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Exceeding the Boundaries of Art as a Property of the Novel Genre in *The Master and Margarita*

Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* can be described as a unique variety of the novel, given the non-canonical nature of this genre. Nevertheless, the structural and narrative research, however elucidating, of this text tends to place it within the existing literary schemes. This causes a number of misleading conclusions. For instance, the "Pilate narrative" has repeatedly been likened to the 19th-century psychological story, while its main event – the encounter with Ieshua – evidently disrupts all thinkable natural causality of human existence.

This paper sets out to explore how Bulgakov's novel was influenced by its author's feeling for time, which alone can give meaning to the structurally identifiable elements of the text. I will primarily consider the two main dimensions that Bakhtin associates with the novel: its sensitivity for historical time and the tendency to transcend the boundaries of literature. The latter is manifested in the fact that the anonymous author of the "internal novel" is no longer a writer or a poet, but a *historian* who himself is involved in ongoing historical change. It is important to explain how Bulgakov's novel grows from the modern world vision, in which the aesthetic boundaries and specific "artistic responsibility" no longer define creative activity. This, for instance, poses an important question of how Pushkin's *poetic* tradition is revised in this *prosaic* text (and why Margarita simply cannot be a Muse).

The analysis is also going to focus on the indeterminacy of an individual's destiny and openness of the future in the novel. It is of interest to clarify how this essential trait of the genre "unlocks" the human fate predetermined in tragedy, which will shed light on how Bulgakov's master revisits the closure of the cultural figure of Pilate, initially predestined to inaction, by making it confront the openness of time.