self and other" (Gardiner 1992, 28). What this implies is that there is no self without other; self can define itself only with respect to other. In Holquist's words, for Bakhtin "the capacity to have consciousness is based on otherness . . . consciousness is otherness" (2002, 17).

In a way, one could say Bakhtin anticipates Lacan; yet contradistinction with/to Bakhtin, Lacan engages himself with man's unconsciousness and nullifies any control over his multiple selves. For Bakhtin, man can still have a voice in forming his own consciousness, hence Bakhtin's I is not as fragmented as its postmodern Lacanian counterpart. For Bakhtin, self is dialogic, a differential relation with another. The requisite discursive interaction with another I implies death of self in its loss.

In Bakhtin's own words, "To be means to communicate. Absolute death (non-being) is the state of being unheard, unrecognized" (1984, 287; Gardiner 1992, 28). This notion of consciousness sets the bedrock on which Bakhtin introduces and accentuates dialogism. "Dialogism argues that all meaning is relative in the sense that it comes only as a result of the relation between two bodies occupying simultaneous but different space" (Holquist 2002, 19). According to this observation, self-other relation is a relation of simultaneity. In Holquist's analysis, "simultaneity deals with ratios of same and difference in space and time", hence Bakhtin's stress on space/time (Holquist 2002, 18). Unlike Deleuze, Bakhtin does not delve into the details and conditions of simultaneity and takes this just for granted as happening concurrently but in different ratios. For Deleuze, however, simultaneity is essential to his time syntheses, according them a virtual side.

A fully self-sufficient consciousness can emerge only out of a dialogic relation with other(s), hence Bakhtin's view "To be means to communicate dialogically. . . . A single voice

ends nothing and resolves nothing. Two voices is {Sic} the minimum for life, the minimum for existence” (1984, 252; Gardiner 1992, 25). As rightly put by Gardiner,

Every aspect of consciousness and every signifying practice a subject engages in is . . . constituted dialogically, through the ebb and flow of a multitude of continuous and inherently responsive communicative acts . . . the dialogic word is locked into an intense relationship with the word of another. (1992, 28)

A counterforce to Stalinist dogmatism, Mikhail Bakhtin evokes dialogism which detotalizes the dictatorial monopoly. He condemns monologism, as it “denies the existence outside itself of another consciousness with equal rights and equal responsibilities. . . . With a monologic approach . . . *another person* remains wholly and merely an *object* of consciousness, and not another consciousness” (1984, 292-3). Unlike monologism which sanitizes and legitimates the dominance of a single voice, dialogism arises dynamically out of interactions between two or more voices. Bakhtin’s stress on voice means the word cannot exist, and does not mean, *per se*; it is always addressed to someone and is accompanied by the keen anticipation of another person’s response. As Gardiner further explicates, the dialogic word is not “a passive vehicle of neutral description or information: because it is designed to provoke a response, to initiate dialogue. . . . This is what Bakhtin means when he refers to the dialogic utterance as being ‘doubled-voiced’, ‘vari-directional’, and ‘multiaccented’” (Gardiner 1992, 29).

Bakhtin sees an intimate relation between self and language, as both, in Holquist’s words, “exist in order to mean” (2002, 22). The process of making meaning, signification, characterizes all language; hence all language is dialogic and monologism is nothing other than manipulating this relation and subordinating or silencing other voices to one authoritarian voice. The immediate aftermath of Bakhtinian dialogism is rendering language dynamic, multiple, and protean. In the same vein, self is a multiple phenomenon of essentially three elements. Holquist aptly refers to these elements as “a center, a not-center, and the relation between the two. A relation involves the construction of ratios” (2002, 28). What interlinks Bakhtin to Deleuze is his emphasis that a relation is never static, but always in the process of being made and unmade, that is, the same Deleuzian process of becoming. Furthermore, the fact that relation is

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differential, involving differences in ratios reminds one of Deleuze's view on asymmetrical relations between the syntheses and their dimensions, rendering them sites of power struggle.

