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SPATIO-TEMPORAL METAPHORS IN
DICTIONARY OF THE KHAZARS BY MILORAD PAVIĆ

1. *Introduction*

For the purpose of acknowledging the significance of the work *Dictionary of the Khazars* written by Milorad Pavić (1929-2009) we have intended to employ the effect of defamiliarization (estrangement)¹ in Eco's interpretation – so that we could display this subject as though we were contemplating it for the first time.² Our question is whether academics and the wider public can recognize the importance of the attitude expressed by Günter Kaindlstorfer who confirmed that Milorad Pavić was undoubtedly the leading figure of European post-modernism,³ or the opinion of Dominic di Bernardi who noted that Milorad Pavić might be one of European premier fiction writers?⁴

Dictionary of the Khazars (1984;⁵ English translation 1988,⁶ Italian translation 1988⁷) was the first on the best-seller list in France, and the third on the list in the Great Britain. Apart from the Europe-

(¹) Viktor B. Shklovsky, *Искусство как прием*:
<<http://www.opojaz.ru/manifests/kakpriem.html>>.

(²) Umberto Eco, *Tra menzogna e ironia*. Bompiani, Milano 1998.

(³) Günter Kaindlstorfer, *Review*, in Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. Dereta, Belgrade 1996, the cover page.

(⁴) Dominic di Bernardi, *Review*, in Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*, cit., the cover page.

(⁵) First edition: Milorad Pavić, *Hazarski rečnik. Roman leksikon u 100.00 reči*. Prosveta, Beograd 1984.

(⁶) First English edition: Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. Translated from the Serbo-Croatian by Christina Pribičević-Zorić. New Knopf, York 1988.

(⁷) The Italian translation was published in 1988 by Branka Ničija: Milorad Pavić, *Dizionario dei Chazari. Romanzo lessico*. Garzanti, Milano 1988.

an cultural sphere, it was *The New York Times* which not only acknowledged the importance of this work, but also included it into the list of the seven masterpieces published in the USA in 1988.

In addition to *Dictionary of the Khazars*, Pavić's entire artistic opus is, by all means, firmly rooted in the world literature. Pavić's significance in the world literature may be derived not only from his abilities to create the erudite dimensions of postmodernism, but from his innovative application of the nonlinear perspectives of literature as well, while simultaneously integrating the principles of multicultural interferences and the representation of one's own cultural identity, along with exercising a decisive influence on the idea of cosmopolitanism. Thus Pavić's works have achieved unity in diversity which is becoming the universal paradigm of the world cultural heritage. These are the reasons why Pavić has been nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature by critics from Europe, the USA and Brazil. In this regard, due to his philological and artistic mission, Pavić has been engaged in a dialogue with Umberto Eco, the one related to the creation of intellectual literature.

As can be noted in the previous section, the principles of Pavić's creativity were extensively researched and debated in the 1980s and the 1990s. However, it is necessary to explain why they are supposed to be revised in this article. It should be taken into consideration that not sufficient attention has been devoted to specific aspects of spatio-temporal relations which are considered to be the backbone of Pavić's poetics.

Thus, the focus of this paper will be on the analysis of a metaphor as the dominant stylistic figure,⁸ through which spatio-temporal relations are structured into Pavić's work. The interdisciplinary approach of these subjects will include: literary theory, criticism, linguostylistic aspects,⁹ cognitive linguistics, ontological and comparative study of religions. All of them will be included in the analysis of each stage of the process of generating the text and functioning of segments of the

(⁸) Having in mind its position in the system of stylistic figures, we will also analyze related spatio-temporal metaphors, comparisons, symbols, allegories and personifications.

(⁹) I am grateful to professor Tijana Ašić for her assistance and support.

textual structure in “the vertiginous succession of metaphors”.¹⁰ It has been widely acknowledged that metaphors¹¹ based on space are crucial in human understanding and representation of abstract phenomena,¹² such as time.¹³ This is not surprising at all, considering the fact that space is conceptually a very rich domain. While representing time in terms of space, we may be in a position to take advantage of the complexity of its structure. For instance, our perception of time may be related to its moving up or down, or its staggering from left to right, or it may be related to the concept of time branching in the same manner just like branches protrude from a tree.

In order to understand the relationship between the use of spatio-temporal metaphors in everyday life and their poetic use in *Dictionary of the Khazars*, it is important to note that the words which describe space and spatial relations are frequently used to designate temporal relations. This linguistic reality is commonly referred to as the “Localist hypothesis”.¹⁴ It claims that spatial expressions are semantically and grammatically fundamental. Thus, spatial prepositions are often used to designate temporal relations as well (“The box is on the table”; “The meeting is going to be held on Monday”), In addition, verbs of spatial motion can also denote the passage of time (“The black car passed by”, “Years passed quickly”). In this particular case, it is possible to discuss the metaphorical uses of linguistic expressions.

On the other hand, while considering human cognition, Ray S. Jackendoff introduces the “Thematic relations hypothesis”.¹⁵ This signifi-

(¹⁰) Janja Jerkov, *Il Dizionario dei Chazari come nodo del dire*, “Ricerche slavistiche”, N.s. 13 (LIX) (2015), p. 283.

(¹¹) Metaphors should be understood here as fundamental semantic mechanisms of our cognition and not as poetic figures. We will come to this second meaning later in this paper.

(¹²) George Lakoff, *The contemporary theory of metaphor*, in *Metaphor and thought*. Second edition. Ed. by Andrew Ortony. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1993, pp. 202-251.

(¹³) Günter Radden, *The Metaphor 'Time as Space' across Languages*, “Zeitschrift für Interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht”, 8 (2003) 2/3, p. 114.

(¹⁴) John Lyons, *Semantics*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1977, p. 718.

