POWER, *EROS*, AND BIBLICAL GENRES

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One of M.M. Bakhtin's contributions to the study of texts was his profound distrust of formalism. In this essay, I seek to extend this insight to the study of biblical genres. As such, I work to detach the study of biblical genres from form-criticism, and to examine genre as dialogically constructed (and thus socially situated). To do so, I draw on Bakhtin's work on dialogism, the chronotope, and heteroglossia. However, in his work Bakhtin did not clearly provide the motive or impulse for dialogism. I seek to enhance and refine a dialogic understanding of genre by reconceptualising genre as a site of politics constructed by the operation of power and eros. In this essay, I explore power from a Foucauldian perspective, seeing it as a network of discourse relations that enfolds the struggle for domination. The dynamics of power, once understood, help to understand the development of distinct genres and development within genres. In this essay, I explore eros from the perspective of productive act (Deleuze), as well as from the perspective of desire for the lacked object (Hegel, Lacan, Foucault), both understandings being ultimately Platonic in origin. Without understanding the erotic impulse, I argue that we cannot understand the dynamics of power that explain dialogically-constructed genre. In this way, this essay takes Bakhtin as a starting point and touchstone, but moves into some different areas as well.

WHAT IS GENRE?

> But something created is always created out of something given… [w]hat is
> given is completely transformed in what is created (Bakhtin 1986b, 119–120).

Biblical form-criticism supposes that genres are givens: they are forms that give the key to content. This is the reason there is such concern for tracing, say, the development of apocalyptic literature as a genre. Genre simply exists as a set form. This particular kind of deductive genre theory, seen in literary studies most clearly in the work of Northrop Frye (1957, 247–248), is implicit in almost all work on biblical genres. We may consider, with Thomas BeeBee, that genre theory has moved through four phases:

1. ancient-through-Renaissance 'production-oriented' theory, ie 'genre as rules';
2. early modern classification theory, looking at the growth and change in genre, ie 'genre as species';
3. early twentieth-century theory, looking at the textual forms and features that indicate genre, ie 'genre as patterns of textual features'; and
4. late twentieth-century theory, locating the meaning of genre not in the intention of the author or in literary history or in the features of the text, but in the reader/s of the text, ie 'genre as reader conventions' (BeeBee 1994, 2–3).

In this broad scheme, biblical genre theory is located roughly in the third phase, although the concern with tracing the development of a genre (like apocalyptic from prophecy) is located squarely in the second phase. But before biblical scholars start jumping on the fourth-stage

bandwagon (ie genre as reader-created), it should be noted that with a revived interest in genre theory in literary studies, most contemporary genre-theory has moved into a new phase, one that locates genre both in text and in reader, in text and in context, and in the combination and re-combination of genres and fragments with each other (Cohen 2003). It is useful to note that Bakhtin's influence on contemporary genre theory is greater than ever.

Thus I would like to suggest that our entry-point and first answer to the question 'what is genre' is a negative one: genre is not form. Or it is not form alone. The ancient preoccupation with genric rules that is the basis for all later western theories of genre should give us pause anyway; those rules are Greek and Roman, retroactively applied to the non-western texts of the Hebrew Bible. If a classical, deductive, theory of genre is being applied universally and so improperly, then perhaps we should be looking at finding or developing an inductive theory of genre. However, this is difficult to do, as Adena Rosmarin (1985, 26–33) has shown: inductive theories of genre tend to be based on deductive models of genre: we only realise genre inductively because of certain pre-conceived ideas about genre; or, the genre theorist feels 'guilt for always being deductive while trying to appear inductive' (Snyder 1991, 203). It may not be possible, therefore, to derive a theory of genre for the Hebrew Bible inductively. Until it is attempted, we cannot know. In this essay, I will attempt to develop a theory of genre inductively. Although I think that I am operating inductively, in that the theory I am about to present derives from my reading of texts, in many ways I am also operating deductively, by working with (imposing?) concepts from elsewhere that are suggested by my reading.

