

CHAPTER 6

CHRONOTOPIC STRATEGY STORIES

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My focus is integrating systematicity theory and chronotope dialogism with some traditional schools of strategy: history-design, configuration, and cultural. I chose ten chronotopes as they are defined in the juxtaposition, or possible mix, of Chronotopic Strategy Story. Chronotopic Strategy Story is defined as the juxtaposition, or possible mix, among several ways in which space and time are being narrated. In the last chapter (stylistic dialogism) we learned that the variety of stylistic materials is mechanistic, and there is much selectivity in which fragments are included or excluded.

Chronotope is defined as relativity of time and space: *"the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature"* (Bakhtin, 1981: 84–5). He employs the term chronotope as an Einsteinian Theory of Relativity with time being the fourth dimension of space.

Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to its movements of time, plot, and history
[1981: 84]

I must challenge Bakhtin for his hierarchical system thinking. Bakhtin's ten chronotopes, unlike Boulding's levels (Chapter 1), are not systemically hierarchically ordered. The idyllic (number 8), for example, would carry the first seven chronotopes, but the chronotopes are more a kaleidoscope. The kaleidoscopic approach (once you get beyond its chronology) is a holosphere rather than a fixed hierarchy — chronotopes combine in any order. Idyllic, for example, could be part of an everyday adventure, but without several other folkloric or adventure chronotopes required for inclusion.

Historically, as chronotopes emerged, they became increasingly dialogically-chronotopic. Strategy is not just multi-chronotopic. Strategy is chronotopic-dialogic. Table 6.1 is a summary of definitions of ten chronotopes (centripetal and centrifugal). Table 6.2 maps each chronotope to strategy schools and exemplars.

Table 6.1: Ten Chronotopes

Chronotope	Definition
Centripetal Chronotopes	

1. Greek Romance Adventure	Systematicity of time and space, both time and space are interchangeable sequences of events that leads to specific adventures where heroes travel through diverse geographic terrain and encounter characters different from themselves.
2. Adventure of Everyday Life	Mix of adventure with everyday time and misfortune, in the context of metamorphosis of human identity. A mythological cycle of crisis, so adventure and ordeal mix together; what she or he was by chances, accident, and fate.
3. Biography & Autobiography Adventure	Biographical time creates three sub-types; each subtype appeals to a circle of readers. Biographical space and spatial events show how a character develops in the public forum/life.
4. Chivalric Romance, the Epic Adventure	Hypothecation of time with other-worldly verification; a strange mix of heroism, adventure, chivalric code, fairy tale world of heroism, test of honor, identity and enchantment. Makes the systematicness of Greek romance more fragmentary.
Centrifugal Chronotopes	
5. Reversal of Folkloric Historical Realism	An inversion of folkloric fullness of here-and-now; many folkloric realisms become transitioned. Folkloric process structure has three archetypal roles, providing the destiny of their enterprise through public shared treasury.
6. Rogue, Clown & Fool Folkloric Archetypes	Out of deaths, grotesque and folkloric structure emerge three major archetypes: the rogue, the clown, and the fool. Each creates their own world and their own chronotope (Bakhtin, 1981: 159).
7. Folkloric Basis for Rabelaisian	Time is collective and part of productive growth. Generative time is a pregnant time; a fruit-bearing time; a time of labor against nature and a time that converges again (p. 207). Generative time is 'profoundly spatial and concrete' (p. 207).
8. Idyllic Folkloric (organic locations)	Idyllic time is agricultural and craft labor; it's farm/organic, a grafting of life and its events to a place, to a familiar region with all its nooks and crannies, to familiar mountains, valleys, fields, rivers and forests, and one's 'own home' (p. 225).
9. Castle Room Folkloric	The place and time of one's residence. It is historic and folkloric chronotope found in the novels of Stendhal and Balzac: the living rooms and salons where the dialogue, passions and ambitions of the heroes are revealed.
10. Castle Room (extended)	McDonald's as a place where home was once a tavern, a place to have playgrounds that cities no longer fund. The fast food castle room is a centrifugal chronotope of displacement.

STRATEGY CHRONOTOPES

The question arises, which chronotopes are manifest in schools and exemplars of strategy? Let me state five researchable propositions:

1. Strategy writers use different chronotopes.
2. Some writers use multiple chronotopes.

3. Strategy schools' typologies ignore the folkloric chronotopes.
4. There are more chronotopes in use than are theorized in strategy.
5. The dialogism of inter-chronotope relationships has not been studied.

