

Liminality and the Liminal Theory of Conceptualizing Time and Space in 20th century Eschatological Anti-utopia.

According to V. Nabokov's Novels *'Invitation to a Beheading,'* and *'Bend Sinister'*.

*** Theory of Liminality**

The author of the term and concept 'liminality' is Arnold van Gennep. In his work *'Rites de passage'* (1902) he not only gave a theoretical definition of the significance of liminality, but demonstrated in practice its coordinating role in the process of seasonal changes, on the one hand, and in the course of change of the individual life style, on the other. Rites de passage, in Gennep's view is an indispensable attribute of any type of change (change in place, country or social status, change in age, etc.), showing the dichotomy that exists between 'hardened' and 'changeable' structures. He believes that each process of movement or transitivity is characterized by three phases: 1. Separation, 2. Marginality or Liminality, 3. Union or incorporation. The first phase or separation implies isolation of a concrete individual form or chosen individual, so-called 'initiana' from the fixed social or cultural structures. It denotes the detachment of the individual from the real temporal-spatial setting; the second phase – liminality – expresses the ambivalent state of the individual or the same 'transit-traveler', his transition to the intermediate, ambivalent social zone, the so-called 'limbo'; the third – final phase of incorporation – corresponds to the return of the individual to society, but in a renovated status, i.e. the individual's 're-aggregation'.

Of these three phases special interest attaches to the second or liminal phase in which the individual acquires the experience of becoming completely obscure and detached from reality. The term liminal, deriving from Latin 'limen', means a threshold or boundary, a corridor between two different places. It enters Gennep's theory with an analogous purpose: a liminal phase in its essence and function is a transitional, dynamic, intermediate condition, placed between hardened and transformed structures. Accordingly in Gennep's view, rites de passage may be defined as an aggregate of three conditions: 'preliminary', implying detachment from the earlier world; 'liminal', denoting the transitional period; 'post-liminal', related to the ceremony of incorporation into the new world. 'Earlier' and 'new' here imply not only small-scale but large-scale cultural transposition. G.Z. Carson notes justly: 'For a scholar of his time (Gennep's - I.R.) this was a remarkable but risky thesis' (Carson 1984:2). For van Gennep, though, cultural commonality and distinctive cultural variety are not mutually exclusive, they coexist and intersect. Common patterns emerge in distinct and unique cultures. Life itself is described in, and the rites of passage the vehicles by which the transitions are traversed.' (Carson 1984:3). Obviously enough, for Gennep the condition of transition or the liminal phase acquires the meaning of intermediate structure – of a valuable medium charged with an impulse of change. Almost half a century later, Victor Turner transfers Gennep's theory to the place of structuralist anthropology, and he defines the liminal phase as an 'inter-structural situation' arising 'between various positional structures'.

The liminal phase in Gennep's theory claims Turner's special attention; it performs the function of threshold, delimiting various stages in life. In Turner's view, the temporary detachment of an individual from a hardened social structure imparts to the individual not only an ambivalent social status but frees him from any laws, norms and rules of behavior; his status is essentially ambivalent and hazy.

As aptly noted by M. I. Spariosu 'Liminality for Turner is a form not only of transitivity, but of potentiality as well' (Spariosu 1997:133), for liminality shows not only isolation from hardened structures, but the potentialities of forming alternative structures. R. Palmer notes 'An individual who moves to the liminal phase has the potential of an individual, but finds himself in the gap between worlds, or he is a certain medium between the alternative structure of 'here' and 'there' (Palmer 1980:8). Thus the production of an alternative constitutes the main function and aim of the liminal theory. The logical question arises; is it feasible to work out an alternative world at the individual's level? I believe, this question returns us to the problem discussed in Chapter I of the present work, in which I tried to show the general paradigm of man's

individual freedom and philosophical struggle waged on behalf of the Ego. What are the teachings of Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, directed against the dominant violence, terror and technocracy and calling for the defense of man's free activity, creative will and individual thought if not a striving for alternative? Both Schopenhauer's philosophy of the will directed at life and Nietzsche's philosophy of will directed at aggression are valuable not only from the standpoint of separating life from violence but by considering the existence of life permissible with it is being subjected to coercion. In other words, it is possible for one visible world (referred to by Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche as synonyms of torture and death) to exist but the existence also of other alternative worlds. Accordingly, if the really existing world is a given condition of a preliminary condition, or causes the separation of the individual from its hardened structures, the alternative world is the result of a post-liminal condition, formed as a result of transformation. As to the liminal phase, it, conceptually and structurally, corresponds to those in-depth phases of torment, suffering, faith and death that play the role of a kind of transit corridor, link, valuable boundary between 'this' and 'other' worlds, both in Schopenhauer's and Kierkegaard's philosophy. But from the historical or paradigmatic standpoint it is very difficult and practically unfeasible to master, this other worldly, to a certain mystic cosmos, even intuitively. As a conventionality it exists at the level of the subject's consciousness, insight into it can be gained only beyond the subject's will – that strong will that fights against the 'slavish mentality' that is characteristic of real context and strives towards a transcendental dimension.

Hence, we may conclude that the three phases of the passage of ritual – pre-iminal, liminal and post-liminal - take shape in both the synchronic or inner structural and diachronic or cultural-historical regularities, and are called on to create a positive alternative. The latter is a result of creative will, a valuable synthesis of imagination and becoming, that detaches itself from the real, hardened historical-cultural structures, attaining desirable transformation as a result of most intense experiences. It is obvious that literature constitutes an ideal form for these 'mystic games'. M.I. Spariosu points out correctly: 'In other words, literary discourse can offer fresh cultural alternatives precisely because it is a form of play and as if mode of activity and being in which the world of actuality and that of the imaginary become interwoven and create an intermediary world separate from, yet contingent upon, the other two' (Spariosu, 1997:29). Thus, by its essence and purpose, literature is a liminal phenomenon that performs the function of a transitory phase between destructive reality governed by force and the other worldly cosmos worked out by imagination; literature performs the function of a transit coach between the force-driven, chronologically ordered world restricted by technological, bureaucratic reality and a world imbued with faith, free ideas and fantasies. In my view, the idea of the liminality of literature is justified by the evolutionary paradigm of the genre theory.

In Aristotle's *Poetics* the liminal character of poetry is concentrated in the coordinating notion of mimesis or imitation. Poetic imitation acquires the meaning of a kind of ambivalent action, in which poetic discourse imitates actually existing discourses, creating a conventionality that can never equal either the philosophical truth or historical reality. In other words, Aristotle places poetry in liminal space that separates philosophy from history 'The poet's task is, Aristotle writes, to speak not what has happened really, but of what may have happened, i.e. of the necessary or possible as need might arise' (Aristotle 1957: 67).

Hence it may be assumed that poetry imitates not only philosophy but history as well, or it constitutes an intermediary form between possibility and necessity. Accordingly, literary discourse emerges as a valuable mediator between differing types of discourse. 'Value' is determined not by mechanical but by its unique capacity of creative imitation: literary imitation does not imply simple copying of established models (this trend obviously takes shape both in Plato's thoughts and in Aristotle's definition of mimesis); it either changes an object radically in the reverse direction (e.g. satire, parody) or thoroughly reworks it (this method is acceptable at the level of any literary genre.) Consequently, to thinkers of the classical period, constitutes subversive---support and amendable marginality placed in liminal space.

The situation alters somewhat in the Renaissance period. Sir Philip Sidney, in his book 'The Defense of Poesy' returns to the cited conception of Aristotle's 'Poetics', extending it in accenting the mediatory function of literature: 'The philosopher offers us a notion, the critic notes, the historian an example while the poet both.... Then whom shall we call a mediator? Of course, the poet' (Sidney 1962:419). Thus, according to Sidney, the poet is an intermediary between historical truth and philosophical abstraction – a medium that, by 'playing' between reality and imagination, determines the boundaries between truth and

abstraction, equally possessing characteristics of both the former and the latter. To put it in a different way, poetry is armed with the function of liminally intermediate neutrality. Sidney's view was shared not only by his contemporary critics but by thinkers of the period of romanticism as well, though the romanticists imparted a different color to the issue.