To return to the schema of genre theory presented by BeeBee (above), the goal of this project is to look for a way into genre that is neither concerned solely with text or its socio-historical situation or with how readers construct genre. In terms of the text, any theory of genre has to make sense in the terms of the text and the text's generic markers and conventions (cf Hirsch 1967, 73–74, 93; Hirsch argues that authorial intention is crucial for making generic assessments, which I do not agree is necessarily the case). In terms of the reader, any theory of genre also has to make sense in terms of the reader, and not necessarily any 'ideal' or 'implied' reader of the text (cf Iser 1978). I would like to suggest, following John Snyder, that one way into an in-between notion of genre is to conceive of genre as operation, 'historically generated and modified' (Snyder 1991, 204), and to do so, I will draw on the work of M.M. Bakhtin and his interpreters. Although Bakhtin's work is very congenial to Snyder's, Snyder does not draw very much on Bakhtin's work. Instead, Snyder develops his theory of genre from classical (largely Platonic) models, using a Jamesonian dialectic, in order to see genre as a mediator, 'between history and cultural artifact, avoiding both empty abstractions and trivial empiricism' (17).

In his earlier work, *Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics* (*PDP*), Bakhtin commented,

> A literary genre, by its very nature, reflects the most stable, 'eternal' tendencies in literature's development. Always preserved in a genre are undying elements of the *archaic*. True, these archaic elements are preserved in it only thanks to their constant *renewal*, which is to say, their contemporization. A genre is always the same and yet not the same, always old and new simultaneously… A genre lives in the present, but always *remembers* its past, its beginning (Bakhtin 1984, 106; emphasis original).

This quotation spells out in some detail what is more generally summarised in the quotation at the beginning of this paper. The location of the genre in history and in social situation is crucial to a Bakhtinian analysis of genre. In *PDP*, Bakhtin continued by saying, 'For the correct understanding of a genre, therefore, it is necessary to return to its sources' (Bakhtin 1984, 106). But by the time of 'Discourse in the Novel', he was more interested in demonstrating how the various speech types interact in a novel than in tracing their origins in sources (cf Bakhtin 1981, 263–265).

Already very early in Bakhtin's thought we can see the detachment of the form of the artistic work from its content. Content is seen as something to be tamed by form, but content does not determine form; nor does form determine content. Instead content can be liberated from its form when the *reader* stops enacting the form (Bakhtin 1990, 305). '[F]orm is the expression of the active, axiological relationship of the author-creator and of the recipient (who co-creates the form) to content…' (306). In other words, for Bakhtin even at an early period, form is the means by which the author and reader can interact with the content of an utterance. However, form is not identical with content, although it is related to it. In 'Discourse in the novel', Bakhtin explicitly set out to link form and content through the understanding of discourse as a social event (Bakhtin 1981, 259).

Even though Bakhtin detached form from an external referent, there is still a connection between style and genre even in Bakhtin's later work. In 'The problem of speech genres', he stated 'style is inseparably related to the utterance and to typical forms of utterances…' (Bakhtin 1986a, 63): there is an 'organic, inseparable link between style and genre… each sphere has and applies its own genres that correspond to its own specific conditions' (64). He also stated, 'Where there is style there is genre. The transfer of style from one genre to another not only alters the way a style sounds, under conditions of a genre unnatural to it, but also violates or renews the given genre' (66). Each utterance's style has an impact on the interaction of the utterances in a particular text and in the genres that make up the polyglot text.

Genre, for Bakhtin, also meant social construction and social context: 'The meaning of a text does not lie in the particular combination of devices but in the ways in which the text is produced and interpreted, transmitted and used' (Cobley 1988, 326). Social context alone is not enough to form genre; it is the combination of style, content and social context that form a generic meaning (Branham 2002, 163–164). Indeed, as Francis Dunn has remarked, for Bakhtin, 'literary genres are neither collections of works nor formal attributes shared by those works but ways of understanding the world' (Dunn 2002, 188). Similarly, according to Gary Saul Morson, Bakhtin's view on genre was that genre is inextricably bound up with worldview: a genre expresses a certain worldview. Genre is all about perspective, and to read a work within a genre is to 'learn to think in the genre's terms' (Morson 2003, 410–411). If that is so, if genre, as giving meaning to utterance, is socially situated, then it is part of the discourse-network that constructs and constrains all social discourse. And if that is so, then genre must be operative in both space and time (Bakhtin's chronotope). Genre is not just a given: it has an effect.