I am reformulating the Mintzberg et al.'s, Barry and Elmes', and Astley's typologies (Chapter 4). I relocated part of the design school (notably, Selznick) into what Boulding would call Level 7 (symbolic). I asserted that the Configuration School of strategy (e.g. Chandler), which privileges history, has Level 7 chronotopic properties. Cole was an economic historian (as well as Schumpeter) whose work bridged into Level 7. And Normann was not just Cultural School. The ideal kaleidoscope (or rhizomatic chronotope) orbits and configures them: it is inter-chronotopic.

Table 6.2: Ten Chronotopes and Strategy Schools

Adventure Chronotope	Strategy School	Exemplary / Key Claim
1. Greek Romantic	Design/SWOT, Rational Planning	Andrews: SWOT as epic adventure chronotope; Ansoff (1965) rational, abstract frame of goal focus and diversification; Schumpeter (1942) and Cole (1959) at level of institutions.
2. Everyday	Institutional / Cultural	Selznick (1957): everyday adventure that is cyclic; life-cycle of institution faced with environmental threats; CEO as Lion or Fox archetype. Chandler (1962): everyday travel adventure — organizations invent strategies resulting in the M-form (multi-divisional form).
3. Analytic Biographic	Comparative History	Chandler (1962): comparative history method as a variant of Bakhtin's analytic biography — well-defined rubrics or principles beneath biographical material.
4. Chivalric	Economic History	Schumpeter (1942) and Cole (1950): idealism coded as 'creative destruction,' defense of monopolistic capitalism; history treats individuals as terms, institutions as heroes.
5. Reversal of Historical Realism	Configuration / Contingency	Miles and Snow (1978); Miller and Friesen (1977): type organization perceptions of environment according to symbol-archetypes (Prospector, Analyzer, Defender, Inspector). Mintzberg (1979): five configurations.
6. Clown-Rogue-Fool	McDonald's / Popular	Ronald McDonald / Hamburgler / Grimace as folkloric grotesque archetypes. Rogue-Clown-Fool strategy in narrative humor (Boje et al., 2007).
7. Rabelaisian Purge	Grotesque / Critical	McDonald's associations of fast food with ripped heart, human and food/animal characters to affirm comic death over real death; Rabelaisian laughter to degrade and thereby renew.

8. Folkloric Basis for Rabelaisian	Generative / Collective	Collective time of productive growth; generative time as pregnant/fruit-bearing; profoundly spatial and concrete.
9. Idyllic	Localization / Global Strategy	McDonald's idyllic chronotope: globalization and localization meeting point. Local menu variations (New Mexico chile, Japanese shrimp, Nova Scotia McLobster) as idyllic strategy.
10. Castle Room	Place / Spatial Strategy	McDonald's as castle room: a meeting place where home was once a tavern or café. The McPlayplace, MCC in China. Contrast with Danish coffee-house warmth vs. McDonald's garish plastic décor.

ADVENTURE CHRONOTOPES

Adventure chronotopes are highly popular in strategy writing. They are used alone, or in combination.

Greek Romantic Adventure

Greek Romantic Adventure is defined as an abstract, formal genre of a given time in adventure. The CEO as SWOT is an example of Greek Romantic chronotope. A heroic CEO battles environmental threats, motivates heroes of the firm, and plays on firm's strengths to exploit environmental opportunities. The link to time/space in the SWOT frame is more problematic: abstract ideas of SWOT drive strategic response. Adventure time stories are used to create more positive constructions.

Schumpeter (1942) and Cole (1959) are economic historians at the level of institutions. Andrews: SWOT is epic adventure chronotope (combination of Greek Romance and Chivalric as Barry and Elmes' [1997] schools framework). Ansoff (1965) rational, abstract frame of goal focus and diversification. Schumpeter (1942) and Cole (1959) at level of institutions and *its only chronotope*.

The systemic-abstract of McDonald's is well known, as is the romantic adventure telling of Ray Kroc's founding of the franchise and expansion. As with the McDonald's brothers who invented the abstract system of fast-food Taylorism, McDonald's operates in global space of diverse countries, avoiding local traditions that might create a counter-narrative. McDonald's character strategies for national adventures have Aristotle's *energeia*, which means their dramatic personae do not change; traits are merely discovered. *Energeia* is consistent with Kroc's (1977) autobiography.