In his well-known series of letters, Schiller considers art as the 'third reality'; - an aesthetic phenomenon that performs the function of intermediary between necessity (cause) and freedom (soul). He writes 'Movement from the passive conditions of sensation to an active condition of thought and desire is impossible without via – an intermediate condition of aesthetic freedom' (Schiller 1967: 161).

It may be concluded that for Schiller art, and certainly literature too, constitutes an aesthetic illusion or resemblance that severs humanity from its perceptible setting, transferring it to the free setting of spirituality. Schiller's stand is further intensified by Percy Shelley who defines art and poetry as an intermediary position grown upon the achievements of reality between reality and the world beyond. 'Poetry, Shelley notes, awakens and deepens the mind, for it translates thousands of combinations of unattainable thought. It finds imagination with new thoughts that are attracted to and assimilated with other thoughts, shaping new intervals and whose void permanently demands food' (Shelley 1921: 33).

I think that Shelley's brilliant idea of the ever becoming, renewable and variable nature of the 'intervals' and 'gaps' resulting from poetic thought seriously poses the question of defining literature as self-transcendental liminal flexibility: poetry, in Shelley's view constitutes a paradigm of thought, a liminal condition, placed between historical reality and thought-engendered irreality, that constantly creates an alternative unreal model from the existing model of reality.

It is noteworthy that the three forms of conceptualization of literary liminality have found broad but mixed interpretation in modern literary criticism.

The founder of existential criticism J.P. Sartre in his work 'Psychology of Imagination' notes: 'the imagined is created on the basis of the world, but instead, insight into the real world implies a mysterious trend towards what is imagined' (Sartre 1972: 218).

Imagination in Sartre's theory is a form of 'nothing' or void, which is characteristic of consciousness and that has the capacity of becoming, or imagination is a transcendental condition of liminal-flexible consciousness. I believe, Sartre's phenomenological stand is closely related to Shelley's position, giving much ground to Giuseppe Mazzotta's version of literary liminality. Resting as he does on Turner's theory, Mazzotta, not only acknowledges the idea of liminality of literature but, on the basis of an analysis of the works of Dante and Boccaccio, even distinguishes several forms of literary mediation. The same view is shared by W. Iser in his work 'The Fictive and the Imaginary: Charting Literary Anthropology'. He considers literature as the function of 'liminal play' not only the intermediary between necessity and imagination but conditioning and self-transcendental action of the individual or subject and determining it. Echoing Schiller's view, Iser asserts that literary invention or illusion is an intermediary phase between reality and imagination, i.e., it corresponds to the triadic paradigm: real-illusory-imagined. 'Literature is a transitive, a boundary phenomenon the permanently escalates between reality and imagination and permanently links them with each other.' (Iser 1993: 4)

Gustavo Perez-Firmat discusses the problem from a different angle. In his work 'Literature and Liminality' he acknowledges the liminal nature of literature, but rejects the idea of its self-transcendental flexibility. Similarly to M. Bakhtin, P. de Mann and H. Bloom, Perez Firmat considers literature as subversive marginality, though, unlike his colleagues, he is extremely radical: for him liminality invades and destroys the actually existing model.

Thus, whereas in the theoretical conceptions of J.P. Sartre, J. Mazzota and W. Iser the influence of Shelley is perceivable and literature is conceptualized as self-transcendental flexibility, the theoretical systems as M. Bakhtin, P. de Mann, H. Bloom and Pirez-Firmat's return to the classical idea of literature as subversive marginality.

At present it is not the invariant conceptualization of literary liminality that is important but the consensus that exists in the history of genre theory from the viewpoint of conceptualizing literature as a liminal phenomenon – the doubtless fact in the context of synchronic and diachronic analysis of a literary system

literature is unanimously perceived as a liminal phase. This presents literature per se as a whole, as a qualitative characteristic of literature, in the conceptualization of literature and literary genres in a system of synthetic or holistic theory, based on a synthesis of the genre theory in synchronic and diachronic aspects.

To revert to the question raised above – whether it is feasible to work out an alternative world at the level of the individual mind, and if we juxtapose the philosophical (Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, later van Genep, Turner) and literary criticism (Aristotle, Sidney, Schiller, Shelley, modern study of literature) connotations, we shall conclude that it is not only feasible to work out an alternative world at the level of an individual's mind but is necessary with a view to expanding mankind's self-consciousness and self-cognition. The most important role in this process is assigned to literature, to a concrete literary work as an intermediary, liminal phenomenon that is capable not only of demarcating differing worlds from one another but, proceeding from the real model of the new world, by producing an alternative or mode of 'another world'.

I think clarity should be introduced into the concepts of 'alternative', on the one hand, and the type of relationship, that is established between existing and alternative worlds. 'Alternative' is a Latin word meaning 'choice', a valuable 'other' taking shape in the process of definite changes. An alternative model is formed on the basis of the existing model, but differs from it from the standpoint of coordinating principles. There may be diverse alternatives: historical, geographic, spiritual, psychological, religious, aesthetic, cosmological, etc. The relationship between the alternative world is either conflictual or competitive. M. Spariosu distinguishes four principal types of this relationship: compatible, incompatible, proportional and disproportionate, giving an exhaustive description of each type: compatible worlds have similar characteristics that readily adapt to each other, similar economic systems, similar political systems, similar religious systems. Contrary to this, the characteristics of incompatible do not intersect so simply. Examples of this are: small cultures within great cultures, aggressive society in the midst of industrial society, democracy in depth of totalitarianism, etc. Proportionality of alternative worlds is feasible when their basic principles are incompatible, yet a definite agreement may be reached and is disproportionate when any agreement is ruled out (Spariosu 1997:47). Thus opposition between alternative worlds may be not only incompatible but disproportionate or quite contrastive as well, as is revealed by the ontological division that has arisen in Western thought: real world, imaginary world. Whereas the real world is a physical objective system with a three-dimensional space, time as a fourth coordinator of space, and movement, the imaginary world is a non-physical world – a subjective system that is opposed to the objective system on the basis of an ontologically alternative principle. Literature, as a liminal phase or intermediate corridor between the real and imaginary clearly reflects this opposition well.

In my view, the principal task of literature as a liminal phenomenon is to create a new reality, a new world, a new cosmos. This process implies not only accentuating the obvious difference between the real and imaginary worlds, but demonstrating logical and ontological contradictions that exist between necessity and possibility. An alternative world turns into a possibility when it takes shape in the author's imagination and is implemented consistently through the transformational spirit of a chosen protagonist. An essential side of the transformational process is the liminal phase as a transit space between alternative worlds – a watershed between the real and imaginary systems, an ambivalent ontological landscape to which the protagonist moves first and subsequently overcomes it. From this standpoint, the imaginary or invented world is perceived not as a 'non-existing object' but as 'existence' based on alternative ontological principles, taking shape beyond the transitive phase. The principle and determining categories of transitivity are those of time and space. The temporal-spatial paradigm characteristic of reality not only does not contradict but ideally corresponds to the existing social structures. In this case the rites de passage is a bridge thrown across another oppositional reality.

One of the founders of the theory of liminality, W. Turner devotes a special study, 'Kinds of Anti-temporality. Essay in Experimental Anthropology.' It is noteworthy that the principal object of research in the paper is considered by Turner in the oppositional or alternative context. Turner considers 'order' to be the principal function of time, orderly sequence that opposes 'chaoses'. But the point is that 'order' is never perfect: cultural, social or technical imperatives – notwithstanding, great endeavour – are permanently of discontinuous character, themselves providing uncertainty, ambivalence, and often inconsistency. In arguing his conception Turner distinguishes four phases of 'social life' which in his view correspond to respective stages of 'social time': the first phase or 'life' reflects the normative system in which a group of

individuals lives; the second phase or ‘crisis’ corresponds to the critical condition that faces the group of individuals with a ‘choice’ and the choice may be ‘positive’ or ‘negative’, the third phase or ‘conflict’ refers to the use of the rights and authority of the ruling group’ with respect to the individuals of the group that has a ‘negative attitude’; the fourth phase or ‘outcome’ reflects the consequences of the drama ‘played out’ in the third phase. Turner focuses attention on the third phase, the so-called ‘conflict’ that disturbs the ‘harmony’ or changes ‘harmony’ to ‘disharmony’, actually posing the question of transformation. Transformation implies ‘coming out’ or separation from the ordinary ‘temporal’ setting and creation of alternative anti-temporality.