To return to the quotation of Bakhtin's that I used at the beginning of this essay, the genre effect is to create out of the given and to transform the given in the creation. This is why each example of a genre is irreducible to a set form: each example is unique; each utterance is its own. Yet, 'if speech genres did not exist and we had not mastered them, if we had to originate them during the speech process and construct each utterance at will for the first time, speech communication would be almost impossible' (Bakhtin 1986a, 79). In genre theory, there is always the

conundrum of the generic and the specific: Bakhtin did not, I think, resolve it, nor did he intend to. It is one of the great unfinalisabilities of literature and of being.

As a brief example, I would like to look at an example from Chronicles, 2 Chronicles 13:23–15:15, the beginning of the reign of Asa (this section is unparalleled in Kings). The first thing we are told about Asa is that, 'In his days the land had rest for ten years' (2 Chr 13:23); Jacob Myers pointed out that this formula is very similar to the formula used of the judges (Myers 1965, 81; cf Williamson 1982, 259; Japhet 1993, 719), as found in Judg 3:11, 3:30, 5:31, 8:28. The speech of the prophet Azariah in 2 Chr 15:3–6 also seems to recall the period of the judges, 'For a long time Israel had… no law… In those times there was no peace [shalom] for anyone to go or come… they were beaten in pieces [vekhutethu], nation against nation and city against city…' This describes quite accurately the situation in Judges, particularly Judges 17–21; one does not need to follow Peter Ackroyd's argument that the language might be referring to events contemporary to the Chronicler (Ackroyd 1973, 138). This language of the period of the judges might well be part of the unprecedented appearance of the altars, asherim and so on in 2 Chr 14:2 – there had been no such places earlier in Chronicles, but they appear many times in Judges (especially in Judges 6) – which are removed by Asa (15:8) following Azariah's speech. Sara Japhet suggests that the sudden appearance of the altars, idols and so on were the result of 'a lack of full integration between history and theology' on the part of the Chronicler, so that Asa's reforms contradict the story given so far in Chronicles but make sense in the context of the story in Kings (Japhet 1993, 707). The use of ktt 'to beat in pieces' evokes images both of idols being smashed (2 Kgs 18:4, 2 Chr 34:7) and of swords beaten into ploughshares/ploughshares into swords (Isa 2:4, Mic 4:3, Joel 4:10); images both of idolatry and peace/war. I would suggest rather that the Chronicler is deliberately reflecting on the book of Judges and the prophetic texts, and trying to draw parallels between the reign of Asa and the period of the Judges (perhaps Asa as a new Gideon?). Azariah also reminds Asa and the people in his speech that when the people of old 'turned in their distress to Yhwh, the God of Israel, and sought him, he was found by them' (15:4); this is language reminiscent of David's charge to Solomon in 1 Chr 28:9, and of Judg 10:10–16 (the unique yet key piece of the Deuteronomist/s' framework [Polzin 1980, 176–177]).

The language of Judges, in particular, informs Azariah's speech in 2 Chronicles 15. By using this language, the folk-tales and Deuteronomic framework-texts are renewed in Chronicles. From this one example it is perhaps premature to suggest that the genric renewal is also a genric shift, but this is precisely what I do suggest. Through the heteroglossic text of Chronicles, the genre of Judges (the larger Deuteronomic History as well?) is shifted into something else: perhaps theology? This is the *effect* of genre.

However, a Bakhtinian theory of genre does not entirely address the question of what motivates uses of genres or genric innovation or the genre effect. If social context and situation is taken as the only motivating factor for the interplay of style and content, then we run the risk of a certain kind of social determinism. In order to extend and refine a Bakhtinian theory of genre, I would like to examine the role of power in genre theory. If genre is an operation, then a study of the power dynamics in the operation may lead to a greater understanding of genre effect.

WHAT IS POWER?

> [P]ower is tolerable only on condition that it mask a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms (Foucault 1978, 86).

