# "THREE WORLDS" IN THE EPIC OF "RAMAYANA": CENTRAL CHRONOTOPE FORM

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*Abstract: The process of perceiving historical figures within real historical time and space in literary works is slow and complex. The specific characteristics of time and space, along with genre conventions and the realistic aspects of artistic representation, are being studied in relation to the historical stages of development achieved by humanity.*

*Keywords: Mikhail Bakhtin, chronotope forms of time and space in novels.*

Every epic is fundamentally rooted in the social, cultural, and spiritual history of humanity or a nation. A comprehensive study of the epics belonging to the imaginative thinking of world nations shows that their plot motives, characters, and details conform to typological rules, meaning they fit into a common mold. According to Bakhtin, the epic world is that of ancestors, "the first ones," and "the best ones." Therefore, the depicted reality within this world, where characters move, is considered absolutely sacred. In this context, both the genre and its characters are fully canonized. The unchangeable past is strictly separated from the world of the narrator or listener, which cannot be altered or transcended. It can only be preserved in memory; it can be recounted and admired, but not changed or reassessed. In short, the narrator and listener of the epic are from a completely different past, engaging in dialogue with the reality they experienced. They view it in comparison with their own time and people. In this process, they do not reflect on the epic's events and characters; instead, they repeatedly perceive and evaluate themselves.

In such reception processes, complex psychological states occur. When a modern person interacts with the epic, it is as if they are giving an account to their own

conscience, as they do not consider their own era or contemporaries to be ideal. Their ideal hero is derived from an abstract genetic memory, from the personalities of their ancestors, and from an ancient past. A systematic observation of the epic's plot, motives, and character typology reveals that the reality and images within them fundamentally trace back to humanity's early past. Regardless of which nation's epic we examine, whether it be complete or fragmented, it often bears resemblance to the life of the first human (peace be upon him) and the prophets who followed him.

Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope, which maximally approaches the phenomenon of the moving human in literature, is crucial to literary scholarship. In literature, the harmonious intertwining of perceived time and space is termed "chronotope" (literally meaning "time-space"). It is based on Einstein's theory of relativity. The term holds no special significance as a mathematical concept for us; rather, we accept it metaphorically in literary studies. In the literary-epic chronotope, the characteristics of space and time can be perceived as a unified whole. Here, time compresses and transforms into an artistic vision; space, within the framework of the movement of time, plot, and history, expands and intensifies. The markers of time manifest in space, while space is measured and understood in time. The artistic chronotope is inherently tied to the essence of genre. It can be said that genre and its characteristics emerge through the medium of the chronotope.

We have defined the chronotope as the intersection of time and space. This can also be observed in the plot of the Hindu epic "Ramayana." History tells us that in a society facing severe conflicts and chaos, a positive hero is born to guide people out of such situations. Their arrival is unique, bringing forth new paths and rules. In the "Ramayana," this motif is illustrated through the deities' long-standing desire to find a person capable of challenging Ravana, the king of Lanka, who has reigned for many years without heirs. Responding to King Dasharatha's plea, they decided to help, leading to the birth of the savior god Vishnu in the form of Dasharatha's four sons. His

first wife, Kausalya, gives birth to their eldest son, Rama. Over the following years, similar motifs have been preserved and continued in various epics, albeit with some changes in meaning and form.

If we focus on the encounter chronotope within this epic, we see that the elements of time play a leading role. The road chronotope is also significant. Specifically, at this point of intersection, representatives from various strata, beliefs, nations, and ages come together. Analyzing the encounter chronotope between Rama and Sita in the "Ramayana," we find that they too meet on the "great road." Rama sets out with Vishvamitra to protect his hermitage in the forest. Along the way, at Vishvamitra's suggestion, he visits the kingdom of Mithila, where he meets King Janaka. There, Rama encounters Janaka's daughter, Sita.

In conclusion, the chronotope defines the integrity of the literary work and its relationship with real events. Thus, the chronotope in a work always encompasses significant moments. We can confidently state that the "three worlds" in the "Ramayana" can serve as a central chronotope, as both the events and characters revolve within this "three worlds" realm, establishing a constant and vital connection. It is impossible to describe the events of the epic without referencing these "three worlds." Any reader who engages with the "Ramayana" will surely grasp this.

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