



Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia
Has been issued since 2014
ISSN 1339-6773
E-ISSN 1339-875X

The Experience of Time and Space in *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens*

Agata Buda

University of Technology and Humanities in Radom, Poland
Faculty of Philology and Pedagogy, 31, Chrobrego Str. Radom
Department of English Studies
Dr
E-mail: a.buda@uthrad.pl

Abstract

The paper is the attempt to present the analysis of the novel *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens in terms of time and space relations, according to the theory of Mikhail Bakhtin. The author of the article distinguishes different types of chronotope that constitute the construction of the novel. This distinction is based on the oppositions: town versus circus, where town represents the materialistic unchangeable world and the circus stands for spiritual life and symbol of freedom. The town represents a typical nineteenth – century industrial area, where life concentrates only on work and the inhabitants move like machines in the same directions every day; the circus, on the other hand, is the embodiment of human freedom, where people move in different dimensions (up and down, left and right, forwards and backwards). The movement in both places has a metaphorical meaning: it refers either to the limitations imposed on humans (factories and school in the town) or to the pursuit for happiness (circus). By using such contrasts Dickens wanted to achieve the effect of realism in depicting Victorian world.

Keywords: chronotope; time; space; Victorianism; industrialization; spatial dimension.

Introduction

The analysis of a particular literary work can be realized on different levels. One of the most in-depth ways of analysing a book is following the factors of a chronotope presented in it. There exists a crucial idea underlined by Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift [1] that writing itself constitutes a particular spatial construction. Examining the context of a novel in contemporary study of poetics of literary works more and more frequently concentrates on the analysis of time and space. These elements are essential to full understanding of the idea of a given literary work. Victorian novel seems to be an ideal area to observe and present spatial relations due to its range and typicality.

Following the way of analysing poetics of a novel by Oksana Weretiuk [2][†] it is worth using the category of time – space relation perceived (after Minkowski, Bakhtin and Barthes) as combining spatial and temporal indications in a reasonable and precise whole, i.e. as *four dimensional space, the fourth dimension of which is time* [2]. As Michał Głowiński states [3], it is space that constitutes the main constructional element of every work and is the basis to analyse its other parts. George Hughes is of the same opinion [4]; he claims that the idea of a chronotope is a fundamental part of a literary work, it is its inner world.

Hard Times is a typical novel by Dickens that does not differ much from his other works as far as the topics and techniques are concerned. However, it is very interesting in terms of the idea of a chronotope. One can easily distinguish in the novel several extensive time – space circles, and inside them – several minor ones.

* The article is an extended version of a subchapter in the book: Buda, A. (2014). *Powieść wiktoriańska i jej dwudziestowieczne życie*. Radom: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Technologiczno-Humanistycznego.

[†] Check Oksana Weretiuk. *Wizja Ukrainy we współczesnej powieści polskiej i ukraińskiej*, Warszawa 1998: 297.

The time – space relation as the background of the whole work

The whole construction of a chronotope is based here on extreme contrasts; in the area of Coketown Dickens presents various contrasts, starting from the level of a territorial space, through the contrasts of the spaces of particular places and buildings, and finally finishing with two different depictions of the figures' characters. The whole creates so called social space, which, as Henri Lefebvre states [5], is unusually complex, it does not constitute one object, which can be compared to another. In the limits of this chronotope, the processes of penetrating through many other levels simultaneously take place.

The industrial space of a town

The chronotope of the town, which predominates over smaller elements of the presented world, constitutes the background of the whole in the novel by Dickens*. And although the name of the place – Coketown is fictional†, its description seems to resemble a typical nineteenth-century industrial urban space. As Alina Szala states [7], giving fictional names to places can mean the attempt to impose on the place a metaphorical meaning. According to Dobrzycka [8], there is a clear similarity between Coketown and Preston or Manchester at that time. There exists also the analogy between the parts of the town's name: coke (carbon fuel produced by distillation of coal) and town, and the character of this industrialized place. Throughout the whole novel, the cloud of smoke and ash raises over the town. Although it was built of red brick, as the narrator informs the reader, ubiquitous ash makes it impossible to distinguish vivid colours. It is a misty space, *out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever* [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 18). It is an unchangeable chronotope; in the whole novel the town looks the same, as if time came to a standstill. At the very beginning the town is described as the area with similar streets and districts, full of contrasts between the poor and the rich, where life is unchanged and schematic:

It contained several large streets all very like one another, and many small streets still more like one another, inhabited by people equally like one another, who all went in and out at the same hours, with the same sound upon the same pavements, to do the same work, and to whom every day was the same as yesterday and tomorrow, and every year the counterpart of the last and the next (...).