Bakhtin and company define identity in the same dialogic terms and trace the roots of the conscious subject deep into its social context. In Holquist's apt words, "Dialogism is an exercise in social theory" (2002, 36). "Dialogism is based on the primacy of the social, and the assumption that a meaning is achieved by struggle" (Holquist 2002, 37). Comparing Bakhtin's dialogism to Einstein's Relativity Theory, Holquist argues, "dialogism's master assumption is that there is no figure without a ground" (2002, 20). The ground of which Holquist speaks is the contextual domain in which the figure or the subject is situated. "The other is always perceived in terms that are specified socially and historically. Dialogism's primary thrust is always in the direction of historical and social specificity" (Holquist 2002, 31).

The same point is stressed by another member of Bakhtin Circle. As elucidated by Voloshinov, "Individual consciousness is not the architect of the ideological superstructure, but only a tenant lodging in the social edifice of ideological signs" (1973, 13; Gardiner 1992, 87). For Voloshinov, utterance, as the basic unit of the "concrete reality of language" (1973, 93; Edgar and Sedgwick 2008, 373), is dialogic and social. In his *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, Voloshinov contends the social character of utterance overlaps with its dialogic characteristic. He carries out this argument by explaining the addressivity of utterance; for him any utterance is inevitably addressed and the addressee need not be an actual person. Rather the addressee could be in the form of a "representative" of a particular social group (Edgar and Sedgwick 2008, 374). According to the feature of addressivity, the utterance is a "product of the reciprocal relationship between" addressee and addresser, hence dialogic. Gardiner aptly calls Voloshinov's insistence on the social feature of utterance as the "thesis of contextualism – i.e., that our talk has an extra discursive referent, and that communication as such is unintelligible without grasping the character of this non-linguistic referent or context" (qtd. in Gardiner 1992, 87). Holquist clarifies Bakhtin's view of addressivity in a more general perspective; he contends, "The world addresses us and we are alive and human to the degree that we are answerable, i.e., to the degree that we can respond to addressivity" (2002, 28).



Despite their partial concession to Saussure's concept of *langue*, the Bakhtin Circle argues for polarization, and elemental contradiction, of *langue* and *parole*. They contend that each particular utterance has its own historicity and a specific concrete social space and is therefore unrepeatable unlike *langue* which is repeatable and reproducible. This spatio-temporal specificity singles out *parole* as each particular utterance emerges out of its dialogism with the relevant context. In this light, the utterance is no longer linguistic but becomes discursive since it is formed in response to the demands of the immediate situation and the requirements of wider socio-historical circumstances. Bakhtin aptly contends:

When we seek to understand a word, what matters is not the direct meaning the word gives to objects and emotions – this is the false front of the word; what matters is rather the actual and always self-interested *use* to which this meaning is put and the way it is expressed by the speaker, a use determined by the speaker's position . . . and by the concrete situation. *Who* speaks and under what conditions he speaks: this is what determines the word's actual meaning. (1981, 401; qtd. in Gardiner 1992, 88)

The implications of this approach are not only the dialogic nature of any discourse but also the discursive nature of any single word. Avoiding the pitfalls of reductive contextualism, Bakhtin restores dynamism and multiplicity to words and thereby language by what Julia Kristeva calls “thesis of intertextuality”. Andrew Edgar and Peter Sedgwick clarify that for Voloshinov and Bakhtin Circle, each utterance is “an element in an ongoing dialogue – or a ‘moment’ in a ‘continuous process of verbal communication’ – and that, consequently, each responds to a previous utterance or utterances and, also, is shaped by the utterer's anticipation of potential responses and objections to what she might utter” (2008, 373-374). Responding to a previous utterance while anticipating a future one reminds us of Deleuze's synthesis of the present which likewise retains the past and simultaneously anticipates the future. This resemblance brings about rapprochements between Bakhtin and Deleuze in the notion of intertextuality. Intertextuality denounces the originality of any word/text and instead posits the mutual interrelationship and interdependence of words/texts. The dialogism that each word/text sets up with the preceding and/or proceeding ones renders words/texts polysemic and dynamic.

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Anand's biotext is the playground where texts are intertextualized and/or synthesized – in a Deleuzian key tone.