Everyday Adventure

Everyday Adventure is a mix of everyday time of suddenly and accident with the previous adventure chronotope. Unlike Aristotelian *energeia* (Greek Romantic Adventure chronotope) it is 'energy' adventure; the plot works itself out in the unfolding of everyday encounters with the suddenness of emergent chance and accident. I categorize it as emergent strategy, up to the instant

it is improvised by control narrative. The Everyday Adventure chronotope is more controllable than romance, often involving control narrative. It is less abstract and linear than the first chronotope.

I read Philip Selznick as adopting more of an everyday chronotope, while also grounded in the romantic adventure chronotope. Selznick (1957) is a sociologist who places strategy in historical context. For Selznick the everyday adventure is cyclic: the institution's growth pattern, how it behaves under conditions of opportunity, the crisis of stability versus sudden opportunities. Institutions have the cycle of birth, maturation, and death. Selznick's life-cycle model draws upon social psychologist Daniel Katz. Katz (1951: 144) presents more of a romantic adventure-cycle with definite stopping and starting places.

A rapidly developing organization which has certain goals to achieve under emergency time-pressures presents an entirely different time pattern from a mature organization which has matured and the pack is at risk of its power. In the former case, the leadership pattern may emphasize innovative, imaginative, daring, and, to some extent, a rejection of traditional pathways to goals and even organizational constitution. As the organization declines, the pattern may be one of conformity to tradition, an absence of initiative, over-conservatism, conventionalized goals.

For Selznick (1957: 103), Katz's remarks suggest the need to 'place the orientation of organizational behavior in historical perspective.' While Selznick skips the language of evolution or life-cycle, he also finds it to be 'misleading' for discussions of organizational identity.

Analytic Biographic

I will call Chandler, Jr., who came to be part of the strategy faculty at Harvard in 1958. Chandler's (1962) comparative history method is multi-chronotopic: Romantic, Everyday, emergence, Chivalric, and Biographic. Chandler (1962: 111) builds biographies around entrepreneur-historian Cole and Schumpeter as institutional theory is applied to administrative theory.

Chandler's (1962) comparative history method is a variant of Bakhtin's analytic biography — well-defined rubrics or principles beneath biographical material. Selznick (1957) institutional leader is chivalric, expected to be beyond opportunism and utopianism; uses self-reflexive self-knowledge.

Most executives (Pierre du Pont, Alfred Sloan at GM, James Barker et al.) were MIT graduates, sharing common socialization in curriculum of engineering. At MIT, managers learned Taylor's scientific management techniques. Chandler argues that each of the four firms had 'differences in the ethos or personality' (p. 319), and delays in initiating or completing the new structure (decentralized multi-divisional form) were due to differences in the ethos — executives failing to appreciate the administrative needs created by expansion into new markets.

Chandler (1962: 139–3) narrates the biography of GM executive Billy Durant as akin to Selznick's Fox and Lion. Alfred Sloan took the opposite path: the administrator who puts engineering details before the goal. Chandler does not make the CEO the hero. His quest is for the origin — the birth of an administrative institution, the M-form (decentralized, multi-divisional firm).

Chandler implicates complexity awareness in chronological narratives (form follows strategy). This makes the enterprise histories comparable. He reviews and summarizes thousands of pages of text: annual reports, memoranda, and biographies. Mintzberg found managerial work to be highly fragmented, full of brevity, discovering the complexity of behavior in some of the most complex environments in industry.

Chivalric Chronotope and Self-Reflexivity

What about self-knowledge? It is here that Selznick moves beyond mere Greek Romantic Adventure and Everyday Adventure chronotopes (Chandler's adventure). Leaders who use a chivalric code put the survival of the enterprise ahead of themselves. For Selznick (1957: 143) reflexivity is a matter of self-knowledge — an awareness that has no limit of the adventure chronotope. Opportunities get caught up in short-term immediate gains or exigencies and miss long-term temporal effects of history upon organization identity.

There is a tension in Mintzberg's perspective on configuration archetypes from his earliest to most recent writing. Mintzberg (1973) first book, *Nature of Managerial Work*, was a behavior challenge to dominant organizational/Fayol principles: managers can become truly adaptive to the environment by finding allies and outer sources of external support, and to gel the organization by creating the means and the will to withstand attacks (Selznick 1957: 145). And so they can become truly adaptive.

FOLKLORIC CHRONOTOPES

Folkloric chronotopes are prevalent in strategy writing, but not labeled. They can be rescued in Mintzberg et al., Barry and Elmes, and Astley. The award-winning chronotopes are therefore fruitful for future research.