The jail might have been the infirmary, the infirmary might have been the jail, the town-hall might have been either, or both, or anything else, for anything that appeared to the contrary in the graces of their construction [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 18-19).

The town's chronotope is restricted to the patterns repeated every day. The chronotope of a group, referring to the inhabitants' lifestyle is a clear analogy to the big space of the town itself. These patterns are presented by the narrator through frequent repetitions: the usage of the expression *the same* makes the reader experience a realistic vision of the town. What is more, using past tense to describe town's monotony, deepens experiencing this dark, unfriendly and unchangeable chronotope. Past tense can suggest the lack of development, changes and progress. Past tense describes something that was created a long time ago and at that moment it stopped at its initial level. Using present tense could possibly make this gloomy industrial space more lively, that is why the narrator's voice is so crucial here – he presents the existing town which seems to keep its image from the time it was built‡.

While the plot in the novel develops, Coketown stays in its unchangeable state. It is still the town full of smoke and chimneys which because of the smoke were *built in an immense variety of stunted and crooked shapes* [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 50). For Coketown then, time came to a

* It is worth paying attention to a spacial definition of a town proposed by Lefebvre [6]. A town is not only a population, geographical place or the group of buildings. Town is a place that consists of those elements which constitute a society.

† In Polish translation of *Hard Times* from 1866 by Apollo Korzeniowski, there is no Polish equivalent of the name Coketown. Korzeniowski translated the names and surnames into Polish, but he resigned from translating geographical terms.

‡ The question of time in the original and in the Polish translation is worth analysing here. The difference in using Polish past tense and Past Simple in the English version is essential here: Past Simple refers here to the past situations that in fact have nothing in common with present time. It is also used to describe people or events existing in distant past. There is no doubt then that the description of Coketown in English shows the depth of the unchangeable space. The described town cannot be seen as a place full of life and open to changes.

standstill*. Smoke is compared by one of the characters to people's daily bread [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 99). In this gloomy chronotope people can feel secure due to stability. Being aware of this state they are not afraid of surprises. There is no unpredicted situation that can be a danger, as the cloud full of soot and fumes from the factory chimneys do not let the sun go through. The space of the town is static then. Its lack of movement is also underlined by the choice of words in the town's description. These are: *was, would have been, had, might have been*. Rare use of the verbs of movement emphasises stagnation, in which Coketown permanently existed. At the end of the novel the town looks exactly the same as at the beginning: the ubiquitous soot and the chimneys *puffing out their poisonous volumes* [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 130) cover the landscape.

Such a description of the nineteenth-century English town in the age of Industrial Revolution seems to be exaggerated by the narrator who presents to the reader only negative sides of Coketown's image. The setting of the novel is the nineteenth century and it constitutes a historical space; Bakhtin distinguishes this kind of space as the space presenting the life of a nation, country or human race [10]. There is only one temporal mention about the time of the novel containing the information about *eighteen hundred and odd years after our Master* [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 73). The reader is aware then of a precise time of the plot. Taking into account the years of the writer's life and the time the novel was written, it can be concluded that the action takes place in the fifties of the nineteenth century. This time is the background for the events in the characters' lives, especially factory workers, whose fate constitutes the chronotope of a group. The plot connected with creating trade unions in British factories is also widely presented in the group chronotope, and constitutes the element of a historical space. The plot also frequently goes beyond the central space of the novel which is Coketown, and shows other realistic places that resemble existing cities. One of them is the capital of England in which Mrs. Sparsit, following her employer, Mr. Bounderby, finds him on St. James's Street. London does not play as important role in the novel as Liverpool. This is the city where Tom – Gradgrind's son – is going to escape in order to avoid responsibility. In comparison to closed and limited Coketown, Liverpool seems to be a total opposition and it represents an open space and freedom. This is Liverpool *whence he could be swiftly despatched to any part of the world* [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 218). Tom's attempt to leave for this place means human attempt to escape the parochialism of such places as Coketown. What is more, the crime Tom committed can be viewed as the consequence of influence of bad social conditions and wrong bringing-up. It is the perspective of a wide space of Liverpool that influences Tom's behaviour. He is sorry for his father and he regrets his deed.