(¹⁵) Ray S. Jackendoff, *Semantics and Cognition*. The MIT Press - Cambridge, MA London 1985.

cant cognitive hypothesis states that when it comes to exploring the organization of concepts which, unlike those of physical space, lack perceptual counterparts, our mind does not have to start *de novo*, but uses an independently motivated algebra of spatial concepts for new purposes. In other words, the mind does not manufacture abstract concepts such as time, out of thin air, but adapts a mechanism that is already available. In everyday communication, time is usually represented as a kind of one-dimensional-pseudo-space with moments (points) and intervals. Lakoff describes the metaphor based on this model as time passing as motion over a landscape.¹⁶

“In English, the Moving-Ego metaphor conceptualizes the ego as moving forward through time and the Moving-Time metaphor construes time as moving forward toward the ego”.¹⁷ An example of the “Moving-Ego” metaphor is: “We are approaching the end of the month”,¹⁸ whereas “New Year’s Eve is approaching”¹⁹ is the “Moving-Time” metaphor.

This being said, the following assumptions can be made: even if our mind and body can directly perceive and feel the passage of time, which has recently been shown in several scientific studies – it should be pointed out that there are some specific neurons and centres in the right hemisphere of the brain which can be seen as inherent “metronomes”.²⁰ Additionally, it is spatial metaphors that strengthen our idea of temporal structure and events, making it even more clear and precise. Hence, if space is not a prerequisite for the experience it is nevertheless indispensable when it comes to talking, contemplating and speculating about it!

In addition to the abovementioned “ordinary” spatio-temporal metaphors which are found in natural languages, it is not uncommon to find

⁽¹⁶⁾ George Lakoff, *The contemporary theory of metaphor*, cit.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Sarah Duffy, Michelle Feist, *Power in time: The influence of power posing on metaphoric perspectives on time*, “Language and Cognition”, 9 (2017), p. 637.

⁽¹⁸⁾ George Lakoff, *The contemporary theory of metaphor*, cit., p. 202.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Herbert H. Clark, *Space, time, semantics, and the child*, in *Cognitive Development and the Acquisition of Language*. Ed. by T. Moore. Academic Press, New York 1973, pp. 27-63.

⁽²⁰⁾ Tatyana Glezerman, Victoria Balkoski, *Language, Thought, and the Brain*. Plenum, New York 1999.

specific spatio-temporal metaphors in poetic and fictional discourse, the nature of which is more complex, just like Pavić's poetic transformation of the concepts of Space and Time. In fact, in his language games, Pavić uses the communicative potential of everyday use of spatio-temporal metaphors as a starting point, in order to create a communicative channel which will boost the reader's recognition of universal cognitive dimensions. However, it also "makes strange" (*осмпа-нѐние* 'estrangement, defamiliarization'),²¹ develops and reshapes poetic images and generates multidimensional space in alternative worlds.

In this context, we shall provide an exact explanation of how Pavić, as an example of literary metaphoricity, advances and reshapes the cognitive metaphors used in everyday life in order to create new poetics of space and time. We shall also discuss the differences between those metaphoric processes that are culturally specific, such as the similarities and differences between "The Red Book", "The Green Book" and "The Yellow Book" and the ones referred to as human universals.

Therefore, the aim of this work is to revise, amend and broaden the reception of the conceptions of space and time in *Dictionary of the Khazars*, in comparison to the poetic principles of Jorge Luis Borges and Umberto Eco. In addition, in this paper we shall analyse some specific aspects of the linguistic nature and stylistic effects of spatio-temporal metaphors in this postmodern novel along with their poetic and semantic functions and ontological status in the fictional world.

2. General Poetic Aspects of the "Open Work" and Postmodern Dimensions of Space and Time in *Dictionary of the Khazars*

2.1. *Upgrading of the Poetics of the Open Work*

There are many different and even contradictory myths, legends and historical data found in *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The mission of the reader is to create a mosaic using these parts and in this manner to raise the level of awareness as regards the existence of semantic parallelisms and interfering layers in the specific genre of the lexicon novel,²²

(²¹) Viktor B. Shklovsky, *Искусство как приём*, cit.

(²²) See Jovan Delić, *Hazaraska prizma. Tumačenje proze Milorada Pavića*. Prosveta - Oktoih - Dečje novine, Beograd - Titograd - Gornji Milanovac 1991.

which has, through its formal innovation, more potential for creating polysemic effects through *ars combinatoria*.²³ There is an obvious parallel between poetic and stylistic aspects in Pavić's *Dictionary of the Khazars* and Eco's theory of the open work.²⁴ Pavić has further developed Eco's theory in order to create a dialogue between the text and the reader, so that the reader could play an active role in the interpretation and creation of meaning.²⁵ The aim of the mission of Umberto Eco and Milorad Pavić in postmodern literature is, therefore, not only to change the way authors write, but also, to transform the manner in which their texts are received, and in a broader sense to change the ways of understanding the world. Eco and Pavić reshaped their works, thus enabling the reader to read them in an "infinite number of ways".²⁶

Taking into consideration the fact that the term "open work" can be perceived as a specific form of epistemological metaphor, in the "Preliminary notes to the second, reconstructed and revised edition", Pavić emphasised the openness of the meanings in *Dictionary of the Khazars*, but also created his own, original vision of the palimpsest concept and intertwining of different civilizations, upgrading the theory of the open work to the form of a lexicon novel.

Therefore, the reader simultaneously becomes a literary hero, a specific type of a co-author, even a potential successor to Pavić as the author of new works about the Khazars. In the context of this article, it should be noted that the reader is actually a collaborator in the creation of performances and perceptions of space and time in the novel. Therefore, Pavić used the basic concept of Eco's theory of the "open work" – the more active role assumed by the reader while pursuing an internal dialogue with the author – so that he could create the multiplicities of perspectives of spatio-temporal relations for the purpose of

(²³) Sava Damjanov, *Postmodernizacija fantastike kod Pavića*:

<http://www.rastko.org.rs/knjizevnost/Pavic/knjiz_portret/09_pkp_damjanov.html>.

(²⁴) Nikola Milošević, *Pavićevo otvoreno delo*:

<http://www.rastko.org.rs/knjizevnost/Pavic/knjiz_portret/05_pkp_milosevic.html>.

(²⁵) Umberto Eco, *Opera aperta: forma e indeterminazione nelle poetiche contemporanee*. Bompiani, Milano 1962.