Anti-temporality in Turner’s view is a concept opposed to temporality – an individual expanse, allowing ontological re-evaluation and transformation of mankind’s socio-cultural experience, and essentially corresponding to the subjectivist conceptualization of ‘eternity’. “In the tradition of positivist anthropology in which I was raised, the reading of Friedrich Von Hugel was considered worse than pornography. But now I will venture to conclude with a paragraph from his book ‘Eternal Life: A study of Implications and Applications’. You may deduce from it my secret thoughts about what I have openly said: ‘Eternal Life, in the fullest thinkable sense, involves three things – the plenitude of all goods and all of energizings that abide; the entire self-consciousnesses of the Being Which constitutes, and Which is expressed by, all these goods and energizings; and the pure activity, the non-successiveness, the simultaneity, of this Being in all It has, all it is. Eternal life, in this sense, precludes not only space, not only clock-time – that artificial chain of mutually exclusive, ever equal moments, but even duration [Here Von Hugel glances at Henri Bergson, whom in s many ways he deeply admires], time as actually experienced by man, with its overlapping, interpenetrating successive stages. But Eternal life precludes space and clock-time because of the very intensity of its life. The Simultaneity is here the fullest expression of the Supreme Richness, the unspeakable Concreteness, the overwhelming Aliveness of God . . . and is at the opposite pole from all empty unity, all mere being – any or all abstractions whatsoever (Von Hugel 1912: 383)’ (Turner 1985: 246).

Turner concurs unequivocally with Hugel’s conception. Following Hugel, Turner considers the supra-temporal and supra-spatial eternity to be the ‘only and genuine alternative’ of existing normative system: ‘In the general anti-temporality or contra-temporality or meta-temporality of social dramatic redress, - he concludes, - the continuous sense of limitation and inadequacy, the frustratedness of historical experience, are often intuited as the very means in and through which historical humankind apprehends increasingly (but only if it opts to do so) the counterstroke of simultaneity, spontaneity, infinity, and pure action of that quintessence of anti-temporality which has been called absolute timelessness, Eternity’ 9Turner 1985: 246).

In my view, by this statement, Turner expresses two basic positions: on the one hand, he makes his personal choice between the objectivistic and subjectivistic theories of conceptualizing time and space, and quite clearly takes sides with the great ‘subjectivists’: Plato, Augustine, Kant, Bergson, and others; on the other hand, Turner gives shape to the function of the liminal phase and liminality as a paradigm of an ontologically and structurally valuable process, directed from the system outward –to an alternative system.

Thus, the liminal phase constitutes an intermediate, transitional, ambivalent – ‘neither hither, not thither’ condition, in which the individual separates from the normative context and – through transformation – creates an oppositionally contrary world. Accordingly, the liminal phase acquires the function of a special somewhat sacred temporal-spatial zone. The process ‘mystic journey’, ‘transitivity’, ‘mysterious movement’ are based on the symbolism of death and birth, fall and rise. The rites de passage is a transition from one model to another. Liminal times, as well as liminal space, reflects the most complex process of the individual’s separation from the ordered chronological system, on the one hand, and his integration in an alternative, anti-chronological, anti-temporal system.

PRELIMINARY CONDITION

POST-LIMINAL CONDITION

LIMINAL PHASE



(STRUCTURE)

(ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE)

SEPARATION REAGGREGATION

REAL TIME-SPACE ALTERNATIVE TIME-SPACE

I have already noted and I think have demonstrated that literature is an ideal manifestation of the liminal phase. It is worth noting that in order to graphically demonstrate the liminal processes, Turner discusses works of literary and specifically dramatic genre, though he considers that it is 'equally reflected in any other genre of literature.' We shall probably not be mistaken if we conceptualize primarily the genre of literary anti-utopia among 'any other genre'. Proceeding from its philosophical world view fundamentals (see Chapter I of the present work) genre specificity (see Chapter II of the same work), and the subjectivistic tendencies of conceptualization of time and space (see Chapter III of the same work), it is safe to say that literary anti-utopia, particularly eschatological anti-utopia, with its total incompatibility with the existing, pseudo utopian regime, with the model of chronologically, temporally and spatially ordered life, also with its indefatigable aspiration to the re-incarnation of man's individual self, freedom, elevation, creates a brilliant mould for the liminal phase. Eschatological anti-utopia not only reflects the split that exists between the subject and objective reality but constitutes an ambivalent springboard, 'transit corridor' for passing to a different, alternative cosmos. The opposition between the pre-liminal and post-liminal or alternative worlds at the level of eschatological anti-utopia is qualitatively incompatible and disproportional: The relation of eschatological anti-utopia to reality is full of Nietzschean aggressive hatred; the only alternative of the existing world, similarly to the teachings of Augustine, Schopenhauer and Kierkegaard, at the level of eschatological anti-utopia too, is the eternity spread beyond the real world; Augustine's continuous 'present' and Bergson's inversive 'simultaneity' are conceptualized to be the truly desirable time, and ultimate goal – spiritual revival and liberty, accentuated in the Christian world view. But the anti-utopian model that, on the one hand, categorically rejects the existing reality, on the other, reworks or transforms it into imaginary or alternative reality. In other words the anti-utopian model is a liminal condition distinguished for its subversive marginality and self-transcendental flexibility. I believe the paradigm of the synthetic conceptualization of the anti-utopian model is graphically confirmed by the liminal models of artistic time and space given shape in 20th century eschatological anti-utopias, performing the function of genre definition.

*** Liminal models of chronotope in 20th century Eschatological Anti-utopia.**

According to V. Nabokov's Novels *'Invitation to a Beheading,'* and *'Bend Sinister'*.

The categories of time and space define the parameters of artistic reality and individual transformations of the boundaries beyond which the subjective world takes final shape. My aim is to demonstrate the general paradigm of these transformations in the novels of 20th century writer V. Nabokov - *'Invitation to a Beheading,'* and *'Bend Sinister'*, respectively.

In my view, the uniting of the cited novels of Nabokov within the boundaries of research into a single genre model is equally based on diachronic or historical-cultural and synchronic or intra-literary factors: a) the time of activity of both writers belongs to one and the same period, occurring in conditions of such totalitarian regimes as communism and fascism; b) the conceptual levels of the named novels are unequivocally related to the research for the individual 'self' lost in the depth of the mass movement, as well as for the faith and God levelled by the efforts of the leaders of the regime; c) the three novels answer the classic genre characteristics of literary anti-utopia and go deeper into the eschatological experience of the world; d) time and space in the works of the cited writers are aspects of subjective cognition – characteristics of human reason, worked out as a result of inner perception. The subjective paradigm of

conceptualization of temporal and spatial parameters demonstrates the world view affinity of Nabokov and not only conditions but justifies the study of the above novels within the boundaries of a single phenomenon – the genre model of eschatological anti-utopia. My stand, obviously, does not imply assertion of the conceptual or genetic identity of the named works of Nabokov. He is a novelist of differing style. However, one cannot but concur with N. Fry's position according to which literature is a conventional phenomenon, and any concept or determination in it is conventional per se. From this standpoint, the concept of conditionality itself is probably tentative as well. Important in principle is not an event being 'more' or 'less' conditioned by the existing traditions (though this aspect must obviously be taken into account) but the degree of integration of the event as a literary fact in the tendencies of the epoch. From this viewpoint, the idea of considering the cited novels of Nabokov on the same plane probably has the right to exist.