Factories

In the borders of a central space of Coketown there exist minor spaces being the oppositions one to another. One of the most important contrasts is the contrast between the formal institutions (factories and school) and places of entertainment (circus and its inhabitants). The picture of industrialisation blends into the town's landscape while circus definitely stands out from it. The first striking difference between a standardized life in factories (and in Mr. Gradgrind's house) and life in the circus is noticeable in the very appearance of these institutions. The space of the factory is full of the state-of-the-art machinery. There is no place for people and their worries. The technologically developed equipment is so essential there that they even dominate in the circumterrestrial space. When they become silent after a whole day of work, then *the great wheel of earth seemed to revolve without the shocks and noises of another time* [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 207). The space of the factory is artificial and soulless. Machines are here the characters, they make the town alive. The levels of machinery work mark the parts of every day. People, mainly workers, injured during dangerous work, covered with dust and oil, can be noticed among the machines. As Dobrzycka claims [8], Dickens wanted to show the misery of workers, that is why he travelled to the industrial centres of England.

School

School also belongs to the same category of space as the factory. The classroom resembles rather barren space than a place friendly for students. Its vault was *plain, bare, monotonous* [9]

* This bland presentation of the town, hero or world in an unchangeable space was defined by M. Bakhtin as hiatus not related to time, empty time which does not bring any progress [10].

(Dickens [1854] 2000: 3). There was no life in it. What in factory stood for its soul - i.e. machinery - in the classroom was a square space, full of angular desks and flat unornamented walls. While describing both the factory and the school the narrator concentrates on the objects rather than people. Both at school and in the factory the most important were not the participants of the production or educational process but the dreary equipment. The school space dominated students' behaviour, making them mechanisms rather than people. The school space is also limited; the walls and the teacher believing only in facts are the border. When children leave the school, they see the open space, they run and laugh, which is impossible inside the school building. There exists harmony between the teacher and the classroom: his forehead is square like the classroom's wall and the rest of his body is similar: *square coat, square legs, square shoulders* [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 3). This space is rather angular than streamlined. It means that a person unaware of this fact can be easily harmed while approaching this space. The school is presented with the help of regular and predictable facts: nothing is surprising here since everything has its clear, definite and measurable shape.

The teacher shows his limited space – he looks *as if his head had scarcely warehouse-room for the hard facts stored inside* [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 3). The students then seem not to be totally pervaded with the theory of fact yet. This theory was strongly supported by the teacher: only things that could be observed and measured were important – there was no place for feelings. The narrator compares children to small dishes which are waiting, or, rather are being prepared to *have imperial gallons of facts poured into them until they were full to the brim* [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 3). There are two images of a geometrical space: one of them is the space of a teacher's square skull – shaped throughout the years of understanding facts. The skull does not accept anything what is abstract and is not a fact. It is already full and it is impossible to pour any more information in it. The other is the space of young students who are being already shaped and are capable of acquiring certain load of knowledge. Students' heads, like open dishes, have some free space and have not been finally shaped, they are more rounded like bowls and pots and able to accept some knowledge.

The limitation of the capacity of the teacher's mind, which is analogous to the limitation of the space he works in, means being closed to any mental innovations and individuality. Thomas Gradgrind is not able to understand anything that does not match his theory of fact:

You might hope to get some other nonsensical belief into the head of George Gradgrind, or Augustus Gradgrind, or John Gradgrind, or Joseph Gradgrind (all suppositious, non-existent persons), but into the head of Thomas Gradgrind - no, sir! [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 4).

The students' space, on the other hand, is a collective space similar to the space of workers in the factory. There is no place for individualism and thinking. Every student is the embodiment of a number in a row. When the teacher asks one of the students a question, he names the girl by the number:

'Girl number twenty,' said Mr Gradgrind, squarely pointing with his square forefinger, 'I don't know that girl. Who is that girl?' 'Sissy Jupe, sir,' explained number twenty (...) [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 4).