(²⁶) Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English. Translated from the Serbian language by Christina Pribičević-Zorić. Dereta, Belgrade 1996, p. 11.

enabling the reader to freely modify the structure and semantic system of *Dictionary of the Khazars* based on their combinations.

2.2. *Borges's Influence on the Conceptions of Space and Time*

The artistic work of Jorge Luis Borges²⁷ has served as an inspiration for both Eco and Pavić's postmodern missions. The intermingling of space and time in Pavić's lexicon novel is generally related to the systems of spatio-temporal metaphors as a whole, a feature that is reminiscent of the beginnings of postmodernism in Borges's story *The Garden of Forking Paths*. In addition, it should be emphasized that the abovementioned spatial metaphor, used to explain the notion of a literary work as a labyrinth of meanings – is what inspired Umberto Eco to create the theory of the open work, whose fundamental idea was related to multiplicities of reading paths that led to the termination of linear spatio-temporal relations when establishing the “branching structure” based on which the reader is able to make interpretative associations within correspondences of the various temporal perspectives, intertwined with mystical hermetic connections. Accordingly, we focus on the presence of the double-level influence upon the construction of this particular poetic aspect of Pavić's creative work: 1) directly – under the influence of Borges's narrative world, and 2) in a theoretical form as well – by means of the interpretation of Borges's creation of “forking paths” in Eco's book entitled *The Open Work*. These principles are also expressed in the narrative flow of *Dictionary of the Khazars*, in the context of searching for the truth in the labyrinth of meanings:

In that event, the reader has no other choice than to begin in the middle of any given page and forge his own path. Then he may move through the book as through a forest, from one marker to the next, orienting himself by observing the stars, the moon, and the cross.²⁸

The structure of the novel involves a labyrinthine along with branching presented in the way in which the interweaving of entries, marked

⁽²⁷⁾ Jorge Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions*. Translated by Andrew Hurley. Penguin Books, New York 1998.

⁽²⁸⁾ Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English, cit., p. 13.

in the “Preliminary notes to the second, reconstructed and revised edition” – is described through the comparison and spatial metaphor and interweaving paths. Therefore, the various combinations of paths” of readings that determine Pavić’s poetics reflect its ambiguity and diffusive nature.

2.3. *The Classification of Basic Temporal Layers*

In order to interpret the metaphors of the paths of writings and readings, embedded in the poetics of the novel along with the overall nature and function of spatio-temporal metaphors, it is necessary to establish a classification of time perspectives and basic concepts of time in the novel. It consists of the following categories: 1) three visions of the relationship between myths, legends and historical data in “The Red Book”, “The Green Book” and “The Yellow Book” (Christian, Islamic and Hebrew sources on the Khazar question); 2) demonic time and gaps; 3) time in dreams; 4) “cracks in time” and “knots in time”; 5) Pavić’s metaphorical representation of eternity.

In addition to these general aspects, the diachronic perspective is provided in Pavić’s selection of various historical sources, myths and legends, generated by four dominant temporal layers: 1) the time of the Khazar polemic (the ninth century), 2) the presentation of the chronicles of the Khazars (the eleventh and twelfth centuries), 3) the seventeenth century – at the time of “the first edition” of *Dictionary of the Khazars* (dominated by the narrative device of the found manuscript), 4) the twentieth century – “the second edition” of *Dictionary of the Khazars*, which renewed scientific interest in the Khazars and the *dénoûement* of the novel.

3. *The Ontology of Space and Time*

3.1. *The Book and the Building of Spatio-temporal Labyrinths*

The complex relations between spatio-temporal metaphors, the composition and poetics are intertwined in the representation of the building, where Samuel Cohen, “one of the authors of this book”,²⁹ once lived:

(²⁹) Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English, cit., p. 210.

He stayed at an old inn, in one of the forty-seven rooms belonging to the local German Jews, the Ashkenazi, and there he found a book about interpreting dreams, written in Ladino.³⁰

The principles of the text and its general construction, are metaphorically represented within the rooms, stairs and corridors. It is evident that this building, with its forty-seven rooms and many strange transformations of corridors, stairs and walls, metaphorically represents forty-seven “entries”³¹ in *Dictionary of the Khazars* (including “Appendix I” and “Appendix II”) and their interconnections. The corridors represent their mutual relations, and stairs mean moving on to the new floor – to a higher level of knowledge. Other books also represent new buildings and new knowledge, whereas connections among the books represent the systems of streets and squares, which continues to produce and reproduce a labyrinth of knowledge.

To understand the metaphorical nature and function of relationships between space and time, it is also necessary to analyze the relationships between comparisons and spatio-temporal metaphors. Specifically, in *Dictionary of the Khazars*, comparisons are based on the same mapping concept just like the one used in spatio-temporal metaphors. For example, a comparison between the book and the building is one of the key aspects of the scientific and the mystical knowledge of Dr. Isailo Suk:³²

He thought of how this building was like a book written in an unknown language he had not learned, how these corridors were like the sentences of strange languages and the rooms foreign words he had never heard before.³³

Time in philosophy can be considered either as an independent notion (a primary ontological category³⁴) or as a simple product of our consciousness, a by-product of the possibility of orienting the domain

⁽³⁰⁾ *Ivi*, p. 233.

⁽³¹⁾ *Ivi*, p. 12.

⁽³²⁾ But even this knowledge didn't save Isailo Suk from the demon-killer.

⁽³³⁾ Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English, cit., p. 107.

⁽³⁴⁾ William Herbert Newton-Smith, *The Structure of Time*. Routledge, London 1980.

of all happenings.³⁵ Moreover, it is commonly thought in psychology that the existence of time is not so evident, accessible and visible to our mind as the existence of space and that the latter is used to represent the former.