Nabokov formulated the conception of time most clearly in his novel 'Ada', in which he shaped the outlines of his own cosmology as the thought of an obstinate philosopher Van Veen. Possessed of the idea of solving the enigma of time, Van Veen, who enthusiastically writes treatises 'Furnished Space', 'The Fabric of Time', etc. I believe, perfectly expresses Nabokov's attitude to the phenomenon of time and space „Our perception of time is senseless , even the most precise clock is nothing but a foolish joke.' (Nabokov 1997:469). Veen rejects the idea of the objectivity of time with its chronological determinations (past-present-future) and continuous flow and similarly to Bergson, considers the only form of cognizing time to be its internalization – subjective perception, which violates Einstein's law of irreversibility, turning into inversive reversibility: I have the power to turn back the time and take pleasure from each moment... Irreversibility of time is nothing more but short sight of understanding... and the same can be said about the evolution of time.' (Nabokov 1997:512-515). For Van Veen time is simultaneity, which is free from the context and comments and which cannot be measured according to the laws of motion determined by Aristotle. In Veen's opinion, measurable or objective time is a property of space and extremely well befits the relativistic theory of conceptualization of time and space, while the time proposed by him is 'understood only spontaneously and beyond feelings' (Nabokov 1997:527). In Veen's philosophy the past is overcome through the present, but not the future – a time that is categorically rejected by hermit, in the wake of the bishop of Hippo: 'I am', he writes, meaning 'I was' or 'I was not' implies to the category of time: Future. I deny its existence.' (Nabokov 1997:537-538). In Veen's philosophy, the future is only a maximum expansion of the present rather than an independent span of time. It was not yesterday and is not today, and will be tomorrow. In the future 'is only death, supra-temporal eternity – a paradox that crowns the eschatological exercises of our stupefied brain.' (Nabokov 1997:557-558).

It is quite clear that Van Veen's theory of time and accordingly, Nabokov's theory, shares in all parameters the subjectivistic position of perception of time, in which temporal and spatial dimensions are rather internal compositions than external. Whereas the time characteristic of the other world involves events that are planned in advance and develop rectilinearly, the inner time is formless and gaseous, distinguished for its contradictory rhythm and non-standard pulsation. Measurable or the clock's time is permanent and the time network or its countable length is not connected with its fabric or its inner structure. The subjective time, on the contrary, offers the integrity and inseparability of the time network and fabric. Unlike objective time, whose flow is reduced to a sequence of separate and isolated units, the duration of subjective time is the result of its hierarchical content – of its inversive ability to place elements of the past in the phase of the present, thus alternating different phases of time through memory and imagination.

Reality is not acceptable. Then what is the way out? It is only in man, in the subject illumined with individual self, who awakens, fights and shapes his own cosmogony marked by eschatological depth. The model of eschatological anti-utopia clearly demonstrates the process of the value transfer the anti-utopian pathos from the critique of the state system to the analysis of personal problems. Although such transition is encoded at the very inception of literary anti-utopia, it developed on a large scale from the 1920s fully conforming to the pathos of the time; in other words, the time came not only for recording the events arising in the depth of history but for their radical assessment. The in-depth model anti-utopia that took shape in the wake of acute social, scientific and fantastic anti-utopia takes into account not only the emphatically totalitarian, industrial and pragmatic presence but its tragic consequence: the total alienation of the personality from the world and his striving for self-localization. The excuse of this enhanced subjectivization is the breakdown of communication between man and environment. Trust is replaced by

skepsis, a hero integrated in the world by a non-conformist hero imprinted with the token of autonomousness. The theme takes shape of a negative character locked up in the depth of a hypertrophied, hazardous world, who is looking for salvation. In this case the possibility of surviving is not only hope but a demand, even an inevitable necessity that induces man to look deep into his existence and beyond most involved, painful transformations of the value boundary, ambivalent liminal zone work out an alternative reality. Such a paradigm of a chronotope system in the cited novels of Nabokov is projected in-depth in a general motivational paradigm of the anti-utopian genre, is integrated in the genre characteristics of literary anti-utopia and determines its specific variety – the conceptual and structural model of eschatological anti-utopia.

Liminal Models of Artistic Time and their Genre-determining function.

* * *

‘Comme un fou se croit Dieu nous
nous croyons mortels.’ (Delalande)
(Nabokov 1997:25)

‘Only common sense rules out immortality.’

(Nabokov 1951:372)

Nabokov’s attitude to ‘common sense’ was cynical, to put it mildly. ‘Common sense’ was an analogue of the existing unpleasant subsidy, legitimized and placed within unshakable parameters, being far from the thought of the writer possessed of permanent search. ‘Common sense’ was a notion subordinated to time – the property of the measurable world with which the wizard was in permanent antagonism.

Nabokov persistently fought against ‘common sense’, as well as against the world filtered with natural numbers and clock hands. His characters wrestled with the same. Their existence, defined by subjective consciousness is stubbornly opposed to the objectively given outer world, whose mechanism of bringing pressure on the individual gives clear expression to the uncompromising conflict of the personality with time and projection of inner aspiration to the supratemporal.

The main character of the novel ‘Invitation to a Beheading’ Cincinnatus C. is a prisoner. He is charged with ‘heinous crimes – gnoseological vileness’ and, pending execution, is locked up in the prison cell. The court decision is final: Cincinnatus is distinguished. He does not resemble other citizens, for he is not transparent like them, hence he must die. In other words, from the beginning, Cincinnatus comes to face the central antiutopian opposition: the mass personality.

Cincinnatus’s crime lies in his individuality. He is incapable of establishing relations with persons around him, his thoughts and words are incomprehensible to others, while ‘Those around him understood each other at first word, since they had no words that would end in an unexpected way.’ (Nabokov 1989:26)

Cincinnatus one among many. Hence he is not only a prisoner physically locked up in the prison but an individual mentally confined to himself. This past life lies behind, ahead – death in torture, inevitable end, the thought and cognition of which makes understandable the absurdity of the reality in the grip of time and ‘invites’ the character somewhat recklessly to the realm of other worldly dimension.

Cincinnatus is a prisoner of time. The time dominant in the everyday life world of the novel is a sham appendage to space, which is many times and emphatically suggested by calendars that say nothing, clock showing the wrong hour and blank dials ‘However every hour the watchman washes off the old hand and daus on a new one.’ (Nabokov 1989:135)

The fake time is followed in its steps by its faithful serfs: the director of the prison, represented as a three-headed Cerberus, the cell guard and lawyer, who chime the clock, march against the background of its rhythm and conscientiously perform the regulations. Mr. Pierre, Cincinnatus's executor, is a messenger of oppressive time. It is he who must carry out the sentence of time – of time whose truth Cincinnatus questioned and hence became alienated from it.

The ordered structure of the novel is also a captive of time. The novel is comprised of twenty chapters, whose first eighteen correspond to the first eighteen days of Cincinnatus's captivity. In other words, the structure is temporally right, representing a significant aspect of the configuration element of the text. Cincinnatus's forced contact with this countable system of time or with the chronologically ordered model is confirmed by several indicators. This is the novel 'Circus' that the prisoner reads, the pencil with which he writes his diaries and the spider whose acting he observes throughout his imprisonment.

In this case, the novel 'Circus' is a temporal artefact represented in book form, which by its being isolated, permanence and unchanging state is an analogue of objective time, clearly expressing the counter position/opposition between the character's inner and outer perspectives. It is noteworthy that 'The main idea of the novel is regarded as the peak of modern thinking' (Nabokov 1997:125), of that modern thinking which Cincinnatus failed to support: 'The character of the novel was an oak-tree. The novel represents the biography of an oak-tree.' (Nabokov 1997:125-126) 'Circus' is firmly based on confidence in objective permanent time interlocked with space. Its plot is a consistent reflection of regular or fortuitous phenomena, the sphere of whose happening is placed in definite parameters from the perspective of an inanimate object. The narration is built on real happening to such an extent that the vacuum existing between them has to be filled by the writer with drawn-out, high-flown phrases/ temporal coordinates are inviolable from the position of subjective cognition, for the author's narration is relevant to the event occurring within the spatial boundaries recorded by a video-camera. About this Nabokov was quite explicit: 'When a scientist sees everything around him in a single point, the poet feels everything. Burying himself in thoughts, rubbing his neck with a pencil-top and at the very same moment a car is driving along the road, a child is knocking on the neighbour's door, an old man is yawning in the Turkish garden, grains of sand are rolling on the surface of Venus, Doctor Jaques Pirch is putting his reading glasses on his nose, and thousands of such events take place... and the kernel of this all is the poet (Nabokov 1997:161). Simultaneously absorption of the moment of time or 'cosmic synchronization' is the phenomenon that, in Nabokov's view, in essence distinguishes the poetic, subjective, inner world from the scientific, objective outer one. A creative writer, endowed with the capacity of 'cosmic synchronization' internalizes the world in a single whole: he takes it, smashes it, again makes it whole, colours new world to art. Art broadens the potential of the outer world, while the scientific method, on the contrary reduces this potential through its encoding and simplification. Thus both art and science are connected on the relationship between the observer and the object of observation. But the energy of art is centripetal, and that of science centrifugal. Where the impulse of the science of physics spreads, the man of art tries to gain an insight into the real understanding of time. Hence, Cincinnatus a creative poet – cannot put up with the time characteristic of 'Circus' and accordingly, the external world 'I am the one, who is alive among you... Not only are my eyes different, my hearing, my feelings, not only the smell of deer or sight of a bat do I have exceptional, but the one that is vital: The gift of combining everything in one point. (Nabokov 1997:62) The gift of 'cosmic synchronizing' or simultaneity is the main conglomerate that separates Cincinnatus from the objective frames of harmoniously consistent time, and it not only makes him put on the prisoner's uniform but gives him a stimulus to transform and again transform reality repeatedly Cincinnatus clearly foresees the future of the author of 'Circus' 'He imagined the death of the author, although he was a young man, living somewhere on the northern islands. Funny though – funny because the only reality and certainty is death – the inevitable physical death of the author' (Nabokov 1997:126). The death of the author of 'Circus' is a direct analogue of the break up of objective time.