Biblical scholars are used to seeing a lot of overt power. The word *koah* appears many times, used of human beings and of God. People have power, God has power. This is what Michel Foucault called '*le Pouvoir*', the thing that he emphatically said that power was not:

> I do not mean 'Power' as a group of institutions and mechanisms that ensure the subservience of the citizens to a given state… [or] a mode of subjugation which, in contrast to violence, has the form of the rule… [or] a general system of domination exerted by one group over another, a system whose effects, through successive derivations, pervade the entire social body (Foucault 1978, 92).

Rather, power is 'the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate… as the strategies in which they take effect…' (92–93). So power, too, is not a given, but rather an effect.

The power effect is to operate, which is why we can trace how it works, through the networks of power relations, of domination and resistance. Because every circumstance is different, every part of the network open to influence, power also is not reducible to form: it does operate in a multitude of ways and means. But, as commentators on Foucault have noted, defining power in this way also runs into difficulty, specifically with respect to the problem of the theory and the examples; Foucault's examples are something less than his theoretical formulation (Beer 2002, 85–90). That is, the examples can easily be seen as examples of dominating or repressive power, rather than the flow of power between individuals. Foucault's defence against this charge was to suggest that power and its correlative freedom is only possible between free subjects (Foucault 1983, 221–222) (a problematic defence). But again, perhaps this is a problem that cannot be resolved – another part of the unfinalisability of being.

The link between power and genre comes when we see both as an effect, when we see both as operative. If genre is an effect, coming not from form but from how it operates, then it is a short step to see that genre is a power-effect. Although Foucault explicitly tried to detach power (*le pouvoir*) from the exclusive purview of the politico-legal sphere, if we understand politics as one of the places where power operates, then genre as a power-effect is also political. Genre is a site of politics, a site where power operates. Taking the given of a genre and transforming it into what is created is a manifestation of the power-effect. I would like to briefly examine the source citations from Chronicles as a manifestation of the power-effect.

The Chronicler's source citation formula is different from the formula of Kings. The standard source citation formula in Kings is: *halo-hem kethuvim al-* 'Are they not written in…?'[1] The standard source citation formula in Chronicles is: *hinnam kethuvim al-* 'Behold, they are written in…'[2] In addition, the subject of the clause, the 'they', is described using a different formula in Kings and Chronicles. In Kings, the standard formula is: *veyether divre – (vekhol-)asher asah* 'And the rest of the affairs of X and (all) that he did'.[3] There is considerable variation in the next

part of the formula, but the pattern is usually clear: an elaboration of some of these deeds or affairs. In Chronicles, the standard formula is: *(veyether) divre – harishonim vehaaharonim* 'And (the rest of) the affairs of X, first through last'.[4] Again, there is some variation in this next part of the formula. Considering the two parts of the formula in both Kings and Chronicles, there are some textual variants in all four of these formulae. The LXX is not tremendously consistent in the form of these formulae; methodologically, it is preferable to heed James Barr's caution on using the versions and in particular the LXX to reconstruct the MT from a grammatical/syntactical stance (Barr 1968, 265–272). In the MT, however, the overall pattern is clear. I am more tempted towards thinking that the exceptions prove the rule than I am towards thinking that each exception says something profound about the creation and/or evolution of the text.

The consensus has been that the Chronicler had access to other sources beyond Samuel-Kings for the period of time covered in the text. But the consensus also says that whenever the Chronicler cited a source, it is a fictitious source, and that whenever the Chronicler used a real source, it is left uncited (so eg Knoppers 2004, 126). What is interesting is that the rhetorical implications of this hypothesis have not been fully explored. What does it mean to cite a source that does not exist? How does it bolster the authority of the Chronicler (which is a commonly asserted reason, cf Duke 1990, 119) to cite a source that does not exist? Why would one cite a non-existent source and then not cite a very-existent source? Why would one not cite the very-existent source of Samuel-Kings when the omissions from the source are sometimes glaringly evident (eg the emergence of Jeroboam in 2 Chronicles 10)? I believe the answers to these questions are most evident once the genre analysis has been performed.