Although the school space is unchangeable and predictable, students show sometimes tendency to utter their thoughts. They are, unfortunately, suppressed in order not to let the individual student's space widen too much. To achieve this aim, the teacher follows clear rules:

'Ay, ay, ay! But you mustn't fancy (...), You are never to fancy.' (...)

'You must discard the word Fancy altogether. (...) You are not to have, in any object of use or ornament, what would be a contradiction in fact' [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 7).

This is the way a person is "shaped" at Mr. Gradgrind's school. The students are "produced" like the goods in the factories: the space is closed and well-known; only time goes forward just to reinforce educational processes. The analogy between the school space and the factory space can be easily noticed in the figure of Mr. M'Choakumchild*, who becomes the embodiment of a person "produced" by a school machine. The narrator, presenting this figure to the reader, uses ironic allusions:

* The author of a Polish translation correctly notices that the surname M'Choakumchild means in Polish Dławibachor [9] (Dickens [1866] 2001: 9).

[Mr. M'Choakumchild] and some one hundred and forty other schoolmasters had been lately turned at the same time, in the same factory, on the same principles, like so many pianoforte legs [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 8).

The narrator is also afraid that erudition of Mr. M'Choakumchild can be quite harmful for those dishes that constitute not filled students' minds. They have one distinctive feature: imagination called *the robber* by the narrator [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 8), whom M'Choakumchild can kill with the amount of his knowledge. Comparing the educational scheme to the kitchen – chemical processes influences the reader's image of destroying individual space and creativity, as well as making it predictable, tendentious and artificial.

The Stone Lodge

In the area of Coketown there is also another significant example of a closed, gloomy and destructive space. It is in the house of Mr. Gradgrind. It is quite similar to the space of school he works in. The Stone Lodge is a name accurate and appropriate to the house's character. The building was located *on a moor within a mile or two of a great town – called Coketown in the present faithful guide-book* [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 9). The narrator compares the house to *the lecturing castle* and its owner to *a monster* [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 9); this combination suggests a particular chronotope; time passing in this dim place seems to be archaic and unrealistic. Nothing changed here over the years. This is the place where Mr. Gradgrind shapes his children's own space that becomes a collective space at the same time. Filling their heads with facts Gradgrind makes his children the elements of faceless crowd. The educational process which takes place in a Stone Lodge is suspended in time, it does not accept any external factors which can be perceived as possible threat to the process. The awareness of different kinds of entertainment in the town could possibly destroy the assumptions of Mr. Gradgrind's ways of teaching. Everything in a Stone Lodge can be controlled and foreseen. The area is unchangeable and monotonous, every day it looks the same. Mr. Gradgrind's house is the embodiment of a static life:

A great square house, with a heavy portico darkening the principal windows (...). A calculated, cast up, balanced, and proved house. Six windows on this side of the door, six on that side; a total of twelve in this wing, a total of twelve in the other wing; four-and-twenty carried over to the back wings. A lawn and garden and an infant avenue, all ruled straight like a botanical account- book. Gas and ventilation, drainage and water-service (...). Iron clamps and girders, fire-proof from top to bottom; mechanical lifts for the housemaids (...) [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 9).

The house's description emphasises its similarity to the factory; there are no natural elements of life, but what is tangible like length, height and width, can be measured. These dimensions make it possible to define the volume of the house's space and to distinguish its symmetry. The symmetry can be noticed for instance in the even number of windows. It creates the image of the house as very austere and lifeless. The most important room in the house – Mr. Gradgrind's study – reflected his work and the space of the whole place. It is similar to the school and factory- everything is in a perfect order, there are mainly books and teaching aids. In this gloomy space, together with Mr. Gradgrind and his wife, there lived their children. The lifestyle of the Stone Lodge's inhabitants appears to be the example of a destruction of an idyllic space mentioned by Bakhtin. Bakhtin points out that this destruction is very typical for the nineteenth-century English novel [10]*. An honest conversation between Louisa and Tom is the most accurate example of such a destruction:

'Because, Tom, (...) as I get older, and nearer growing up, I often sit wondering here, and think how unfortunate it is for me that I can't reconcile you to home better than I am able to do. I don't know what other girls know. I can't play to you, or sing to you. I can't talk to you so as to enlighten your mind, for I never see any amusing sights or read any amusing books that it would be a pleasure or a relief to you to talk about, when you are tired.' Well, no more do I. I am as bad as you in that respect; and I am a Mule too, which you're not. If father was determined to make me either a Prig or a Mule, and I am not a Prig, why, it stands to reason, I must be a Mule. And so

* Among the elements of a destruction of idyllic space Bakhtin distinguishes, among others, the failure of idealism in the capitalist metropolis, as well as degeneration of moral rules and family relationships under the influence of materialism [10].