However, the structure of the novel points to a different viewpoint: the pencil is exactly of the length of the span of life left to Cincinnatus. The pencil shortens directly proportionately to the reduction of his life, turning into a 'dwarf' object that Cincinnatus finds difficult to hold in his hand. Thus, the pencil emerges not only as a measure for counting the days left to Cincinnatus to live ('It's the eight day of imprisonment-wrote Cincinnatus with a pencil that was three times less in length.' Nabokov 1997:94-95), but as a doubtless benchmark of the end of the captive prisoner's torment and the break of the objective rhythm of time.

The spider's noteworthy motif also suggests the inevitable break of objective time. The spider is an 'official friend of the prisoner'; it is carefully fed by the warders-helmsmen of time. The ritual of the feeding and pampering of the spider runs through the narration as an indispensable implication. But the spider's main victim is the most beautiful butterfly *Saturnia Paranoital*- unusually large, and pretty, with fluttering wings; she flies into Cincinnatus's cell in the 19th chapter, one of the closing chapters of the novel. The cell guard runs after the butterfly frantically in an attempt to feed the spider whose appetite is whetted by its sight. However, the effort of the guard is in vain. The butterfly finds refuge under Cincinnatus's bed, surviving, she then elegantly flies out through the open window. The spider is the loser; accordingly the ordinary rhythm of time breaks down. Whereas the normal rhythm of the spider's everyday life stressed the ordered daily life, pointing to the punctual course of time, as a result of the spider's fateful failure the time machine begins to halt: the spider finds itself under the ruins of the demolished stronghold, allegorically depicting the break of the objective time interlocked with space.

On the basis of the cited examples, attesting to the pulsation of real time in the novel, it may be concluded safely that all indicators of objective time – 'Circus', the pencil and spider – are speeding along to an end, that is to death.

The time prison situated in the novel is spherical; its exit is sealed up and, as all prisons, has its guards assigned. The grouping of the three characters – doorkeepers of time – is told by their alphabetic iconography: the warden of the prison, Rodrig, cell inspector, Rodion, and the lawyer, Roman – all begin with the letter R, three Russian 'P'-s 'PPP', involuntarily reminding us of the Satan's sign '666' turned upside down. The depiction of the devil as a three-headed creature is noted frequently in Christian Art. In early medieval Christian sources the devil is often associated with entirely animal, half animal and half-human form. The devil, as a guard, was equated with Cerberus, inheriting three heads from it. Many mythological sources point to the tricephalic image of the ruler of the nether world. For example, one face of Dantes, three-headed devil looks ahead, the other two in different directions. The middle face is red, the right white yellow, the left black. (Rudvin 1931:40). Notably enough, Rodion has a 'red beard' and 'crayfish hand', Rodrig wears an 'ideal black wig' wafting an odour of lilies in an uncovered coffin, while Roman has 'white powder' on his face and a black cat incessantly leaps onto his shoulder. In the second chapter of the novel Rodion sings a curious song "Rodion embracing him like a baby, carefully took him down, after which he moved the table with a violinlike sound to its previous place and sat on the edge, dabling the foot that was in the air, and bracing the other against the floor, having assumed the imitation-jaunty pose of operatic rakes in the tavern scene, while Cincinnatus picked at the sash of his dressing gown, and did his best not to cry' (Nabokov 1989:29)

The wine cellar, the deep baritone and choir involuntarily bring to mind the well-known aria of Mephistopheles from the 'Faust'.

It is quite clear that the anti-system of real time is determined by a demonic archetypal model. The prison guards serve time and, accordingly, time is the dominant power in the closed, brutal world of the prison. The only measure of this time for the ostracized Cincinnatus is his end or death: death not only puts an objective end to the course of time but gives shape to an alternative projection of inner time, worked out by the character at the level of subjective perceptions.

The main character of the novel 'Invitation to a Beheading', Cincinnatus, stands out clearly in the general gallery of Nabokov's protagonists and in my opinion, this special feature is due to its close link to the myths roots of literature. Cincinnatus opposes the brutal reality in the shape of an apocalyptic model. Cincinnatus's appearance is noteworthy: 'Cincinnatus face, grown transparently pallid, with fuzz on its sunken cheeks and a moustache with such a delicate hair texture that it seemed to be actually a bit of dishevelled sunlight on his upper lip; Cincinnatus face, small and still young despite all the torments, with gliding eyes, eerie eyes of changeable shade, was, in regard to its expression something absolutely inadmissible by the standards of his surroundings, especially now, when he had ceased to dissemble. The open shirt, the black dressing gown that kept flying open, the oversize slippers on his slender feet, the philosophers skullcap on the top of his head and the ripple running through the transparent hair on his temples completed a picture, the full indency of which it is difficult to put into words – produced as it was a thousand barely noticeable, overlapping trifles: of the light outline of his lips, seemingly not quite fully drawn but touched by a master of masters' (Nabokov 1989:120-121). Cincinnatus's impressive portrait involuntarily reminds one of the deep, piercing comprehensive images of the martyrs and saints, first

Christian righteous men depicted in old icons and frescoes. However, Cincinnatus's special feature is not defined by his outward appearance alone. He is distinguished for the lightness, unattainable to an ordinary mortal and coming close to in - corporeality: 'it was as if one side of his being slid into another dimension, as all the complexity of a tree's foliage passes from shade into radiance, so that you cannot distinguish just where begins the submergence into the shimmer of different elements.' (Nabokov 1989:121).

Cincinnatus's lightness brings us back to the icons characteristic of old Christian painting in whose contours and movement one can easily recognize the unearthly airiness of body.

The wide circle of Cincinnatus's possible myths prototype is specified by the age of the character, stressed by the author: 'He is exactly thirty years old' (Nabokov 1989:82). One's thought voluntarily finds its way in the stream of mythological subjects, stopping at two Gospel coevals of Cincinnatus: John the Baptist and Jesus Christ.

Before I have recourse to a thorough analysis of the problem I deem it necessary to note the following: notwithstanding the deep link of Cincinnatus's literary images to the primary images of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, and despite the great ideological and aesthetic significance of this likeness, Nabokov never betrays one of the coordinating characteristics of anti-utopia, i.e. parodying, and in the process of two trends – seriousness and ambivalent play of parody – he meticulously moulds the highest moral values of his pale-faced protagonist.

Thus, we can take Cincinnatus's age for a parody on his age overlapping with that of Jesus Christ and John the Baptist, while Cincinnatus's lot following the trial, with somewhat belittled motives, may be compared both to separate facts of the life of John the Baptist and the sequence of the execution of the Lord's passion.

Pending his execution, the prisoner Cincinnatus is 'pampered' with luxury food, but he refuses it; he is hungry, like John the Baptist gone into the desert; similarity to John the Baptist, Cincinnatus is put in the prison dungeon and is beheaded.

