



Figure 1. Sculptural composition, *Eritis sicut deus*, by Hugo Wolfgang Rheinhold, circa 1893. Gift to V. I. Lenin from American businessman Armand Hammer, October 1921. *Courtesy of the Museum of Lenin's Flat and Study, Gorki Leninskie.*

CHAPTER I

“You will be as gods”

March on, my land, move on, my land,
The commune is at the gates!
Forward, time!
Time—forward!

—Vladimir Mayakovski, “The march of time”

“What day is it?” asked Pooh.

“It’s today,” squeaked Piglet.

“My favorite day,” said Pooh.

—A. A. Milne, *Winnie-the-Pooh*

An ape sits on the works of Darwin, holding a drawing compass with the toes of one of its feet over the pages of an open book. The ape contemplates a skull, which it holds in its right hand (see fig. 1). The Latin inscription on the open page of the book reads, “You will be as gods” (*Eritis sicut deus*). These words, which gave the figurine its title, come from Genesis 3:5: “But God knows that in the day that you eat of [the fruit of the tree, which is among the paradise], your eyes will open and you will be as gods, knowing good and evil [*scientes bonum et malum*].” This figurine is Hugo Wolfgang Rheinhold’s, circa 1893. It is a bronze cast, 32.4 centimeters high, which exists in a number of copies.

The inscription, while Biblical, nonetheless denotes a message that is resolutely secular. It gives us a “Darwinian plot” (Beer 2000), which made this figurine a popular collection item in the early twentieth century in the world of biology and medicine. Its casts are on display at the Boston Medical Library, the University of Edinburgh’s Institute of Evolutionary Biology, the Aberdeen Medico-Chirurgical Society, the Medical Library of Queen’s University, Canada, and many more places (cf. Richter and Schmetzke 2007). But the particular cast of which I write here is in an unlikely location. It holds pride of place in the Museum of the Kremlin’s Flat of Vladimir Lenin. Lenin received it as a gift from a young American businessman, Armand Hammer, who visited him in 1921. As a gift, the figurine received an unintended, yet well-fitting, Marxist meaning: “You will be as gods,” the inscription seems to say, in building a new and radically different society.

Whether it represents a triumph of natural science or socialism, the *Eritis sicut deus* sculpture presents a temporal narrative—in fact, several narratives, each held in a mirror reflection of the others. The main narrative is one of Darwinian time. This biological time of evolution inverts another temporality, Christian, since what the sculpture represents is not a fall from Eden but rather an ascent of Man. At first glance, this all meshes well with Marxist historical materialist time. But in this context, Darwinian time is not just reflected in—or aligned with—Marxist time but rather split into two temporalities: biological and social. As Friedrich Engels famously stated, “just as Darwin discovered the law of development of organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history” (Engels 1989: 467). But Marxism rejected social Darwinism as the “bourgeois ideology” par excellence that naturalizes capitalist market relations. Equally famously, Engels observes that

The whole Darwinian theory of the struggle for life is simply the transference from society to organic nature of Hobbes’ theory of *bellum omnium contra omnes* [the war of each against all], and of the bourgeois economic theory of competition, as well as the Malthusian theory of population. When once this feat has been accomplished . . . , it is very easy to transfer these theories back again from natural history to the history of society, and altogether too naïvely to maintain that thereby these assertions have been proved as eternal natural laws of society. (Engels 1991: 107–8)

In Marxist perspective, social Darwinism does not just give a social version of the biological evolutionary time. It de-temporalizes a particular version of capitalist modernity as “eternal natural laws.”