I would argue that the difference in the formulae is actually a generic innovation. It is a deployment of power within the genre. The power effect of a declarative, presentative statement like *hinnam kethuvim* 'behold they are written' (Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 40.2.1) is different from a rhetorical question like *halo-hem kethuvim* 'are they not written?' (40.3). A rhetorical question has the possibility of being answered with a negative: 'Are they not written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah?' has the possible (if highly unlikely) answer of: 'No, in fact, they are not'. But there is no answer to the statement: 'Look, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah'. The statement demands acceptance. Similarly, the phrase 'the rest of the affairs of X and all that he did' as used by the Chronicler may imply that some of that king's deeds are described in the book of Kings, and some of his deeds are described elsewhere. This may be, in fact, the kind of canonical loophole that even permits the existence of Chronicles: the things left out. But Chronicles makes a different claim; it is 'the rest of the affairs of X, first through last' that are recorded elsewhere; thus it is not only the king's deeds that are recorded, but also all of the affairs that took place during that king's reign. The Chronicler can, through this means, imply that only a certain selection of material has been presented in Chronicles. Within the genre that includes both Samuel-Kings and Chronicles, the Chronicler has taken the genre and made an innovation: it is not bits and pieces of everything that are included in his work, but a clearly made selection. This, I would argue, is a power-play. The answer to the questions about citation of non-existent sources when existent sources are not cited may be made along the same lines: the Kings formula says, 'If you do not believe me, then you can look in this other source'; the Chronicles formula says, 'If you do believe me, then you can look in this other

source', but if the reader does believe the Chronicler, then there is no need to look at another text! This too is a use of the power of the genre by the Chronicler.

WHAT IS EROS?

> 'For eros is not, Socrates,' she said, 'of the beautiful, as you believe.' 'Well, what then?' 'It is of engendering and bringing to birth in the beautiful.' (Plato *Symp*. 206e, trans. Benardete)

Platonic *eros* is closely linked if not identical with desire (Plato *Phaedr*. 237d). Often it is taken to mean sexual desire, but *eros* goes beyond that to describe all kinds of desire (see the discussion in the *Republic* on the tyrannic man). As Paul Ludwig has put it, though, it is important to distinguish between 'any banal desire, such as the wish for a second helping at the dinner table', and *eros* (Ludwig 2002, 12). He suggests that in Platonic thought, *eros* is something beyond basic needs, and that it has something of a compulsion or obsession about it; the subject of *eros* will pursue it as far as possible (13). Ultimately, all discussions of desire in the western tradition are based on the discussion of *eros* in Plato, and especially the discussions in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus* – and the *Republic* is also a text to attend to. In the *Symposium*, there are two basic definitions of *eros*: that *eros* is motivated by a lack – that we seek what we do not have, especially beauty; and that *eros* is motivated by generation – that we seek to create the beautiful – and it is this definition that I have quoted. *Eros*, then, is either a lack, or it is a productive act, or it is both.

Eros as a lack is very common in the Western philosophical tradition: it is found in Hegel, in Nietzsche, in Freud and Lacan and Irigaray, and in Foucault. However, what is much more interesting to me is the conception of *eros* as productive, and this has found its most recent expression in the work of Gilles Deleuze. In a note written after Foucault's death, Deleuze wrote: 'The last time we saw each other, Michel told me, with much kindness and affection, something like, I cannot bear the word *desire*; even if you use it differently, I cannot keep myself from thinking or living that desire = lack, or that desire is repressed… For me [Deleuze], desire implies no lack; neither is it a natural given' (Deleuze 1997, 189; emphasis original). In this view of *eros*, it is also an operation: it is an arrangement, it leads to creation; it motivates creation. In addition, I would argue, it would also act as the motivation behind power – reading with Deleuze 'power is an affection of desire' (186). It is this link that is most forcefully made in the *Republic*. Once we have made the link between *eros* and power, where *eros* is the creative motivator of power – when power is understood as the network of embedded discourses – then we can also link *eros* to genre. *Eros* motivates the power effect; *eros* motivates the genre effect. So the effect of genre, the operation of genre, is motivated by *eros*, and especially *eros* as a productive act. Taking the given of the genre and transforming it into something created is both a manifestation of the power-effect and also a manifestation of *eros*, intense desire for creation. And, I would argue, the intense desire for creation is a motivator for the deployment of power.