I am,' said Tom, desperately (...).'Tom. It's very unfortunate for both of us.' [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 40-41).

This is how Dickens concludes the situation in which the siblings realised that their childhood was subjected to the destructive space of the house. Children at school as well as workers in the factories were also experiencing similar processes. As Dyboski claims [11], by showing these processes Dickens criticises human view on the world, far from the realistic one and created from the perspective of the industrialized country. Nevertheless, this sad and depressing landscape stays in the opposition to the chronotope of a circus.

The circus

Mr. Sleary's circus is a specific space, unknown to people living in the space of factories and school. That is why Mr. Gradgrind, who wanted to find Sissy Jupe – the girl living with other circus performers – has no idea how to reach the place which is quite mysterious and exciting at the same time. The bend of the road leads him from the space of work to the space of entertainment. The passage from the stiff and flat space is deformed then; it becomes twisted; that can mean dealing with a totally different environment. People working in this area move in every possible dimension: they dance on the barrels, jump, move up with the lines, so their movement is mainly directed upwards. This spatial dimension has a metaphorical meaning: a human being, moving upwards, has a different perspective of perceiving reality: he sees more and looks wider than a person who is down-to-earth. That is why a difference between Mr. Gradgrind and the people from the circus is so crucial here. The teacher has a limited point of view, as he moves along a straight line in a flat space; that is why he does not notice anything that is beyond his field of vision, he does not accept the facts that go beyond his flat surface of moving. On the other hand, the people from the circus represent human freedom; they are able to explore six dimensions: they move up and down, left and right, forwards and backwards. This widens their perspective and gives them a broad view of reality. It influences their humanity, as they experience various situations in their lives*. Dickens describes them in an accurate way:

Yet there was a remarkable gentleness and childishness about these people, a special inaptitude for any kind of sharp practice, and an untiring readiness to help and pity one another, deserving often of as much respect, and always of as much generous construction, as the every-day virtues of any class of people in the world [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 29).

The chronotope of the circus is then the reflection of kindness, tolerance and humanity, while the space of school and Mr. Gradgrind's house are metaphors of evil, oppression and limitations. The people working in the circus live in a tavern that is also dominated by the space of freedom. In Sissy's room there was the image of Pegasus, which is named by the narrator one of *the idealities* [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 23). This symbolic creature is indirectly the reflection of human desire of freedom, as well as possessing abilities inaccessible for an ordinary mortal. This attempt to explore the height of the space was typical of the people of circus who were simple and honest. Teachers, bank clerks and factory owners were not familiar with this dimension. Any sign of trying to explore it (student's own opinion, attempt to create trade unions) was treated as heresy.

Changes are typical feature of the circus. Contrary to the unchangeable world of factories and school, in the circus constant changes take place and the progress is visible. Mr. Sleary tells Sissy the story of the circus's development during her absence. The changes mainly referred to the personal life of the circus people: young men got married, young girls found good husbands and bore children. Happiness on the family level is a materialistic representation of the circus space: the artists went up and up in their performances and finally they achieved their success. What constituted the destruction of an idyllic chronotope in Mr. Gradgrind's house, in the circus became the full realisation of family happiness. Sissy's relationship with her father is the best example of love and support. Sissy tells Louisa about her father's care that cannot be achieved through strict rules but through the mutual respect.

* Both Stanisław Jaworski [12] and Juan Eduardo Cirlot [13] perceive space in the categories of distance and direction. They distinguish the oppositions: up/down, near/far, open/close etc., as well as the image of a three-dimensional spatial cross, whose arms refer to all six dimensions, being the metaphorical representations of different values; for instance, up means good, down refers to evil etc. This perception of a chronotope is also shared by Janusz Sławiński [14].