In addition to the relationships previously described, the chambers within the building also bear temporal meanings, so that the labyrinth, in the spirit of Hermeticism, simultaneously represents space, time and the combinations of the meanings in the novel:

The past has suddenly changed; the more inroads the future makes, the more the past changes – it becomes more fraught with dangers and more unpredictable than the future, full of long-closed rooms from which live beasts increasingly emerge.³⁶

Pavić highlighted metaphorically-represented poetic principles, as well as comparisons that can be applied to his artistic work in general, in the relationship between time, space and the construction of the novel: “prestressed time, which, similar to prestressed concrete in construction, thanks to their specific characteristics, allows the construction of large arcs”.³⁷ So, in Pavić’s work, the construction of time is like the construction of a building – the nature, function, material, and time formats are actually in accord with the material and shape of the concrete that supports the monumental ceiling of large buildings. “Thus, with ‘prestressed time’ it is possible, in a creative moment, to unite the past and the future, and be equally responsible to both”.³⁸

The metaphor of the book as a building is determined by the idea that *Dictionary of the Khazars* is constantly being revised and transformed in space and time, along with the notion that the relationship between the future and the past is reversible, because it is natural to move forward and return from one chamber to another. Therefore, through spatio-temporal metaphors, space, time and the structure of the

⁽³⁵⁾ Roberto Casati, Achille Varzi, *Parts and Places: The Structures of Spatial Representation*. MIT Press, Cambridge 1999.

⁽³⁶⁾ Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English, cit., p. 283.

⁽³⁷⁾ Radovan Popović, *Prvi pisac trećeg milenija. Životopis Milorada Pavića*. Dereta, Beograd 2002, p. 68. (For the purpose of this paper, all articles published in Serbian are translated by Dušan R. Živković).

⁽³⁸⁾ Jovan Delić, *Hazaraska prizma...*, cit., p. 79.

novel are mutually elucidated and intertwined in mystical, poetic and stylistic layers.

3.2. *The Hourglass*

The hourglass, incorporated in the cover illustration of *Dictionary of the Khazars*, symbolizes the general principle of the perception of time. The process of reading is cyclical, because, after the apparent end of the book, when the sand runs down, it is enough that the (same or next) reader turns over the book or hourglass in order to start again, so that he/she could have time to recreate *Dictionary of the Khazars* and make it a part of eternity. In other words, the book is constantly being reshaped by readers who become its co-authors accordingly:

The hourglass he had built into the binding of the book was invisible, but, as you read you could hear the trickle of the sand in the utter silence. When it stopped, you had to turn the book over and continue reading the other way around, back to front, and there in the secret of the book was revealed.³⁹

In this section, the materialization of abstract aspects is evident in the context of the dynamism of the past and the future. The nature and function of the clepsydra can be explained by the general principle of reversibility of time: “When the stream of time can flow backward, then it is quite normal that the sequence of cause and effect is reversed, too”.⁴⁰ Therefore, the hourglass (as a mystical, kabbalistic object) is transformed into a metaphor for the purpose of the communication process between the writer and the reader, in the creation of temporal perspectives.

3.3. *Religions and Spatio-temporal Metaphors*

3.3.1. “*The Red Book*”, “*The Green Book*” and “*The Yellow Book*”: *Frames of Space, Time and Eternity*

In this part of the analysis we shall consider general poetic images that

⁽³⁹⁾ Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English, cit., p. 7.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Andreas Leitner, *Dictionary of the Khazars as an epistemological metaphor*, “Review of Contemporary Fiction”, 18 (1998) 2, p. 159.

constitute the framework of metaphorical processes which shape the relations between Judaism, Islam and Christianity:

He became head of the Polychron Monastery, of which nothing was known for centuries except that it had perhaps been built at the juncture of three measures of time – Arab, Greek, and Hebrew – whence its name.⁴¹

There are also cultural specificities, reflected in the Christian, Hebrew and Islamic concepts referred to in the novel. For instance, in “The Green Book”, Al Bekri Spaniard, the principal Arab chronicler of the Khazar polemic, believes that Islam reached the highest level of knowledge of the nature of space, time and eternity:

The fourth, *anbia*, the level of prophetic rays and tomorrows, represents Islamic teaching in its most essential meaning, the spirit of the Book, or the seventh depth of the deep.⁴²

According to Spaniard, Judaism and Christianity are not false religions, yet he claims that they have reached a certain level of knowledge, whereby the achievement is illustrated by the depth of knowledge as a spatial entity.

On the other hand, the spatio-temporal metaphor in “The Red Book” of the mission by Cyril and Methodius displays the time and silence through the spatial entities in the way of seeing the world of ascetic rhythm of monastic life in the cell: “From the cell you could clearly see half of October, and in it the silence was one hour’s walk long and two hour’s walk wide”.⁴³ In the same passage a temporal entity (the month of October) is depicted as a space spreading in front of the observer. Besides, the silence, which is ontologically also a temporal entity, has spatial dimensions – length and width. Apart from this specific metaphysical interpretation of silence, another layer of meaning suggests the universal metaphoric measurement of space: “two hour’s walk”.

After demonstrating that frame in “The Red Book”, as well as the cultural specificities in “The Yellow book”, the latter consists of twen-

⁽⁴¹⁾ Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English, cit., p. 86.

⁽⁴²⁾ *Ivi*, p. 135.

⁽⁴³⁾ *Ivi*, p. 64.

ty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet and ten numbers from which the world is created: eternity, space and time. The divine verbs are carriers of action, eternity and time of creation, whereas the nouns which indicate material entities are demonic.

After this analysis, it is evident that Pavić seeks to find some focal points which would establish a dialogue between religions.⁴⁴ *Dictionary of the Khazars* illustrates the tragedy of civilizations. Their interweaving, from the metatextual point of view, reflects their search for various forms of knowledge, whereas universal joy and agony are reflected in their similarities.