In order to use this completed model to explore a biblical text, we need to recognise that it is only in a series of examples that its usefulness will become clear or not. In fact, in order to be most useful, the theoretical model needs to be derived from the reading of the biblical texts; it needs to be arrived at inductively (as I noted above). In this way, I take issue with those who

have taken literary-critical methods from other fields of study and simply applied them to the biblical text. Although I have used the insights of literary criticism and philosophy to describe my theoretical model, it is not a simple matter of finding a method from literary studies and using it on the biblical text.[5] I have abstracted the theoretical model from the text, but now I would like to demonstrate briefly where the model has come from. My previous example dealt with the aspect of Foucauldian power, now this example shows how all the threads come together; the threads of Bakhtinian genre, Foucauldian power and Deleuzian desire.

The final particular example is one verse, 2 Chr 32:19, which reads: 'And they spoke about the god of Jerusalem as about the gods of the peoples of the lands, the work of human hands.' This particular verse is unique in its use of the term *elohe-yerushalaim*, 'god of Jerusalem'. The verse comes at the end of the Chronicler's version of the story of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, which differs not inconsiderably from the version in Kings. The verse as a whole draws on the language of the passages in 2 Kings 18–19 and Isaiah 36–37, language that is placed in the mouths of the Assyrians in those passages, and that is picked up in the language of the Assyrians in 2 Chronicles 32. It is in these Assyrian speeches that Yhwh is compared with the gods of other nations and other cities. However, 2 Chr 32:19 is not a quotation of the Assyrians, but a narratorial aside about their speech. It may be a parody of their speech: a sneering narratorial rebuttal of their theology. But in this sneering rebuttal, the language of the particularity of Yhwh, Yhwh as patron of Jerusalem the city (rather than Israel the *ethnos*) is maintained from the Assyrians' speeches of 2 Kings and Isaiah. This slip, this ungrammaticality (cf Riffaterre 1997), reveals both the aspect of parody, and the aspect of desire. The Chronicler, despite protestations to the contrary (1 Chronicles 16), desires a particular, patron, visible god, like the gods of the nations. Here, then, we see an example of *eros* in the text. It may be that this example of *eros* has to do with a lack or a repression, as Foucault, Hegel et al. would have it. But Deleuze argues that desire is social and collective; any desire that is 'deterritorialized' wants 'a transcendental signified such as happiness, God, wealth, fame' and is 'reterritorialized' as a 'negative will to power [that] aims to encompass the whole world in its interpretations' (Goodchild 1996, 196–197). What, then, does this example of *eros* have to do with genre?

This particular episode, Sennacherib's invasion of Jerusalem, is an excellent place to make a study of genre, since it appears in both Kings and Chronicles, which many would consider 'historiography', as well as in Isaiah, which most would consider 'prophecy'. Yet while 2 Kings and Isaiah have almost identical versions of the story, so much so that it is common for commentaries on Isaiah to refer readers to the literature on Kings, especially for the 'historical issues', (eg Blenkinsopp 2000, 461) – and in the case of Isaiah, where for the most part scholars consider the passage to have been borrowed from 2 Kings, Yuri Lotman's notion of the inserted text (Lotman 1993, 377–384), which is close to Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossia, is particularly helpful – it is Chronicles that has the different version. More to the point, Chronicles has transformed the 'given' of Kings and Isaiah in its creation of another text. What is the effect of this transformation? It is to simplify the story, to create a very clear chain of cause and effect. What does this have to do with genre? One of the clearest areas of agreement among scholars on the text of 2 Kings 18–19 is that there are two stories combined into the text: the text is messy (Childs 1967, 69–103; Cogan and Tadmor 1988, 240–244). This seems to be a feature of much of Samuel and Kings (so, eg the three stories of the death of Goliath in 1–2 Samuel, two of which are combined