Accordingly, a literary text is polyphonic and multivoiced not only because the author dialogizes with the characters in the text but also the text itself arises out of the author's dialogic interaction with his/her socio-historical context. On the level of reception also, the reader dialogizes with the characters within the text, with the implied author, as well as with the shared context of the utterance. As Voloshinov posits, besides a verbalized context, there exists an un verbalized context assumed by the addresser and the addressee (Clarke and Holquist 1984, 204; Edgar and Sedgwick 2008, 374). As the author's response to the demands of his/her situation, the text is woven out of the multiple negotiations held between them just as it is received based on the many negotiations which are held between the text and the audience. This accounts for the text's polyvocality as well as its interdiscursivity on both levels of reception and creation.

### **Bakhtin and Deleuze**

Viewing Deleuze through a Bakhtinian lens leads to some interesting insights. However, it would be pertinent to first refer to points of difference between Bakhtin and Deleuze. This distinction would set up the framework in which Anand's biotext is to be discussed. While Bakhtin and company mainly deal with human being, human consciousness, Deleuze steps beyond the human sphere and attends to the notion of time, thinking, language, and synthesis on both animate and inanimate scales. This is the point that Williams aptly raises to defend accusations made against Deleuze's work on thought for being too humanistic, almost romantically so. In Williams's explanation, "Thought could never be human thought, or the brain a human brain, if by this we mean something contained in a human body, or associated with human consciousness, souls and values. Animals, plants, people are all implicated in thought and are thinkers, in the same way as all events are linguistic" (2008, 194). This difference between Deleuze and Bakhtin, however, does not nullify the argument that Deleuzian synthesis is dialogic. Dialogism, as basically an interactive and reactive relation, is inherent to Deleuzian notions of time, thought and language. This dialogism is well implied in Williams's clarification of Deleuze's theory of thought. Williams explicates,

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thought is the description of the operation of ubiquitous processes explaining and standing as a condition for novelty. Thought is not a capacity solely embodied in things for which thought is possible. . . . It is a process changing the relations between different layers of series in a creative manner that responds and initiates events running forward and back through those series (2008, 194).

This paper argues that in so far as thought, time, and language are discussed in relation to human and human (un)consciousness, it is dialogical in a Bakhtinian key note, that is, pregnant with discursive and ideological implications. Since biotext is basically a human concern, this study restricts its scope to human aspects.

Deleuze's time notion as synthetic, contractual, and processual implies the very dialogical base of time. He takes time as three passive syntheses, each one of which "retains" the other two as its dimensions. Retention denotatively means keeping other(s) in itself instead of discarding it/them. Accordingly, time scheme could be nothing other than dialogical; in a Bakhtinian key tone, for Deleuze time emerges out of dialogism between the triad of present, past, and future. Dialogism is *raison d'être* of the sense of simultaneity which lies at the core of Deleuze's time notion. What motivates us to give a dialogical base to Deleuzian time philosophy is when Williams informs that Deleuze "sets his account of the syntheses of time within a defence of 'repetition for itself'" (2011, 22).

When Williams introduces Deleuze's paradox that "there is no repetition until a connection [namely, a difference] has been drawn between two things" (2011, 22), he is actually speaking of Bakhtinian dialogism which is essential to the notion of repetition, itself the basis of syntheses of time. The connection between two repeated things is a contraction, hence processual and synthetic. Yet the outcome of this dialogical contraction is not similarity but difference. In Deleuze's philosophy of time, the living present is the bedrock on which past and future are set up. Time unfolds because past and future events meet in it. In the living present, the past is retained just as the future is anticipated; hence past and future stand as dimensions to the living

present. The retention of the past and anticipation of the future implies the interdependence of the triad elements upon one another: “retention leads into and feeds on anticipation; anticipation rests on and drives off from retention” (Williams, 2011, 26). Likewise, in the synthesis of the past, the present and the future are retained just as in the third synthesis, the present and the past are contracted.