3.3.2. *The Khazars' Beliefs in the Context of Relations Between Space and Time*

Dictionary of the Khazars is divided into three books, intending not only to represent the Christian, Islamic and Hebrew views of the Khazars' question, but also to assume the role of a medium, in the creation of multilayered semantic systems, which includes the origins of secret wisdom of the Khazars. In these culturally specific metaphoric processes, an ancient hidden religion of the Khazars represents a palimpsest, and its relationship to understanding of the world, according to which the internal compositional, stylistic, narratological and ideological principles of *Dictionary of the Khazars* act. It is important to point out that the spatialization of time constitutes the very essence of the mythology of the Khazars, as a result of their religious and philosophical perceptions of the world: "The Khazars imagine the future in terms of space, never time".⁴⁵ In this segment, the concept of temporal layers being placed in parallel in space – is introduced: "In the beginning, according to the Khazar legend, all creation, the past and the future, all events and things, melted as they swam in the fiery river of time, former and subsequent beings mixing like soap and water".⁴⁶

(⁴⁴) Hans Robert Jaus, *Razgovor religija ili: The Last Things Before The Last*. Translated from German into Serbian by Damir Smiljanić, "Letopis Matice srpske", 1/2 (2014), pp. 61-94.

(⁴⁵) Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English, cit., p. 145.

(⁴⁶) *Ibid.*

This myth is also the key to understanding Pavić's poetics in general. It is the idea of the continuous transformation of space and time that connects history, fiction, poetic and the semantic aspects of the novel:

They believed that all things followed one code when on the rise and another when on the fall, the departures and returns did not come under the same law, and the same agreements did not apply before and after victory.⁴⁷

This aspect could be interpreted in the context of Eco's ostensibly paradoxical notion on the nature of code presented in the spirit of the openness of meaning.⁴⁸ In Eco's definition, as well as in Pavić's *Dictionary of the Khazars*, the modification of the conventional understanding of the code, as a closed system of meaning, is achieved by placing a strong emphasis not only on its dynamics but on the process of communication with other codes as well.

3.3.3. *The Mission of the Composing of Adam's Body – the Assemblers of Dictionary of the Khazars against Demons*

Being in the quest for the divine principle, the assemblers of *Dictionary of the Khazars* have a mission (through a combination of words) to compose Adam's body on the Earth, representing the epitome and spiritualization of an essential metaphor in the divine space and time, as a principle that connects all four religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam and the ancient religion of the Khazars):

Their places of worship are built in a strict, predefined arrangement, which, when connected, form a picture of Adam Ruhani, the third angel, the symbol of the Khazar princess and her sect of priests.⁴⁹

In this semantic system there is an evident active future-oriented principle: heroes of *Dictionary of the Khazars* tend not only to conquer the upcoming time, but also to win and change the past so that they

⁽⁴⁷⁾ *Ivi*, p. 74.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Umberto Eco, *Codice*, in *Enciclopedia Einaudi*. Einaudi, Torino 1978, pp. 243-281.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English, cit., p. 145.

could change the present and the future. Their mission is, naturally, represented by the Moving-Ego metaphors, as a universal human attitude towards eternity.

Adam's body metaphorically represents the embodiment of basic beliefs of "authors", compilers, dream hunters, and continuers of *Dictionary of the Khazars*, from ancient times to the postmodern era (as regards the religious and poetic aspects of the novel). Therefore, they can be perceived as the metaphors of the body of the sacred text which should be established through the interweaving of intertextual relations belonging to different religions, with the interference of different space and time perspectives:

Not individual lives, but all future and past times, all the branches of eternity, are already here, broken up into tiny morsels and divided among people and their dreams. [...] Humanity chews up time all at once, not waiting for tomorrow. Time, then, does not exist here. It comes and washes over this world somewhere from the other side.⁵⁰

If they conquer time, they would put together *Dictionary of the Khazars*, which symbolically represents the creation of Adam's body on the Earth. However, the satanic time-force, that they encounter, exercises domination over them. Their Universe is also populated by Demons who destroy time and prevent the Khazars from attaining their goal:

Time belongs to Satan; he carries it like a skein in the pocket of the devil, unravels it when his mysterious economies so dictate and it should be wrested away from him. For, if one can ask and receive eternity from God, then we can take the opposite of eternity – time – only from Satan.⁵¹

Parts of Adam's body are trapped in dreams, whose logic is non-linear. Dreams are the main battle sites where all the strategies for conquering time are to be employed. Still, "A dream is a garden of devils, and all dreams in this world were dreamed long ago".⁵²

There is an evident domination of demons over compilers in all temporal layers of the novel. From the eighth to the twentieth century,

⁽⁵⁰⁾ *Ivi*, p. 315.

⁽⁵¹⁾ *Ivi*, pp. 314-315.

⁽⁵²⁾ *Ivi*, p. 9.

Adam occupies different stages of the divine hierarchy. The demons want to destroy the assemblers of *Dictionary of the Khazars* particularly in the period of Adam's rising up the divine hierarchy and only in that case – the demonic victory would be absolute: "We are waiting for time, my lord. Besides, we devils cannot take a step until you humans have taken yours".⁵³ Besides, the relationship between human and demonic steps demonstrates the relationship between their past and present. This is the reason why *Dictionary of the Khazars* does not have an end in the customary sense. Pavić, on his part, suggests that every dedicated reader becomes a segment of the novel, while simultaneously being drawn into the revelation of demonic and divine sources. Thus the battle for dominance over Time, that is simultaneously fought in all temporal layers, continues and perseveres.

3.3.4. *Relations Between the "Cracks in Time" and "Knots in Time"*

The overlapping aspects of time create "knots in time",⁵⁴ whereas the processes coming from the conflict occurring in the potential past and potential future, have the opposite directions: the clash between the past and the future generates "the cracks in time": "Under these conditions, of course, the connecting seams of the days could not fit together properly, and cracks appeared in time. However, this matter only gladdened Petkutin".⁵⁵ It was in this transition into the chthonic world that Petkutin (the creation of Avram Brankovich) wrapped up a temporary victory over the current time, which was soon replaced by his eternal agony as a result of which his body was torn by the ancient shadows. The cracks in time, by their nature, significantly differ from one another. Besides, Avram's initial hope that he deceived the living and the dead by creating Petkutin through contact with demonic principles is only valid for a moment and then transforms into his final agony.