in 1 Samuel 17; the other is in 2 Samuel 21), and it has the effect of positing that there may well be more than one story about a particular event and the author has decided to provide both: it is a feature of the genre with a particular effect. This genre-effect of messiness in Samuel and Kings is transformed into the simplifying genre-effect of tidiness and order in Chronicles. The power of the transformation is easily seen: possibilities and meanings are shut down or repressed, although occasionally they break out, as in the Chronicler's story of the division of the kingdom in 2 Chronicles 10, when Jeroboam pops up after having been excised from the account of Solomon in 2 Chronicles 1–9. Chronicles is operating within the same genre as Kings, but uses the power of the genre in such a way that certain conclusions must be drawn by the reader of the text rather than leaving the reader to puzzle it out on his or her own. Yet the power is hidden: the story told seems to be the same one as told in 2 Kings and Isaiah. What motivates the use of this power? It is intense desire, *eros*, in this case going mostly hidden, implied, and unspoken until it erupts in 2 Chr 32:19: an *eros* for Yhwh, one, particularist, and local. This *eros* for Yhwh motivates the use of genre-power to reshape the story to show his ultimate power (a negative will to power, in Deleuzian terms). This *eros*, therefore, looks like it may indicate a lack or a repression (and it does, in a way), but it also leads to a singularly productive act, the productive use of genre-power to create a new text.

If we return to Bakhtin, who insisted upon the social-situatedness of all genre and utterance, then we must seek out the context for such a generic transformation, from rambling and compendious to narrowly focused. As with all biblical literature, this is a difficult and delicate task, tending toward the circular in its argument. As such, this is not an argument that can be fully made in the space here, but if we locate the writing of Chronicles in a fifth-to-third century B.C.E. context, then it is not difficult to see an intense desire for a powerful, particular and local Yhwh as a strong motivator for using the power inherent in the genre to transform the genre.

Genre, then, is an effect, an operation. Power operates on genre in order to achieve the genre effect; that power is motivated by *eros*. In many cases, this use of power is a political use of power; the motivating *eros* is a political kind of *eros*. Genres can be transformed through this operation of power and *eros*, and that operation can have a political outcome. By situating the genre change in a social context, by observing how power and *eros* are delineated, we can discover something about that genre and about the use of biblical genres generally.

ENDNOTES

[1]   1 Kgs 11:41, 14:29, 15:7, 23, 31, 16:5, 14, 20, 27, 22:39, 46; 2 Kgs 1:18, 8:23, 10:34, 12:20, 13:8, 12, 14:15, 18, 28, 15:6, 21, 36, 16:19, 20:20, 21:25, 23:28, 24:5; this form is also found in 2 Chr 9:29, 12:15.

[2]   1 Chr 9:1, 29:29; 2 Chr 9:29, 16:11, 20:34, 24:27, 25:26, 27:7, 28:26, 32:32, 33:18, 19, 35:25, 27, 36:8; this form is also found in 1 Kgs 14:19; 2 Kgs 15:11, 15, 26, 31; all of these passages are non-synoptic with Chronicles.

[3]   1 Kgs 11:41, 14:29, 15:7, 23, 31, 16:5, 14, 27, 22:39, 46; 2 Kgs 1:18, 8:23, 10:34, 12:20, 13:8, 12, 14:15, 28, 15:6, 21, 26, 31, 36, 16:19, 20:20, 21:25, 23:28, 24:5.

4   1 Chr 29:29; 2 Chr 9:29, 12:15, 16:11, 20:34, 25:26, 26:22, 28:26, 35:27.

5   In the spirit of Bakhtin (if not his practice, cf. Holquist 2002, 188), there are the voices of two of my teachers, Fernando de Toro and Robert Polzin in the Comparative Literary Studies program at Carleton University, who speak through me here. In a doctoral seminar in the mid-1990s, when one student spoke of 'applying' a method to a literary text, de Toro snapped back, 'You do not apply a method to a text. The method grows out of your reading of the text'. And Polzin once told me that while his generation had fruitfully used the methods and theories of literary criticism to read the biblical text, it was up to my generation to develop our own theories from our readings of the texts rather than to continue to mine literary studies for our theory and method. I am reminded of Stephen D. Moore's comment, 'The arrival in biblical studies of a fledgeling literary-critical methodology… generally signals its geriatric status, or utter exhaustion, if not its outright demise, in literary studies' (Moore 1997, 289).

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