However, the setting of the execution is somewhat different: John was beheaded in the dungeon of the prison, while Cincinnatus's execution is of public character.

The publicity of Cincinnatus's execution involuntarily directs our attention to the scene of the crucifixion of Christ. The motif of the crucifixion of Christ is superimposed on the motif of the death of John the Baptist. We observe Cincinnatus's ascent of the scaffold and we recall the God's son's walking to the Calvary and well-known posture of crucifixion.

According to the Evangelists: 'But now it was about midday and the darkness fell over the whole land, which lasted until three in the afternoon; the sun's light failed.' (Luke 23:44-45); 'There was an earthquake, the rocks split....' (Matthew 27-51).

According to the text of the novel, an analogous situation obtains at the execution of Cincinnatus, too. (Nabokov 1997:214).

The motif of the likeness of Cincinnatus with the image of Jesus Christ, again disguised under parody but in full sequence, is realized in the plot of the novel. This is provided by:

1. The mysterious birth of Cincinnatus, clearly echoing the motif of the immaculate conception of God's son and his birth, and emphasizing the special feature of Cincinnatus.
2. Cincinnatus's boundless love for the depraved woman Marfinka, being not the fruit of physiological needs but the expression of a keen desire to save Marfinka's soul, echoing Christ's pardoning a sinful prostitute.
3. Cincinnatus exposed of 'lack of transparency' and 'impenetrability', is arrested through denunciation, which would seem to be a parody on the motif of Jesus, betrayal and the circumstances of the arrest of Christ in the Gethsemane Garden;

4. Similarly to the Saviour, Cincinnatus has a premonition of his heavy future, yet he perceives it calmly as an inevitability;
5. Immediately after being seized, Cincinnatus is handed to 'justice' and 'with the polite permission of the people' is sentenced to death. Cincinnatus's trial is obviously a parody on the 'King of the Jews' trial of the Son of God, who was also put to death at the will of the people or society.

I believe that juxtaposition of separate sections of the text of the novel 'Invitation to a Beheading' with the texts of the Gospel attests to the affinity with the images of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, or its derivation from Christian iconography. But here a question arises: Does Nabokov's novel remain at the level of parody of the cited parallels or is extended in the Christian style? I believe that 'Invitation to a Beheading' contains not only an outward likeness of the character to the proto-images but establishes its affinity with the Christian perception of the world which, in the given work is manifested by significant eschatology hidden in the depths of Nabokov's stylization.

I will try to explain my view.

Cincinnatus, arrested and kept in a cold cell of the prison, is stupefied with feelings of expectation and fear. Cincinnatus is closely linked to the fact that he is unaware of when his last day will come: 'However, I demand – yes demand (and the other Cincinnatus began to stamp his feet hysterically losing his slipper) 'to be told ho long I have left to live' (Nabokov 1989:40) Cincinnatus pleads with the daughter of the prison warden.

Cincinnatus is always tense, in constant expectation and fear 'Tomorrow, probably,' said Cincinnatus and sat down on the cot, kneading his forehead with the palm of his hand. A sunset ray was repeating effects that were already familiar. 'Tomorrow, probably,' said Cincinnatus with a sigh. 'It was too quiet today, so tomorrow, bright and early' (Nabokov 1989:32). Cincinnatus's fear constitutes the realization of one of the central motifs of anti-utopia, acquiring an ambivalent function: on the one hand, it is an empirical impulse, and on the other, Kierkegaard fear.

Cincinnatus constantly feels 'cold in the back of his head' and this fear not only perturbs and terrifies the prisoner doomed by the regime but, no matter how strange it may seem to us, brings intolerable yearning to him – yearning for other, desirable life.

N. Berdyaev wrote: 'Fear has its causes... It is connected with danger, everyday empirical world..... it is connected with the hazard of torture, strikes. Fear does not remember the supreme world; it is directed downwards, is changed to the empirical. But a human is a creature that experiences not only fear and terror, but sadness as well.... Sadness strives upwards, revealing the supreme nature of man. Man experiences being deserted, solitude, the state of being alien.' (Berdyaev 1995:31).

Cincinnatus's fear is his human experience, for before his execution he instinctively clings to reality. His sadness is the result of the secret expectation of his end, as the character does its utmost to penetrate into the unknowable 'The end was not yet today, and it could have been today, just as easily as it might be tomorrow, but tomorrow is still far away' (Nabokov 1989:140). One recalls the Lord's words: 'but about that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, not even the Son; only the Father.' (Matthew 24:36). And Cincinnatus too is expectant. His inner world disintegrates: on the one hand, we have Cincinnatus the individual, the suffering prisoner, fearing for life, on the other Cincinnatus the personality, a melancholic artist in secret expectation of death. Is this mysterious distant land alien to Cincinnatus? It proves not: while still a child he unexpectedly partook of the mystery unattainable to others 'When still a child, living in a canary-yellow, large cold house where they were preparing me and hundreds of other children for secure non-existence as adult dummies, into which all my coevals turned without effort or pain. I knew without knowing, I knew without wonder, O knew as one knows oneself, I knew what it is impossible to know – and, I would say, I knew it even more clearly than I do now' (Nabokov 1989:95) and once 'While sitting at a distance he shouted to me, his voice amplified by the acoustics, to go into the garden. In my sadness, in my abstraction, unconsciously and innocently, instead of descending onto the garden by the stairs (the gallery was on the third floor), not thinking what I was doing, but really acting obediently, even submissively, I stepped straight from the window sill onto the elastic air' (Nabokov 1989:97).

Cincinnatus experienced the pleasure of flying - he perceived his strange movement from the objective world to another 'forbidden, impossible' world, but arriving at the boundary he stopped in fear: he was not ready for the change, was not ready to run away from reality; however, having partaken of a miracle, he involuntarily submitted to the unusual transformation of his personality: he stopped at the boundary of two worlds, as it were, he moved on an unusual plane of life - to intermediate space and boundary time 'neither here, nor there' - in the liminal zone. The time model characteristic of the liminal zone is sacral 'Once, when I was a child, on a distant school excursion, when I had got separated from the others - although I may have dreamt it - I found myself, under the sultry sun of midday, in a drowsy little town, so drowsy that when a man who had been dozing on a bench beneath a bright white-washed wall at last got up to help me find my way, his blue shadow on the wall did not immediately follow him' (Nabokov 1989:52)

The temporal phase in which Cincinnatus exists naturally merges with the character's trembling expectation and logically corresponds to the well-known apocalyptic break before the fulfilment of the Lord's judgment.

Standing at the boundary of two worlds Cincinnatus feels to be on a threshold - time-eternity, time in which the long-awaited - mystery of God must become known. The reality to which Cincinnatus aspires does not live on the surface of real life but extends above - on a vertical - along Cincinnatus's expectation.

The prisoner's outraged soul begins to revive gradually; the peculiarities hidden in it gradually form into a single chain: sharing secret, Cincinnatus is special, experience of a threshold and premonition of the promised reality. Cincinnatus is special, Cincinnatus is extraordinary, Cincinnatus is chosen, the fear of death retreats, Cincinnatus strives for his goal - and this goal is salvation. His salvation is his freedom - freedom not only from the illumined prison, but from the entire corrupt, immoral, absurd reality.

Cincinnatus's surrounding objective world has broken down both externally and internally: the closed micro-space symbolically reflects Caesar's domain - that of tyranny and slavery - all abomination: a dead city in a sunlight spot, a dried, waterless river, collapsed, frightful horses, Captain Sleepyhead's tomb, airfield overgrown with grass, with a fatigued airplane - all this undoubtedly creates a static dead reality. The people - who fill the town, have long since turned into dim-witted, marionettes or puppets, like transparent glass dummies; the triad of the prison supervisors - Rodrig, Rodion, Roman and the executioner Mr. Pierre represent justice that symbolically reflects the dominance of the devil or Satan over the world; Marfinka's bodily and spiritual demoralization point to the immorality of the society and the collapse of the institution of the family. Her deformed, lame and blind children augur the end of hope or future while next to the constantly dancing Enochka continuously flickers the ominous shadow of Salomea, daughter of Queen Herodia, who entertained King Herod and his guests with dance. This world, engrossed in the round dance of the never-ending pseudo carnival, is doomed - similarly to Sodom and Babylon that have turned into a place where devils dwell and serves as a shelter for demonic souls.