Bakhtin’s dialogism somehow sounds the same especially his view of the intertextuality of word/text. For Bakhtin, word/text develops out of its difference from the preceding words/texts (the past) and from the anticipated ones (the future). In a Deleuzian terminology, in intertextuality, text/word retains and contracts the existing and/or previous words/texts and anticipates the future ones. This implies the synthetic structure of dialogue. Moreover, Bakhtin’s own words on intertextuality reveal his resemblances to Deleuzian time notion. He writes:

there is neither a first word nor a last word. The contexts of dialogue are without limit. They extend into the deepest past and the most distant future. Even meanings born in the dialogues of the remotest past will never be fully grasped once and for all, for they will always be renewed in later dialogue. At any present moment of the dialogue there are great masses of forgotten meanings but these will be recalled again at a given moment in the dialogue’s later course when it will be given new life. For nothing is absolutely dead: every meaning will someday have its homecoming festival. (1981, 37)

This long quotation has many Deleuzian hints which deserve to be elaborated at length. Bakhtin talks of “The contexts of dialogue”; what he means by the plural form of “context” is the protean nature of context itself which changes constantly in different spatio-temporal situations or when approached from different perspectives, hence these contexts “extend into deepest past and the most distant future”. Bakhtin’s idea that these contexts will be renewed in later dialogue implies Deleuzian argument about the virtuality of the real, encompassing a wide variety of possibilities waiting for proper conditions. This point is further accentuated in the succeeding sentence: “At any present moment of the dialogue there are great masses of forgotten meanings

but these will be recalled again at a given moment in the dialogue's later course when it will be given new life". What these words imply is nothing other than the simultaneity of all pure past within the living present and the virtuality of the past which embraces everything, albeit forgotten. For Bakhtin, just as it is for Deleuze, nothing is dead: "every meaning will someday have its homecoming festival".

What lies at the core of this dialogic process is the asymmetry between the major synthesis and its dimensions. While the past stands for the retained particular, the future represents the expected general; and in process time scheme, any set of particulars determines and leads to multiple sets of generalities; this, however, cannot be conversed as no sets of the general can result in any set of particularities. This indicates the asymmetry between the retained past and the anticipated future. Without this asymmetry, there would be no synthesis and thereby no time.

By the same token, in Bakhtin's notion of dialogism the very existence of asymmetry is the engine which propels negotiation onwards. Put in another register, one voice dialogizes with other(s) in order to contest the ruling asymmetrical power relations. Without this asymmetry, there would occur no dialogue between words, texts, and discourses. Therefore, dialogue for Bakhtin is a site of power struggle just as for Deleuze each passive synthesis is the site of struggle over the other two elements of the triad. This paper takes such a similarity as the challenge-orientation of both Deleuzian synthesis and Bakhtinian dialogism. Out of this challenge base not only emerges difference but it also ideologizes the relationship.

Bakhtin reveals the dialogic base of man's language and linguistic interaction which anchors him down to his situation, while for him time as a pillar of situation is supposed to be linear; Deleuze, however, revolutionizes this notion and represents time as ever changing, protean and synthetic. According his time philosophy a dialogic dimension draws rapprochement between Bakhtin and Deleuze which is best crystallized in Anand's biotext. More than unifying two contradictory theorists, biotext benefits from its eclectic approach.

## **Biotext**

Like Bakhtin, Anand mainly deals with literary texts since these texts treat language as dialogic. Thus his biotext mostly applies to this type of text, although on a more general scale biotext could be revealing when applied to other texts as well.

In Holquist's words, Bakhtin takes literary works as utterances, "words that cannot be divorced from particular subjects in specific situations" (2002, 66). What such a definition implies is the inevitable interdependence of the three elements in the triangle of text, author, and context. This interdependence is highlighted in Holquist's clarifications when he writes, "Literary texts, like other kinds of utterance, depend not only on the activity of the author, but also on the place they hold in the social and historical forces at work when the text is produced and when it is consumed" (2002, 66).

Words in literary texts are active elements in a dialogic exchange taking part on several different levels between the author and his/her context when they are produced, and the reader and his/her context when they are appreciated. Therefore, literary texts are marked with an overriding feature of simultaneity.

As elaborated by Holquist, 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" (2002, 67).

What makes Bakhtinian simultaneity resemble Deleuzian discourse is his notion of heteroglossia of which simultaneity is a particular instance. Heteroglossia, in Holquist's words, is a "situation, the situation of a subject surrounded by the myriad responses he or she might make at any particular point, but any one of which must be formed in a specific discourse selected from the teeming thousands available" (2002, 67).