But the sculpture itself refers only to Christianity and Darwinism. The Marxist temporality is manifested in this item only because this particular cast is a gift to Lenin. This gift act further complicates the canvass of temporalities of *Eritis sicut deus*, as it is not just the Marxist temporality that is added to the picture but also the *time of the gift*. As a part of the display of the Museum of the Lenin’s Kremlin Flat, the statue stands for a distinctly Soviet understanding of gift reciprocity that links the very concept of socialist modernity—the new dawn of history, in which “You will be as gods”—with the grateful world to which this modernity is given. In this perspective, Hammer’s figurine is a counter-gift. But this gift time is itself complex: its circular reciprocity is about a *gift of the new time* that “marches” toward the commune that is already “at the gates” (to quote Vladimir Mayakovski’s poem, “The march of time”).

Time—in anthropological perspective—is a culturally specific construct that combines ways of structuring daily activities with broader meanings about the past, present, and future. The case of Hammer’s gift and his relations with Lenin and the Soviet Union condenses several meanings of time. They are culturally specific to early twentieth-century modernity, including Marxism. In fact, we see how his gift makes visible multiple and contested meanings of *modernity* through multiple and contested meanings of *time*. Modernity has long been understood as producing a homogeneous time that is “uniform, infinitely divisible, and continuous” (Sorokin and Merton 1937: 616). Indeed, one of the first things the Soviet government did after the revolution was to adopt the Gregorian calendar, thereby eliminating a two-week time difference with the Julian calendar that Russia had previously followed. Doing so integrated Russia into the emergent frameworks of standard global time (Conrad 2016; Ogle 2015). But this immediately complicated Soviet revolutionary chronology. The storming of the Winter Palace on October 23, 1917—which marked the start of Bolshevik Revolution and quickly became the major Soviet holiday, the “Day of October Revolution”—according to the new calendar was to be celebrated on November 7. Settling on a global, shared territory of calendar time (although see Gumerova [n.d.] on Soviet calendar experiments such as the five-day week and rotating holidays), Soviet time then moved to make a claim to a radical difference in terms of something else: the time that is *epochal*. In this new epochal time, it hardly mattered that the “Day of October Revolution” was in

November. Rather than being purely chronological, this epochal time mapped history and humanity through a new time of socialist modernity. It started with the October Revolution as a new dawn of history, celebrated by statements such as Mayakovsky's "March of time" or material objects like an electric light bulb with a filament in the shape of Lenin (see fig. 2).

But in the early 1920s, when Hammer visited Lenin, these new times of energetic socialist futurism coexisted with the equally energetic capitalism of Lenin's New Economic Policies. Hammer was instrumental in this turn to capitalism and benefited from it personally. Indeed, perhaps his gift to Lenin turned out, rather, to be a ricocheting gift to Hammer who subsequently made a business empire out of contacts with the Soviet Union. Perhaps this very statue was a business gift and followed the reciprocal temporality of business, rather than gifts. Moreover, given the importance of American business concessions, which Lenin discussed with Hammer during his audience, and of Fordism, which Lenin took as a model for Soviet industrialization, this sculpture may equally problematize who is giving gifts of new time and to whom. The inscription—"You will be as gods"—may well stand for the gift of American modernity to Russia, rather than the Russian revolutionary gift to the world.

The reader must now be persuaded that the many meanings of time of modernity that this gift articulates and in fact celebrates can be expanded almost to infinity. But my aim here is not to ask how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. It is well established that sociocultural time is multiple. Ethnographic inquiry no longer proceeds by assuming either a universal singularity of time or its cultural singularity within a given society as an isolated unit—for example, the Nuer or Balinese time (Evans-Pritchard 1940; Geertz 1966). Anthropology acknowledges composite and hierarchically assembled temporalities of most of the phenomena that it explores. It is not just that empire or nation, state socialism, or global capitalism constitutes multiple temporalities. Each of their "parts"—the temporalities of the market, governance, consumption, reproduction, work, politics, etc.—are in turn intrinsic multiplicities (cf. Abu-Shams and González-Vázquez 2014; Bear 2014; Bestor 2001; Birth 2012; Chelcea 2014; Dick 2010; Franklin 2014; Greenhouse 1996; Lazar 2014; May and Thrift 2003; Miyazaki 2003; Rosenberg and Grafton 2010; Rowlands 1995; Shove, Trentmann, and Wilk 2009; Verdery 1996; Wengrow 2005).