Cincinnatus must leave it and go to salvation, freedom, , or move from the existing model of time to an alternative model.

Among the various temporal layers Cincinnatus's double emerges as his best transfer coach - Cincinnatus's second half in which the creative impulse glows and that tries his utmost to wrest Cincinnatus from the empirical. The double, that in the first chapters of the novel emerges as a traditional alter ego 'Therefore Cincinnatus did not crumple the motley newspapers, did not hurl them, as his double did (The double, the grangrel, that accompanies each of us - you, and me, and him over there)' (Nabokov 1989:25) - gradually acquires depth and towards the end of the novel is associated with an apostle of the other, unbounded, unlimited world: 'I think I should prefer the rope, since I know authoritatively and irrevocably that it shall be the axe; a little time gained, time, which is now so precious to me that I value respite, every postponement... I mean time allotted to thinking; the furlough I allow my thoughts for a free journey from fact to fantasy and return... I mean much more besides, but lack of writing skills, haste excitement, weakness... I know something. I know something. But expressions of it comes so hard' (Nabokov 1989:91). 'I am here through an error - not in this

prison, specifically – but in this whole terrible, striped world; a world which seems not a bad example of amateur craftsmanship, but in its reality calamity, horror, madness, error’ (Nabokov 1989:91). The ‘striped world’ dressed in the uniform of a prisoner is an inseparable epithet of the paradigm of reality, its metaphysical implication: the world that has formed itself in the captivity of time is doomed and Cincinnatus must leave it.

Cincinnatus’s double, possessed with a search for salvation, boldly engages in the process of the revival of the creative mind leveled by the regime: the writing of diaries is Cincinnatus’s most important attempt to freeing himself from the shackles of time, hence from reality. Creativity inspires man, fills him with enthusiasm, or gives him an opportunity to creatively transform the world: ‘Just a little work... writing down all verified ideas, - writes Cinnacinatus-, someone will read it some day, and it will be like a dawn in an unknown city. I would force them to cry and melt the ice that dwells in their eyes, and when this happens the world will become pure and renewed’ (Nabokov 1989:62).

Involved in the creative upsurge, through introspection and inspiration, Cincinnatus fights of his fear. He is aware that freeing himself from the fear of death is the only way of moving from the threshold, ‘the rare species of time’, from the liminal zone to the long desired alternative reality.

Personal special qualities elevated spiritually, creative talent, striving for truth - these are properties that attend Cincinnatus in the most intricate process of defeating the enslaving fear: ‘I had a strange sensation last night – and it was not for the first time - : I am taking off layer after layer, until the last... I do not know how to describe it, but I know this: through the process of gradual divestment I reach the final, indivisible, firm, radiant point, and this point says: I am! (Nabokov 1989:90). ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.’ (Revelation 1:8)

An ordinary person has not the right to say ‘I am’. Only a person made in God’s image, a person in whom the divine element clearly dominates is capable of pronouncing these words. These words justify Cincinnatus’s likeness to the images of John the Baptist and the Son of God, justify his lot and his sentence, his martyred death in the expectation of the promised land.

Cincinnatus feels in advance the possible end of the world, he not only feels it in advance but predicts it as well: ‘Today it seems just as incredible as the music that once used to be extracted from a monstrous pianoforte, music that would nimbly ripple or suddenly hack the world into great, gleaming blocks – I myself picture this so clearly’ (Nabokov 1989:93).

Being in the state of emotional mental agitation, wandering between reality, dreams and fainting fits, Cincinnatus arrives at an inevitable conclusion: the road to freedom and salvation lies through death for the body is chained to the sinful earth, while the ennobled soul strives into the distance, flying upwards.

Cincinnatus’s inner eschatological nature, filled with hope and presentiment of new hither I to unfathomed opportunities, is imprinted with extreme positiveness. Positive perception of the end engenders the joy of triumph over fear and transition to new life. “Not here! The horrible ‘here’, the dark dungeon, in which a relentlessly howling heart is incarcerated, this ‘here’ holds and constricts me. But what gleams shine through at night, and what-. It exists, my dream world, it must exist, since, surely there must be an original of the clumsy copy’ (Nabokov 1989:93).

The model of an alternative world is incompatible and in un-proportional relation to the model of transition to a new life. Cincinnatus comes out onto the runway - the fear overcome is a direct road to salvation, freedom, truth and other kingdom, for the Son of God says: ‘Those who undergo pain will survive.’

Cincinnatus perceives the end, he knows the beginning and peels the last layer of his fear: he is not afraid of death, pain, departure; he is tempered ‘is ready to cross the threshold: ‘Everything united... I found a chink to life, found it in a place where it was broken... I think I will say everything – about dreams, about connection, about dismissal’ (Nabokov 1989: 200). Walking to the scaffold, Cincinnatus sees the signs of the end of the world that has no power of creativity - the waterless river, non-existent

fish, fruitless apple tree. The end is near, for it was said 'Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.' (Mathew 7:9)

Tortured like the first Christians, and executed like John the Baptist, Cincinnatus dies like the Son of God and is resurrected bodily: 'What am I doing here? Why am I lying here? Asked Cincinnati himself his simple question and he came down from the scaffold and walked on the land.' (Nabokov 1989:217)

The eschatological finale of the scene is marked by the resurrection of the character.

What does Cincinnatus's resurrection herald? There is only one answer: The characters triumph over time.

'Man's road runs through suffering, the cross and death, but it leads to resurrection. Resurrecting heralds the triumph over time, change not only of the future but of the past as well.' (Berdyayev 1995:161)

'There will be no time' (Revelation 10:6), says the cited work, and indeed, the time covered in the novel fully disappears at the end of the novel. Cincinnatus is resurrected, thereby he is freed from shackles and with his fetters removed, he goes to the maximum liberation of the character both physically and spiritually: '...and amidst the dust, and the falling things, and the falling scenery, Cincinnatus made his way in that direction where to judge by the voices, stood beings akin to him.' (Nabokov 1989:223). The time filling the work vanishes; Cincinnatus overcomes the boundary zone of death, becomes free from the pincers of time; thereby rendering understandable the phrase epitaphed to the novel 'Comme un fou se croit Dieu nous nous croyons mortels', or 'just like mad, who believes to be God, we also reflect that we are mortals' (Nabokov 1989:25). Cincinnatus steers clear of death - to the state that scares only those who does not believe in immortality.

* * *

'Once more and even more, my consciousness, will all its strength, tries to differentiate individual twinkling in the depersonated darkness of life. This darkness is the fault of time, fault of the walls that time has built around us' (Nabokov 1997:433). The author of these words is a philosopher and thinker Adam Krug, the main character of the novel 'Bend Sinister' another of Nabokov's protagonists who selflessly wrests with time.

Adam Krug is a prisoner. Only his prison is larger than Cincinnatus's tiny cell. Krug's prison involves a city immersed in the dark of anti-utopian dictatorship that goes beyond the bounds of locality and generally emerges as bearer of the dictatorial function of the Caesar's world.

Krug too belongs to the chosen, like Cincinnatus. He is distinguished from others by a creative mind - a mind that is in antagonistic attitude to the dictatorship of equalism. The government, imbued with the spirit of scientific progress and technocracy is constantly seeking to tame him. Inasmuch as equalism is an apostle of objective time and like the Commander's stone statue, firmly strides on earth, Krug's revolt against time may be quite logically taken for the quintessence of objective time. The emotional and moral paradigm of the revolt is subject to the principle of graduation, reaching its culmination in the final chapters of the novel.

Equalism is a symbol of really flowing time - dictatorship based on the party of 'the ordinary man' and led by Krug's classmate Paduk. The members of this party 'The followers all had some defects, or according to the theory teacher after a sip of fruit cocktail, they all had 'background faults', that became clear' (Nabokov 1993:358). The founder of the 'middle-class party' Frederick Scotoma, according to whose scientific-theoretical doctrine 'During world time in all the time scopes that ever existed, human consciousness was divided amongst the dwellers of the world. This division was not fair and was the problem to all mankind. Humans for him were just an uncountable number of joints possessing unequal quantity of consciousness.' (Nabokov 1993:359). Scotoma '...was content by repeating one and the same phrase written down in his book' (Nabokov 1993:360).

