

Title: Dostoevsky and Zola: Transiting at Different Speeds  
Author: Nina Lee, Columbia University

Literary scholars have attributed the success and popularity of the Russian novel in France during the late nineteenth century to Eugène-Melchior de Vogüé's *Le Roman russe* (1886). It was not only significant for introducing the major Russian novels, especially those of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, to a French audience but also for attempting to counter the naturalist aesthetic theory espoused in Zola's *Le Roman expérimental*, which advocated for novels based on scientific determinism (Hemmings, 30). Largely because of de Vogüé, Dostoevsky's indeterminism became a foil for Zola's determinism, and the opposite was true in Russia, where some of Zola's novels and articles—including *Le Roman expérimental* (Russia, 1879; France, 1880)—were published before appearing in France. Although a comparative study between Dostoevsky and Zola is well-justified and potentially productive, no such study has yet been undertaken.

This paper will juxtapose Dostoevsky and Zola by examining the intertextual relationship between *Crime and Punishment* (*CP*; 1866; France, 1884) and *La Bête humaine* (*LBh*, 1890). The indeterminism in *CP* repelled Zola so much that he wrote *LBh* partially as a naturalist re-reading of it. One of the most notable and significant differences between the two novels is the replacement of Raskolnikov's peripatetic movements with train rides in Zola's novel. Drawing on Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope, this paper will establish *chronotopes of the peripatetic* and *of the railroad* to determine the relationship of (speedy) movement to time and space in the novel during a time when new forms of rapid transportation appeared. This paper will also draw on Dostoevsky's "railway novel," *Idiot* (1868), which is set during the "century of the railways" (*Idiot*, III, iv), to examine how two practically antithetical writers utilize the same image for different purposes. My readings of Dostoevsky's and Zola's texts will underscore the importance of looking at space during the late nineteenth-century in relation to movement, mobility, and speed.

Hemmings, F. W. J. *The Russian Novel in France, 1884-1914*. London: Oxford University Press, 1950.