Heteroglossia as such is Deleuzian in that like his time notion it is virtual, a virtual situation abound by the myriad responses the subject may make at any particular point, hence multiplicity and plurality as its inherent features. Moreover, "at any particular point" reminds us

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of the singular point Deleuze speaks of in a parabola. Thus the subject makes a response, but his/her response is highly reliant on the demands and givens of the situation in which s/he finds himself compelled to react.

In a Deleuzian key tone, heteroglossia is a processual situation, the virtuality of which accounts for a wide variety of responses the subject might make. This situation is rightly processual as it sets in process the subject's possible response. Furthermore, the virtuality of heteroglossia renders any particular response protean as any response is an actualized form of several other responses that have not yet found the proper conditions to get realized. This justifies the differences in responses not only made by different subjects in the same situation but also by the same subject in different situations. This is the point that Holquist raises when he writes on heteroglossia and its relation to dialogism. He explicates:

Dialogism assumes that at any given time, in any given place, there is a set of powerful but highly unstable conditions at work that will give a word uttered then and there a meaning that is different from it would be at other times and in other places. . . . All utterances are heteroglot in that they are shaped by forces whose particularity and variety are particularly beyond systematization. (2002, 67)

Being beyond systematization is the same as being virtual as the virtual is marked with "unstable conditions", hence protean. Texts are spaces which emerge out of the mutual struggle between centrifugal and centripetal forces, giving structure to their simultaneity. Literary texts give the most possible space to this struggle. One of Anand's justifications for viewing biotext as a Third Space is this Bakhtinian notion about texts as spaces where dialogism and/or simultaneity of forces occur.

Like Bakhtin, Anand approaches literary texts as a form of communication, hence dialogic and/or heteroglot. Anand's theory of biotext synthesizes and develops out of interlinks between Bakhtin and Deleuze. In this notion, the writer dialogizes with and synthesizes his/her context and thereby negotiates his/her (con)text and the result of this interaction is the text; the

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resultant text is not something fixed since as an actual entity it has a virtual side which renders it open to many other possible interactions with its author, its context, its reader, and its reader's context. In the synthesis of context, author and text as its dimensions are dialogized and the outcome is the response and/or reaction of the author crystallized in the form of the text. The potential to set up dialogues with many other factors makes the text multiple and processual. The syntheses of context both in author's and text's dialogisms open new perspectives on different dimensions of the context hitherto unknown, ignored, or silenced.

When the reader approaches the text, s/he experiences a dialogue with the text, and its dimensions which are the author and its context. In this light, the reader's interpretations are both interpretations and misinterpretations; they are interpretations because they emerge out of his/her dialogues with text, author, author's context, and his/her own context and simultaneously each interpretation is a misinterpretation because of its reductionism; in each interpretation the reader unavoidably reduces his/her dialogisms to one aspect and hence misinterpretation. The same Deleuzian approach applies to the writer's act of writing which is unavoidably reductive in having to actualize a specific text and ignore multiple other ways of textualization.

Anand's biotext encompasses all these possibilities while in a Bakhtinian key tone it retains a relative sense of unity for the subjectivity of author/reader and the particularity of his/her text. This relative autonomy is due to the freedom that Bakhtin and his Circle secure for man, contra responsive to Lacan, Foucault, and Deleuze who reduce man to a mere concept. Voloshinov in particular accentuates the subject's relative biological and biographical unity; thus the Circle do subscribe to something called "human nature" which is "not a fixed and static 'essence', but an historically-mutable and socially-embedded complex of qualities, capacities and powers" (Gardiner 1992, 74-75). While as rightly put by Gardiner, for poststructuralists like Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari "the subject is an infinitely malleable and contingent constellation of forces, a temporary nodal point in the endless flux of discourses and signifying processes" (75). In Bakhtin's own words, "man is free, and can therefore violate any regulating norms that can be thrust upon him" (1984, 59; Gardiner 1992, 76). This view accords a relative sense of resisting power to man; hence Bakhtin prescribes, "the better a person understands the

degree to which he is externally determined [. . .] the closer to home he comes to understanding and exercising his real freedom” (1986, 139; Gardiner 1992, 75).