Opposition as the main feature of the spaces

Both the spatial vision of factory/ school and the circus can be perceived as the collective spaces. Nevertheless, one may distinguish in their structure the individual spaces*. In the factory one can notice personal space of a worker named Stephen; he is a representative of a group of workers and the inhabitant of a working colony. The space of school contains the life of Sissy who as a child is closely connected with the circus.

Between the two groups of spaces (factory/school – circus/tavern) there exist extreme oppositions, for instance the idea of movement. Static factory and school stay in opposition to the dynamic circus. Mr. Gradgrind's walk from the safe and static space of the school towards the dynamic space of the circus results in undermining the teacher's own chronotope. He gets lost while approaching the circus since he has not been conditioned to understand and accept entertainment; his whole life was filled with studying the theory of facts.

Another opposition between the two worlds is predictability of factory and school processes versus mysteriousness of the circus. In factory and in the classroom everything is planned and unchangeable while in the circus everything that is located in human minds is unpredictable due to being natural. If one isolates the workers from the space of the factory and treats them as the representatives of a group oppressed by global technology, he finds in them the element of mysteriousness being in opposition to the place they work in:

So many hundred Hands in this Mill; so many hundred horse Steam Power. It is known, to the force of a single pound weight, what the engine will do; but, not all the calculators of the National Debt can tell me the capacity for good or evil, for love or hatred, for patriotism or discontent, for the decomposition of virtue into vice, or the reverse, at any single moment in the soul of one of these its quiet servants (...). There is no mystery in it; there is an unfathomable mystery in the meanest of them, for ever [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 54).

The strictness of factory and school rules are in opposition to a certain freedom of behaviour in the circus. Strict written rules aimed at the workers and students become the limited space because they prevent people from free thinking and acting. The unwritten symbolic rules of respect and love among the circus inhabitants become for them the open space. Teachers and factory owners have to create the norms of behaviour which are artificial (they can be applied to work of machines rather than to humans) while circus people understand one another and behave correctly despite the lack of definite rules. This results from the fact that nothing is imposed on the circus people; imagination and individualism are cultivated. Sissy intuitively understands why her father had to leave the circus, because they had a good contact. But the girl is not capable of uttering a short definition expected from her by the teacher. This is the example of the difference between the two spaces, it is the opposition of the fact to spirituality. It is also the opposition of superficiality of the factory and school to the spontaneity of the circus. The factory and the classroom are presented by Dickens through the analysis of their appearance – everything that can be directly observed: machinery, rotary wheel, desks, walls, doors. The circus, on the other hand, is mainly presented from its internal side: warm relationships among the inhabitants are analysed. In the factory and school everything is well-organized and even. The image of the circus then, is far from any visible order; one may even notice some negligence. But it is only a surface disorder, as the main thing emphasised is the people's imagination. Even the shape of these two spaces resembles the character of their opposite meanings: angular factory and school stays in opposition to the circus. You can be physically harmed in the circus but it is still the best place for your mental health. At school and in the factory spirituality is limited and overwhelmed; in the circus it flourishes.

Irrespective of extreme differences between these two spaces there exists some kind of a link between them. Although Mr. Gradgrind is not aware of this dependence, the owner of the circus, Mr. Sleary, fully realises it:

People mutht be amuthed. They can't be alwayth a learning, nor yet they can't be alwayth a working, they an't made for it. You mutht have uth, Thquire. Do the withe thing and the kind thing too, and make the betht of uth; not the wurtht! [9] (Dickens [1854] 2000: 230).

* Bakhtin defines such a layout of the space the internal aspect of time.

Constructional chronotope of the novel

While analysing a number of spaces in the novel, one may easily distinguish a global constructional space of the whole work. Looking at the book as at the complete whole, one can notice its spatial structural elements. The time of the plot stays in the accordance with the agricultural cycle and corresponds to the particular phases of work on the field. First of all, there is SOWING that refers to shaping young minds at school; next there appears REAPING which is the effect of what the educational doctrine worked out. A farmer is not always successful in his work, similarly a teacher fails sometimes and does not achieve planned effects. Finally, GARNERING being usually the indicator of a farmer's work is not always satisfactory*. Tom Gradgrind escaping from the punishment for a theft, Louisa leaving her rich husband and rejecting her father's strict rules appear to be such unsuccessful harvest. It seems then that the final effect of what was sown at the beginning, is depressing. Nevertheless, the changes that took place in the figures' lives appear to be the blessing for both Tom and Louisa. They are some kind of a rebellion against the order existing in Coketown. Although the characters fail, in a metaphorical sense they win; they are aware that they lived in apathy so far and are brave enough to escape from it.