When we investigate the folkloric chronotope, Bakhtin's (1981) work might be read as its core competencies. Each phase in the organization's life-history narrative calls forth a different leadership, a different developmental problem, and thereby different core competencies of the leader-strategist. Folkloric chronotopes have three types of leader roles: interpersonal (figurehead, leader, and liaison); informational (monitor, disseminator, and spokesperson); and decisional (entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator, and negotiator). Fayol's functions and Mintzberg's roles differ substantially in how they relate to time and space in organizational stories.

Reversal of Folkloric Historical Realism

There is trans-positioning in this chronotope, an inversion of time into the mythic. Past to realize a less ephemeral Future. In a sense the mythic organization is omni-present. Folklore is about where space or time become separated from embodiment to become the here-and-now. Ephemeral future is not in concrete, dense form — as we discover, a mythic past becomes the basis to concretize the future.

It appears to me that Mintzberg's techno-futurist strategy and the past (1981) calls the chronotopic 'reversal of folkloric' time and space. Snow (1978) calls the chronotopic reversal of folkloric time and space. Proposition: strategy plans are *not* using adventure chronotopes or any other folkloric time and space. Miles and Snow's archetypes use the reversal (i.e. Miles and Snow): reality becomes inverted by trips into mythic archetypes for feed-forward stories.

Cole and Schumpeter are multi-adventurous and mechanistic in their ideas of history. Rather institutions are heroes. Folkloric chronotopes organize the diversity of themes expressing constructions — but home themes pervade the diversity of themes expressing adventure, folkloric, and idyllic frames. These themes are: (1) active agency, (2) order, (3) will, (4) small-relatedness, and (5) lifespan development. People are embedded in symbolic systems such as Cole's histories.

Stone's archetypes are keyed to the life-cycle model of Normann's (1977) symbol-archetypes: they type organization adaptation to challenges and problems as reflective of an organization's adaptation to challenges or conglomerations of personnel, engineering, and administrative spheres. In archetype theories of organization theory, the present seems to lose its integrity, breaking down into increasingly abstract configurations or conglomerations of symbol and myth. Configuration school, in general, is a process of organization myth — archetypes that define and dominate the historical constellation of strategy.

Mintzberg and Langton (2001): the architecture of configuration camouflages the theme of configuration in contingency theory. It is a stone that hides Kantian roots in humanist Kant (1724–

1804). Mintzberg relates the dual-archetype structure (configuration) framework in contingency theory. Each configuration is associated with specific environmental conditions and contexts.

Rogue-Clown-Fool

The rogue, the clown and the fool create around themselves their own laws, their own world, their own chronotope (Bakhtin, 1981: 159). The rogue has 'no real ideal' in common with the world, but the clown and fool are 'not of this world' (p. 159).

McDonald's has deployed the strategy of narrative humor, particularly in its Hamburger-Ronald-Grimace storytelling (Boje et al., 2004, 2005; Roy and Rhodes, 2005). We produced a play to explore this chronotope (Boje et al., 2007). Part of the work was producing a film that would explore this chronotope by having MBA students examine how McDonald's uses it. McDonald's uses this chronotope to purge and cleanse: Ronald plays cruel pranks on his friends, attacks vegetarian people by parodying the high language of religious practice. He is a figure of life's journey opposed by the Slow Food movement.

McDonald's strategy of narrative humor is particularly the Rogue-Clown-Fool. The fool and clown are 'not of this world' and create their own laws and their own chronotope. McDonald's characters manage to be both inside and outside the social contract: Ronald is simultaneously a friend of children, a clown, a rogue who 'steals' hamburgers, and a cosmic fool at the frontier of culture and nature.

Rabelaisian Purge

Rabelaisian purge is a cleansing of spatial and temporal world of cruelty and the scandalous. It is a grotesque method using laughter to degrade, debunk, and discredit and thereby renews, rejuvenates, and redeems. This serves to replace: (1) grotesque laughter in order to purge trial irresponsible that do not achieve full potential and authenticity at important historical junctures; and (2) to purge the construction of transgressive worldview: the mask of conventionality, and to purge of transcendent identity and moral associations reinforced by tradition, religion, and class appropriation by modernity.