In this context, the knots and cracks in time are alternately interspersed. For an ordinary man – the transience of life and the law of linear time is of prime importance. On the other hand, the divine per-

⁽⁵³⁾ *Ivi*, p. 53.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ *Ivi*, p. 245.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ *Ivi*, p. 35.

spective presents it as a cyclical process. This principle does not automatically mean that one would return to the starting point, but rather suggests the monumental dramas that took place in order to close the circle.

Knots in time represent the principle of the interweaving of multiple time perspectives, and consequently time dimensions reversibly affect one another, especially in the teachings of Judah Halevi, the principal Hebrew chronicler of the Khazar Polemic:

He warned that there are knots in time, the “hearts of the years”, which are in accordance with the rhythm of time, space, and human beings, and correspond with these knots are acts, works that are tuned with time.⁵⁶

Pavić employs the spatio-temporal metaphors to suggest the nature of the novelistic structure as a semantic network whose knots indicate the interlaced settings, which are also, in the external context, a part of the labyrinth of intertextuality.⁵⁷ An encyclopedic attitude towards tradition indicates inherent elements of intertextuality. Anthony Burgess pointed out the intertextual innovations in *Dictionary of the Khazars*: “One of the intentions seems to be to elevate the book, or BOOK, or Box of Organized Knowledge into a magical object [...] which can talk to itself and with other books, a lethal weapon [...]”.⁵⁸

Based on the previously elaborated aspects, we conclude that the spatio-temporal metaphors of cracks in time and knots in time contain general principles of various tendencies in the permanent transformation of past, present and future, as well as the transformation of spaces as the outcome and the overall dynamism of meaning, which is presented by Moving Time metaphors.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ *Ivi*, p. 245.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ In its branched structure, and reference to the “links” to the various determinants, which continue to multiply new meanings, *Dictionary of the Khazars* is a hypertext suitable for reading in virtual environments.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Anthony Burgess, *What The Reviews Say*:
<www.khazars.com/en/recepcija/what-the-reviews-say>.

4. *Four Types of Spatio-temporal Metaphors*

4.1. *The Principle of Classification*

Dictionary of the Khazars is rich in semantically fuzzy, ambiguous and odd linguistic expressions. We have already emphasized that space and time are not only central but also deeply interwoven topics in this extraordinary book.

In this section, we shall investigate the spatio-temporal metaphors characterizing the universe of the Khazars, both at the conceptual and poetical level. The final objective is to explain whether semantic relations and dependencies between concepts involved in these metaphors illustrate the much more complex artistic and fictional elements and ideas that form the basis of this novel.

Dictionary of the Khazars provides four types of metaphors in which space and time are semantically related; time can be represented either a) as a place (location) or b) as a substance or c) as a living creature; d) in addition, there are two examples in which time serves as a conceptual basis for space: spatial dimensions are defined through temporal duration.

4.2. *Time Is a Place*

Several metaphors represent time as an open space – a place where a human being can build his/her life or through which he/she can travel. Thus, time is not reduced to a mono-dimensional axis, but constitutes two (or three) dimensional locations, an unknown land of opportunities, threatening at the same time: “He settles his future very slowly and conscientiously. [...] First he clears it, then he builds on the best site, and finally he rearranges the objects inside at great length”.⁵⁹ In this metaphor, Kyr Avram declares an active attitude. This is actually an expanded image of a typical, conventional Moving Ego metaphor, in which the observer is conceived as motion and time⁶⁰ as being stationary. The future is presented as an inhabited space.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English, cit., p. 32.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Dedre Gentner et al., *As Time Goes by: Evidence for Two Systems in Processing Space – Time Metaphors*, “Language and Cognitive Processes”, 17 (2002) 5, pp. 537-565.

This spatio-temporal metaphor, enables us, in a rather paradoxical manner, to imagine eternity because in this novel the temporal infinity is represented as a simultaneous co-existence of all the temporal instants in a single space. By analogy the same moment or interval occurring in different locations (for example, a night) can be seen as a set of different moments: “they are thousands upon hundreds of thousands of nights, which, instead of traveling through time, one after another, like birds, calendars, or clocks, evolve simultaneously”.⁶¹

This section shows the pluralism of perceptions that continue to multiply and transform themselves into the “branchings” of the following moments.

4.3. *Time Is a Substance*

Images of this type could be seen as a meditation on the Moving Time metaphor. The essence of this principle is presented by the following metaphor related to Kohen’s mission, in which Constantinople is represented as a city constantly washed by time: “And in his dreams did indeed see a city on the shores of time, walked through its straw-strewn streets that deadened sound, lived in a tower full of cupboards as big as a small church, and listened to the rain of the fountains”.⁶²

“Time is water” is a very common and exploited metaphor. The passing of time is described as a flow in many languages (“time is flowing like a river”). However, in Pavić’s novel, this metaphor is transformed into a much more powerful picture: time bathes the city, changes, destroys and recreates it. The citizens of Constantinople (as well as its visitors) are thus just slaves of time, who have to obey its demonic constraints and caprices.

The basic meaning of the term “the flow of time” is essentially metaphorical, because in the archetypical sense it evokes the image of the river flow. However, this classic metaphor in *Dictionary of the Khazars* is much more complex, insinuating that just because it apparently looks like a linear flow. In fact, it is viewed from the broader perspec-

⁽⁶¹⁾ Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English, cit., p. 313.

⁽⁶²⁾ *Ivi*, p. 211.

tive of a network of streams flowing and overlapping, and, as such, represents the branching of temporal perspectives.

Furthermore, along with the idea of the branching of time and its patio-temporal metaphor, Pavić outlined the principle of reversibility, placing on an equal footing the two seemingly contradictory conceptions which actually figure as a supplement in accordance with the hermetic principles.⁶³ “When the girl turned ten, her mother, with what had once been pretty hands, taught her how to bake bread, and her father summoned her, told her that the future is not water, and died”.⁶⁴ That’s why Kalina’s father, shortly before his death, said that time is not water, momentarily becoming aware of the fact that the mortal’s idea of linearity is actually an illusion. That is only one part of the sentence uttered before his death, signifying that time is not necessarily water that flows from source to confluence, but can also flow reversibly. Therefore, the power of knowledge was gained, yet it was the jaws of death that enabled its acquisition.