The asymmetry that propels Deleuze’s synthetic time scheme and stands essential to Bakhtin’s dialogism proves vital to Anand’s biotext as well. Just as in Deleuze’s philosophy of time in each synthesis the other two elements are retained and contracted as dimensions to the main synthesis, in biotext also, as discussed by Farsi (2013), each synthesis sets up asymmetrical relations between the major synthesis and the other two contracted dimensions.

In a Bakhtinian tone, each element of the triad dialogizes the other two dimensions due to the asymmetrical power relations. The result of this dialogism is the centrality and dominance of one voice over the others; yet this monopoly is tensile and negotiated as soon as it maneuvers its authoritative dominance. The result of author’s dialogism with context is crystallized in the body of text; while text itself undermines the authorial voice as it dialogizes the author and the context. Bakhtin aptly refers to the dialogic relation between author and characters in the novel exemplified in Dostoevsky’s “polyphonic novels”. “The crux of this polyphony,” in Gardiner’s explanation, “is the suggestion that Dostoevsky’s novels contain a plurality of unmerged consciousnesses, a mixture of ‘valid voices’ which are not completely subordinated to authorial intentions or the heavy hand of the omniscient authorial voice/narrational voice” (1992, 24).

Yet this dialogism is not a dyad relation restricted only to author and text since context interferes in the synthesis as characters in the novel are, in Bakhtin’s own words, “*not only objects of authorial discourse but also subjects of their own signifying discourse*” (1984, 6-7; qtd. in Gardiner 1992, 24). Context interferes in the author’s characterization in the form of the signifying discourses from which each character emerges.

Text has a Janus face since, on the one hand, it stands as the context’s demands on the part of the author and, on the other hand, it claims to realize the reaction of the author to the requirements of the context and its signifying discourses. In either case, the relation is an interactive (synthetic and/or dialogic) one with the difference that in the former, context claims authority over the voice of the author whereas in the latter the author stands in a position of

power with respect to the context. This dualism renders the text open to both author-oriented and context-based interpretations, each one of which cherishes its own merits while suffering delimitations. The same happens to the dialogue the reader holds with text; the reader's response is, on the one side, the immediate outcome of his/her contextual demands; and on the other debt, it concretizes his/her reactions to the impelling forces of the context. It is in the reader's attempts to interpret the text that the context of the reader synthesizes or dialogizes the context of the author. The outcome of this interaction encompasses many interpretations which can simultaneously be misinterpretations. This reminds us of Roland Barthes's argument that every reading is a misreading as well. What is of significance in these reactions is the fluidity and dynamism of either element of the triad which make each synthesis a site of power struggle over the monopoly of the synthesizing element. This accentuates the necessity of asymmetrical power relations which render all syntheses dynamic.

Although many have focused on the intercontextual interactions between author and reader, Barthes shows it to be intertextual as well. According to the reader the authority of writer, the reader writes or rewrites the text as s/he reads it. The outcome would be the reader's text which is one interpretation of author's text. Hence the reader's text synthesizes the author's text and this synthesis crystallizes the negotiation of the reader's voice with the author's. The reader's text is the outcome of his/her dialogism with the author's text in all its dimensions. Accordingly, not only is the authorial voice negotiated by the dialogues s/he holds with his/her characters in the text, but also by interactions the reader sets up in the process of reading and thereby rewriting the text.

The virtuality of biotext accords it a map-like form with multiple enterways and exits. This accounts for all these dialogisms and validates each individuation while opening it up to multiple variations. As the Third Space which, in a Bhabhalian key tone, mobilizes the codes of each element, biotext is the realm of empowering and disempowering *ad infinitum*. However, what distinguishes biotextual Third Space from its postcolonial counterpart is the politico-historical setting in which biotext occurs but Bhabha denies to his Third Space. Biotext is a no-man's land creating a dynamic that brings differing authorial, textual, and contextual codes into confluence to reinforce and re-create new realms of interaction and synthesis.

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