Conclusion

Realism in the chronotope presented by Dickens is mainly the realism of historical times which become the background for historical events [15][†]. The social and industrial spaces are faithfully described as well. The human being becomes the centre of each space, as he constitutes the measure of every chronotope, as Yi- Fu Tuan [17] notices. The spaces are anthropomorphic then. All the constructional elements of the novel are realized in a particular time – space relation, what underlines the novel's cohesion [18]. The writer sometimes exaggerates while presenting the world, like for instance in the description of the town full of dust making it impossible for the sun to go through. Nevertheless, such a presentation emphasises negative aspects of a depicted life. The writer's aim was to achieve the effect of realistic depiction of a Victorian world. To make it possible, Dickens based his novel construction on the presentation of the extreme opposites: the two totally different worlds, being the direct and indirect references to the nineteenth – century lifestyle. Presenting the town the author shows difficult life conditions of the workers and soulless attitude towards education of the young. By showing the circus Dickens wants to emphasize what is important in human life and what cannot be found in such places as Coketown: freedom, entertainment, individuality and creativity. Those two oppositions constitute a characteristic picture of Victorian England; it is a developing country in which people are like machines and machines seems to replace people.

References:

1. Crang Mike i Nigel Thrift, red. *Thinking Space*. Routledge, Nowy Jork, 2003, p. 23.
2. Weretiuk, Oksana. *Wizja Ukrainy we współczesnej powieści polskiej i ukraińskiej*. Warszawa, 1998, p. 297.
3. Sławiński, Janusz, red. *Słownik terminów literackich*. Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław, 1988, pp. 410-411.
4. Hughes, George. *Reading Novels*. Vanderbilt University Press, Nashville, 2002, p. 39.
5. Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Blackwell Publishers Ltd, Oxford, 2000, p. 73.
6. Shields, Rob. *Lefebvre, Love and Struggle. Spatial Dialectics*. Routledge, London, 1999, p. 145.
7. Szala, Alina. *Wstęp do: George Eliot. Młyn nad Flossą*. Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław, 1991, p. 5.
8. Dobrzycka Irena. *Karol Dickens*. Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa, 1972, p. 191, 190.
9. Dickens, Charles. *Hard Times*. Wordsworth Editions Limited, London, [1854] 2000.
10. Bachtin, Michaił. *Problemy literatury i estetyki*. Czytelnik, Warszawa, 1982, pp. 286-287, 438, 456-457, 459.

* Sowing, reaping and garnering are the terms Dickens uses to construct the novel. They are the titles of the three parts of the work referring to the three phases in the plot development.

† Stanisław Sierotwiński calls the historical time shown in a novel a time of a presented environment [16] (1966: 55).

11. Dyboski, Roman. *Charles Dickens*. Wydawnictwo S.A. Książnica - Atlas, Lwów-Warszawa, 1936, p. 67.
12. Jaworski, Stanisław. *Słownik szkolny. Terminy literackie*. WSiP, Warszawa, 1990, p. 123.
13. Cirlot, Juan Eduardo. *Słownik symboli*. Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków, 2000, p. 335.
14. Sławiński, Janusz. „Przestrzeń w literaturze: elementarne rozróżnienia i wstępne oczywistości” [w:] Włodzimierz Bolecki, red. *Próby teoretycznoliterackie*. Prace wybrane, tom 4. Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych UNIVERSITAS, Kraków, 2000, p. 200.
15. Nosowska, Dorota. *Słownik motywów literackich*. Wydawnictwo Park Sp. z o. o., Bielsko-Biała, 2007, p. 36.
16. Sierotwiński, Stanisław. *Słownik terminów literackich*. Ossolineum, Wrocław, 1966, p. 55.
17. Tuan Yi - Fu. *Space and Place. The Perspective of Experience*. The University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2002, p. 44.
18. Kulawik, Adam. *Poetyka. Wstęp do teorii dzieła literackiego*. Wydawnictwo ANTYKWA, Kraków, 1997, p. 257.