McDonald's uses grotesque humor to associate food and drink with the rich and spiritual antics of Hamburglar/Rabelaisian (in Barry and Elmes). He pulls a tray of food from his pants and inflates a cheeseburger to the size of a coffin. Ronald and gang climb between the heaven and the colossal. McDonald's cartoon films frequently invoke religious concepts and symbols to affirm a kind of sacred carnivalesque: the rogue and fool transgress what is meant to purge this sort of transcendence.

In each episode, Ronald dines from the underworld and returns at the culmination of carnivore. Folkloric characters such as Hamburglar, Birdie, etc. are grotesque hybrids of human and fast food. McDonald's operates in global space of diverse countries, invoking local traditions. McDonald's folkloric chronotope adventures have Aristotle's *energeia*, which means their dramatic personae

do not change; traits are merely discovered. Enegeia is consistent with Kroc's (1977) autobiography.

Idyllic

Foods, agricultural labor, and craftwork are idyllic. Idyllic space and time is 'an ancient lore fashion; a grafting of life and its events to a place, to a familiar region with all its nooks and crannies, to familiar mountains, valleys, fields, rivers and forests, and one's own home' (Bakhtin, 1981: 225).

McDonald's idyllic chronotope is as idyllic, where the generations localize and globalize without limit. Globalization and localization meet at McDonald's. Globalization weakens and blurs temporal boundaries between places on the globe — the same little home away from home. Every menu in the world is part of McDonald's strategy to globalize its menu but allow for local variations: New Mexico server greens chile, New York and California veggie burgers, Japanese shrimp menu, McLobster in Nova Scotia, India McAloo (vegetarian). The idyllic is a sublimated form, a way to conjoin local human life with global life, and posit the unity of three things: cosmic distances global, demanding accommodations. Global disengages local, as people have fewer choices.

Castle Room

Bakhtin (1973) calls the Castle Room a historic and folkloric chronotope. It is found in the novels of Stendhal and Balzac: the living rooms and salons where the dialogue, passions and ambitions of the heroes are revealed. 'It is in the castle that characters, ideas and passions of the omnipresent power of the new owners of the revealed money' (Bakhtin, 1981: 456). It is possible to say in contemporary literature it occurs in castles with fast food places to meet. In neighborhoods, McDonald's has mothers take their children to McPlayplace. In China, the meeting place without a park, have McPlace to go. The meeting place to discuss makes a difference on the quality of the discourse. The ambiance of a salon or coffee house in Denmark is one of cozy warmth. McDonald's is garish, plastic, and makes one want to run screaming from the place. McDonald's plastic meeting place shows, life's journey is opposed by the Slow Food movement — that is a place of conversation and conviviality (Ritzer, 1993/2002).

The spatializing and organizing are dialogically chronotopic: various ways of temporalizing and spatializing are integrating chronotopically in the adventure chronotopes that are monolineal (more centripetal). The field of strategy has been about these rather limiting adventure chronotopes while ignoring the folkloric chronotopes that are multi-chronotopic (centrifugal-descending). These are the chronotopes that are more apt to be investigated.

Note: Opening of Chapter 7 — Architectonic Strategy Stories (p. 155)

[The scanned pages also capture the opening of Chapter 7, summarized here for reference.]

Architectonic Strategy Story is defined as orchestration of ethos in relation to aesthetic and cognitive aspects of storytelling. For it to be dialogic, the three discourses must become more fully answerable to one another, not just image management. Bakhtin's (1990, 1991) work on architectonics is only recently translated to English. Its impact on social sciences (in English-speaking communities) is only beginning to be felt. Applied to strategy, the architectonic dialogue is the interaction of several social discourses that affects a firm's narrating.

These authors, Immanuel Kant, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Michel Foucault write about architectonics in different ways. Like Kant (1781) and Bakhtin (1991), Foucault (1975) treats architectonics as societal discourse. Kant invented cognitive architectonic (*Critique of Reason*, 1781/1900, 696). For Kant the term Architectonic means: 'the art of constructing a system... Reason cannot permit our knowledge to remain in an unconnected and rhapsodistic state, but requires that the sum of our cognitions should constitute a system.' Architectonics is cognitive, and is deeply implicated in constructing systemicity.

Bakhtin preferred the term 'consummation' to 'construction,' and was careful about architectonic's monophonic or mono-languaged system. He proceeded to look at the unmethodedness, the unfinalizeability of system, or what Boje calls throughout systemicity. Bakhtin (1990) added ethical and aesthetic dimension to Kant's cognitive architectonics: discourse here is the situation of answerability. Ethics here is defined as being about how, and for whom, systemic behavior is undertaken.

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