Therefore, man, according to Equalism, is a simple sum of items, while individualism is the result of mechanical. Equalism is based on a mathematical set of qualitative indices. The numeric-central world of Equalism is the flagship of real time, while its principal machine - the padograph - is the rhythmic equivalent of time. The padograph is a metaphoric symbol of the mechanized reality. The apparatus of the padograph, patting evenly on the pages and throughout imitating calligraphies, has no question mark on its keyboard, which is the starting point of creative imagination and the 'Self', that carries the sign of man's personal identification. Krug's surrounding reality is determined by fragile rules of mathematics 'Mankind, -wrote V. Nabokov,- at some point of its existence starting using mathematical system in order to obtain some order' (Nabokov 1980:374), but in Bend Sinister' the system clearly violated the rule of subordination to man, emerging as a complete master of the situation 'Mathematicians transformed its first condition and behave as if they are the natural part of the world and not adjunction... They try to base everything on numbers and do not really care that in such case the world will become just a dull skull a shadow of what it is' (Nabokov 1980:374). The belief that numbering is a substitute for description and differentiation is decisively perceived by Nabokov to be a gross confusion of the dimension of an object with true essence of the object itself. In the philosophy of Equalism based on a set of whole numbers degree is a simple sub-classification of quantity and elementary mathematics without hindrance balances the 'unjust' difference between people. According, to the 'idea of universal equalization of humans 'Should be molded in a new gauge , according to pre-existing pattern' (Nabokov 1993:360), and then the quantitative distribution of doses of consciousness in the joints will be the same.

Such is the moral anti-norm against which Krug, possessed with knowing his own self, fights. Here the conceptual axis is the clash of the creative mind which is limitation formed of a finite set of numbers, whose inevitable outcome is death. Apart from the breakdown and turning into scrap metal of the padograph, an analogue of an ideal time machine, while the dictator Paduk's nickname 'toad', according to the American student of Nabokov's works, in a bilingual connotation from German Gields 'Der Todd', i.e. 'death', death determines the ideological projection of the anthem of Equalism.

The oppressive time of Equalism is finite, and Krug must flee this finite flow. The direction of fleeing will be determined by the force of pressure of the outer world on the individual: it will show the trajectory of the dispute of the character both with the outer world and with his own self. An ideal expression of this dispute is the opposition between the doubles. Two quite clear doubles of Adam Krug can be found in the novel: one is the vice president of the Medical Academy and owner of a car of reliable reputation, Dr. Martin Krug, often taken mistakenly for Adam Krug. Martin Krug is a figure fixed on the time scale of the real, objective world, the existence of which constantly returns Adam Krug to material reality and at the same time demonstrates the ontological inappropriateness of this reality; the other double is Adam Krug's second half - his alter ego, inner voice that earnestly whispers to the philosopher of the absurdity of the every-day life world: 'Square-root of 'Me' equals to 'Me' (Nabokov 1993:307). Krug's inner conflict is relevant to the opposition that exists between the doubles. Thus, e.g. on the one hand 'was never keen on searching for a pure substance, the one, the absolute - diamond that sparkles on the fire-tree of galaxy' (Nabokov 1993:431) and on the other If physical world can be perceived as a formation of countable numbers, which like mouches volantes sails on the shadowed background somewhere behind the borders of physics, than doubtless that measuring the measurement of interest, can be done through all-embracing despair' (Nabokov 1993:432), but 'Get lost will all your rulers and scales ! Without your rules, competitions, or on paper, material will leave light far behind' (Nabokov 1993:432). According to the theory of relativity, matter cannot move in equivalence with the speed of the light ray, or move faster, it will have zero length and mass, as a result of which time will cease to exist, Einstein's physics categorically rules out such probability, though it considers it possible for an organism to move at a velocity close to that of a light ray, which he calls the 'hour paradox', considering it in the context of the lowering of the biological activity of the organism in cosmic space. Adam Krug's position is diametrically opposed to this. For him the space is not a set of symmetric figures seen by a telescope, where everything obeys physical laws 'Let's through away this stupid telescope' (Nabokov 1993:432) the philosopher storms; for him space is equivalent to infinite duration - of an individual length, which he so far does not possess, but feels, duration where there is no beginning or end, similarity to Bergson's 'la duree', which is the result of the subject's intellectual fabrication and is an analogue of eternal continuity. If matter leaves light behind, then there will be no time and accordingly there will be no death. Persons kept in a

spherical prison of time involuntarily obey death, as an inevitable law of finiteness in time. Death simply puts an end to life, but such prospect does not absolutely attract the philosopher Adam Krug 'My conscious could not deal with the transformation of physical inconstant in non-physical elements, just as it could not cope with the absurd flow of ideas and feelings; Idea- behind the idea, Feeling – beyond the feeling. Maybe because, that then on one fatal day they will vanish and will be absorbed by black darkness, become a part of nothingness (Nabokov 1993:379). Perhaps there exists an alternative reality 'The pictures of consciousness are so counterfeited by the concept of time, that we nearly believe that something eternal exists, a glittering weapon (a point of perception), retrospective eternity, which we can nor remember and perspective eternity, that we are unable to guess' (Nabokov 1993:434), then what is death 'Death is either a momentous filling of conscious with perfect knowledge or absolutely nothing' (Nabokov 1993:434) 'Dealing with which problem is more vital – external, like space, time, material, beyond knowledge, or internal, like life, though, love, internally un-cognizable? Or maybe death, the point were these both problems come into collision with each other?' (Nabokov 1993:433).

Death is interpreted as the point of section, or the liminal boundary between the inner and outer perspectives, where Krug himself must take upon himself the function of border guard: at the boundary point of death lies the path of salvation of the philosopher caught in the trap of time. Accordingly, death is not an end but the beginning of global metamorphosis. Krug's name 'Adam' is not accidental. The symbolism of the original man, encoded in the name suggests the trajectory of the movement of the character: Krug - first subconsciously, then quite consciously moves 'thither' - to that supra-temporal world that lies on the vertical. Krug's own insanity emerges as his impulse 'He is unable to deliver his message to the world by words, because words are not enough' (Nabokov 1993:488). Krug who has long fought his double in order to understand the meaning and purpose of death, 'the blessed insanity', suddenly helps him 'solve the problem' 'Stupid people? - he cried while touching his nose with his palm – Tell me for God's sake, what are you afraid of? Does it really matter? Funny indeed! Just like the childish dream of my family – Olga and the boy played a scene – The woman got drowned and the child was a victim of a railway accident. God, does this make any sense? Death – it is only a question of style' (Nabokov 1993:481-485). Like in a reliable trench, Krug is fortified in his 'blessed insanity' from above, vertically descending into his dark cell like a ray. Madness is a window opened into a different dimension; it is the only way out of the confused absurd of reality. Madness imprinted with the sign of transcendentalism enables the character to taste the charm of the other world 'With a calm smile lying on his whining face Krug buried himself in hay' (Nabokov 1993:478-479).

Krug too goes onto the runway: the philosopher's double, reflected in a mirror commensurate with supra-temporal dimension, emerges not only as a 'companion' of his empirical copy but as a rescuer as well. The process of reflection is Trans-corporeal; the image beyond the parameter of fragile time puts an end to the dichotomy, expressed by the symbolism of the mirror, and the qualitative result forms a new, welded, single 'self'. The character turned full, is magnanimously released from the spherical prison by the author 'Listen – says mad Krug to one of his friends – Yesterday I had a dream, yes a dream.... Does it matter whether it was a dream or a vision, - a ray of light that reached the dark cell of a pale-faced monk. - Look at my feet- they are as cold as marble, but do you get what I mean> Listen to me, you are not as stupid as the others? You can understand that there is nothing to be afraid of' (Nabokov 1993:483).

The humiliated, tortured, suffering Krug, like a hermit, goes barefooted towards the supra-temporal world, where lies consciousness free of time, the highest unattainable stage of existence. The meta-idea is the same 'just like mad, who believes to be God, we also reflect that we are mortals'.

Translated to English by **Ariane Chanturia**