Also, the negation of the idea of the linear flow of time is equivalent to its spatialization. This principle is confirmed in the following passage, which describes the never-ending Khazars’ battle with the perilous and unconquerable future that has the power of natural phenomena such as water or wind: “Only a part of the future reaches us Khazars, the toughest and most impenetrable part, which is hardest to master; and we brave it sideways, like a strong wind”.⁶⁵ In this particular section, a Moving Time metaphor is presented. However, it is given in a more complex form, because the future is represented as a strange entity, like the wind carrying rainfall.

As it frequently happens in this novel, what follows after a Moving Time metaphor is a literary character’s attitude towards time in a Moving Ego metaphor (in this example, also in a combination with a comparison), in which the Khazars tend to break through time as if through the wind, but manage to conquer only one part of it.

⁽⁶³⁾ Franz Bardon, *Initiation into hermetics: A Course of Instruction of Magic Theory and Practice*. Trans. by Alfred Radspieler. Dieter Rugeberg, Wuppertal 1987.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English, cit., p. 36.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ *Ivi*, p. 147.

The future is also represented as solid matter that can be manipulated and can get perforated as well. An example of this Moving Ego principle is presented in the motif of Petkutin's power in "The Tale of Petkutin and Kalina" (in the seventeenth century): "For example, on Monday evening he could take a different day from his future and use it the following morning, in place of Tuesday".⁶⁶

Taking into consideration that during one stage of his life Petkutin has the power to make a mixture of days, in the context of mystical connection with this metaphor, one relationship between comparison and spatio-temporal metaphor in the temporal layer of the twentieth century attracts our attention: the years of one of the novel's protagonist's life (Dr. Suk) are compared to a "thick porridge".⁶⁷

Thus, there is a connection between these two metaphors that represent the mixture of different compounds, which means that the principle of the postmodern mixture of time perspectives was presented by the metaphor of porridge, as the unity of diversity in the novel. Moreover the knowledge of this unity is hidden by the spatio-temporal metaphor in which time is materialized as a fruit that makes memorable all the mixtures of temporal layers: "And, as if he picked his days from her as from a tree, she offered him a different fruit each time, each one always sweeter than the last".⁶⁸

In the quest for the secrets of dream hunters, Masudi Yusuf, "one of the writers of the book",⁶⁹ lost the largest prey – Ku, the fruit of knowledge about the Khazars' secrets, which the princess Ateh wanted to bestow on him.⁷⁰ Thus, in this motif Pavić warns the reader not to be restricted in the interpretation of the novel, just like Masudi is, who does not have access to the completeness of the meaning. Therefore, the mystical essence remains elusive to him, but the reader's ideal knowledge is supposed to be erudite and therefore overbearing.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ *Ivi*, p. 35.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ *Ivi*, p. 105.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ *Ivi*, p. 43.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ *Ivi*, p. 160. Yusuf's task was to unite knowledge on the destinies of other writers of *Dictionary of the Khazars*.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Instead of accepting this greatest gift, Masudi (the dream hunter), entreats Ateh to see Samuel Cohen in her dreams.

Time is materialized, establishing the general relationship between comparisons and metaphors. Based on the above analysis, we conclude that the metaphors of time as a substance are dynamic by their nature and also, we believe that they have the power of the transformation of forms.

4.4. *Time Is a Living Creature*

In the context of the relations between the spatio-temporal metaphors and comparisons, in some entries of the novel temporal entities obtain the characteristics of living creatures: “Years passed like turtles”.⁷¹

The first interpretation of the above quoted simile is that a typical association with slowness (the image of a turtle) is used for describing the unhurried passage of time. However, an investigation of the broader context of this novel reveals the importance of the motif of a turtle, which connects different time layers in the world of Khazars in four basic systems of meanings: 1. basic meaning – years passed slowly; 2. in the communication between the princess Ateh and her lover, Mokadasa Al Safer (in the ninth century); 3. the demon’s painting of the apostles on turtles (in the seventeenth century) and 4. the system of meanings presented in all time perspectives, in the relations between symbols, comparisons and the metaphorical representation of turtles in the context of hermetic principles.

Namely, there is a characteristic parallel between Mokadasa, who wrote love notes on turtles, and the demon Nikon’s painting of the Holy Apostles on turtles, symbolizing heretical thought. On the other hand, this metaphor can be interpreted in parallel with the apostles who passed on their knowledge wisely, safely and slowly, preaching the truth and eternity. This motif, therefore, has several different layers. However, if we bear in mind that these icons are painted by Satan, then we can still talk about the simultaneity of contradictory meanings that we can analyze in the context of hermetic principle as one of the dominant aspects of *Dictionary of the Khazars*. On the other hand, the mysticism, poetic and spatio-temporal metaphors are harmonized, because the basic feature of Hermes Trismegistos,⁷² is the ability to be

⁽⁷¹⁾ *Ivi*, p. 27.

⁽⁷²⁾ Hermes Trismegistos is a compound of the Greek god Hermes and the E-

in two places at the same time, and to be both good and evil. Accordingly, the hermetic work metaphors simultaneously have different and sometimes even opposite meanings.⁷³

As far as this aspect of *Dictionary of the Khazars* is concerned one cannot but observe a hidden ancient mysticism, covering the spatio-temporal relations between poetry⁷⁴ and painting, hermetic principles and the metaphorical and symbolical values of the turtle. Namely, the turtle belongs to the hermetic cult in general, and peculiarly in this aspect of *Dictionary of the Khazars*, turtles are the transmitters of the love messages and therefore evoke the domination of the hermetic principle, because Hermes is a messenger of the gods. Thus, this metaphor indicates the interdependence of representations of Space and Time, in the merging of the ninth and seventeenth century temporal perspectives in the novel.

Besides, this presentation in the Khazars' universe means that temporal entities have their own life; consequently, they can die: "The moments of my life are dying like flies gulped down by fish. How can I make them nourishment for his hunger?"⁷⁵ This image should undeniably be interpreted in relation to the symbolical and theological value of the concept of fish in the novel.

Additionally, it should be noted that in the Khazars' world there is no strict borderline between the concrete and the abstract, between material and spiritual, between animate and inanimate, between human and animal. Thus, seasons can age just like living creatures: "One quick three-week-old autumn".⁷⁶ This personification of time makes it possible for the protagonists to have an active and creative relationship with time. It is essential to understand that in this lexicon-novel, materialization and personification are not only instances of metaphors, but also exist as a part of fictive reality: "The week had received its monthly wash, and Sunday was already a reek in the air, breaking wind

gyptian god Thoth.

(⁷³) Umberto Eco, *I limiti dell'interpretazione*. Bompiani, Milano 1990.

(⁷⁴) Also, according to the Greek myth, Hermes made the first lyre from a turtle shell (Robert Graves, *The Greek myths*. Penguin books, Middlesex 1960).

(⁷⁵) Milorad Pavić, *Dictionary of the Khazars*. The first Yugoslav edition in English, cit., p. 37.

(⁷⁶) *Ivi*, p. 64.

like a cripple on the road recovery”.⁷⁷ Thus the images analyzed in this paper should not only be considered as cases of figurative speech, but also as constituents of this complex, invented universe.

In presenting the week as a living being, the author is blending metaphor and personification. Generally speaking, in *Dictionary of the Khazars*, the personification of periods represents the principles of animistic perceptions.

A typical example of this animistic aspect is the hen that lays and carries temporal entities, in “The story of the Egg and the Violin Bow”, in a conversation between Isailo Suk (an archaeologist from the twentieth century) and the seller: “No, my hen does not lay golden eggs, but it does carry something that you and I, sir, cannot lay. It carries days, weeks, and years. [...] This egg, sir, holds one day in your life”.⁷⁸

In this context, the motif of future life connects different temporal layers in the novel. Dr Isailo Suk, the reincarnation of Avram Brankovich, buys this miraculous egg. Consequently, Suk fruitlessly tries to break it down in time, in order to avoid his death, through the forever lost replacement of days. Thus, the demonic circle closes. After 293 years, the demon Nikon fulfills a threat given to Avram Brankovich, and the revenge becomes complete. In this way, the spatio-temporal metaphor maintains the tension in the novel, as in the seventeenth century the final showdown is suggested, and in the twentieth century it becomes the key point of acknowledging this reincarnation as the perpetrator of novel’s resolution.

4.5. *Space is Time*

There are two metaphors in the novel in which, contrary to common spatio-temporal metaphors, serves as a basis for representing space: “There is a tight pass on earth, thought Methodius finally, one no wider than ten camel deaths, where two men missed each other”.⁷⁹ In this section, space is measured by time, complementing, on the other hand, numerous analyzed examples in which time is measured by space. Thus, the motif asserts that in *Dictionary of the Khazars* there is no

⁽⁷⁷⁾ *Ivi*, p. 110.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ *Ivi*, p. 116.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ *Ivi*, p. 89.

clear ontological borderline between space and time: moreover, it proves that time can also have a physical existence and therefore can have measurable dimensions.

Finally, the materialization of time is beautifully expressed in the simile bonding movement through space and movement through time: “They watched their hounds race through the scents of the Bosnian woods as through the seasons of the year and came upon Šabac in the night of the eclipse”.⁸⁰

This segment is characterized by the comparison of space and time. Pavić initiates the mystical motif of time which gradually transforms into the description of multilayered space.

5. Conclusion

The dominant poetic and stylistic aspects of *Dictionary of the Khazars* were achieved within the openness of meanings, through spatio-temporal metaphors.

Pavić uses potential semantic spatio-temporal metaphors used in everyday life that both estrange and enrich their meanings. Instead, linear semantic codes are becoming the dominant means in creating multilayered postmodern fiction, led by Borges’s influence, adding the new value to Eco’s theory of the open work.

In the next creative phase, there is an interference between those metaphoric processes that are culturally specific and those that are human universals. In this process, all linguistic, stylistic, poetic and semantic aspects are in harmony with the ancient mystical elements. The nature and the functions of spatio-temporal metaphors in *Dictionary of the Khazars* are determined by the following principles: cyclicality, reversibility, interference, transformation, parallelism, branching, simultaneity, ambiguity, seeming contradictions and paradoxes. Thus, spatio-temporal metaphors, harmonized with the comparisons, personifications and symbols,⁸¹ connect different temporal layers in the novel, from the eighth to the twentieth century. The spatialization of time

⁽⁸⁰⁾ *Ivi*, p. 232.

⁽⁸¹⁾ The analysis of comparisons, allegories and personifications may be applied with the same mapping concepts, with the function of highlighting and linking the spatio-temporal metaphors.

can be viewed as a space that opens up in front of the viewer. The future is also occasionally portrayed as a space and temporarily as matter. In this process, Moving Ego and Moving Time metaphors are intertwined, aiming at the comprehensiveness of narrative and conceptual perspectives.

The materialization of time makes it possible for the protagonists to have an active relation towards time (in Moving Ego metaphors), but this creative mission was converted first into deconstruction, and then into destruction by the Demons. In the destroyed identities and movements of the protagonists, beside an awareness of the tragedy of the Khazars' mission, Moving Time and Moving Ego metaphors still suggest that *Dictionary of the Khazars* continues to be compiled, because eternity can be represented as a specific spatialization of time (and not a timeline), and above all as the existence of the totality of time in space.⁸²

САЖЕТАК

Овај рад представља анализу лингвистичке природе и стилских ефеката просторно-временских метафора у *Хазарском речнику* Милорада Павића, као и њихове поетичке функције, семантичких аспеката и онтолошког статуса у сложеном фикционалном свету постмодерног романа.

Метафоре кретања времена и кретања субјекта се преплићу, у циљу свеобухватности наративних и концептуалних перспектива *Хазарског речника*. Посредством ових односа, просторно-временске метафоре повезују различите временске слојеве у роману, како би створиле њихову интерференцију и реверзибилност. У том процесу сви стилски, поетски и семантички аспекти у складу су са древним мистичним принципима јединства простора и времена.

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