Figure 2. Electric light bulb of a half-watt 1000 *svechi*, with a filament in the shape of V. I. Lenin. Gift to the 12th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) from the workers of the First and Second United Electric Lamp Factory, April 23, 1923. *Courtesy of the Central Museum of Contemporary History of Russia.*

My own moment of “discovering” temporal multiplicity occurred when I explored a single event: Joseph Stalin’s birthday of 1949. I did it through the lens of a single practice of birthday gift giving and an institutional singularity of the exhibition of these gifts at the Pushkin Fine Arts Museum, Moscow, where these gifts displaced art—to the triumph of some and the horror of others—over the ten days leading up to the birthday celebration (Ssorin-Chaikov 2006a). I was interested in charting how the temporality of birthday gift giving was divisible into the temporality of the birthday and the gift, the conflicting eternities of the teleological time of socialism and of the high art, the geopolitical time of the Cold War, and the micromaterial time of exhibition construction and its entropy—with bottles of wine from French Communists arriving half-empty or exhibition draping accumulating moths and dangerous dampness before its display was completed. This is, indeed, but one example of sociocultural time appearing as a composite. As Nancy Munn put it, time is “divisible” not just by *culture* or *concepts* but by “action systems” or “systems of movement,” each of which “produce[s] . . . its own time” (Munn 1983: 280). Whatever is taken as a single “sociocultural time,” it can be shown to contain “multiple dimensions” such as “sequencing, timing, past-present-future relations, etc.” (Munn 1992: 116). The three questions that follow from this constitute this book’s problematic.

Three questions

First, all this means that we are at a point when temporal multiplicity and complexity is hardly in need of another confirmation. The issue, rather, is where we go from here. Multiplicity and complexity are good questions, but they are poor answers if they come (as they so often do) without qualification as to how a given multiplicity is organized and what we can tell in addition to acknowledging that “X is complex and multiple.” In this book, multiplicity is not a destination where an argument finally arrives but a point of departure. Once acknowledged, multiplicity immediately prompts questions about its composition: what exactly it is, how it is structured, and how different temporalities that are in it are interrelated.

The second question is how to conceptualize these relations between temporalities precisely *as relations*. This book’s key proposition in regard to time is *relational* rather than *relativist*. What is important for me when considering, for example, *Eritis sicut deus*, is not that each of its Christian, Darwinist, Marxist, and gift temporalities constitute culturally distinct singularities. The issue is,

rather, that each is what it is through the lens of others. We see Christian temporality through the Darwinian narrative, and Darwinian through the Marxist narrative. Together, they form a relationship that is itself specific to the time and place when these temporalities were articulated together—that is, Soviet Russia of the early 1920s.

Incidentally, it was at about the same time, in 1923, that Russian anthropologist Vladimir Bogoraz published what has become an important relativist statement in the anthropology of time. His book *Einstein and religion* opens with the premise that “each system S, each realm of phenomena, has its own space and its own time” (Bogoraz 1923: 4). This explicitly draws on relativity theory, but Bogoraz’ move is characteristic of cultural relativism, which in the form of Boasian anthropology predates relativity theory. As early as in 1887, Franz Boas argued that “civilization is not something absolute, but that it is relative, and that our ideas and conceptions are true only so far as our civilization goes” (Boas 1974: 64). “System S” in Bogoraz’ formulation stands for culture, that is, for a culturally specific belief system (shamanism is Bogoraz’ prime concern): “it is only from this point of view we can interpret the measurement data in the religious sphere” (Bogoraz 1923; see Bogoraz 1925 for an English-language summary of this perspective). Such a cultural system appears as an isolated universe that encapsulates its own difference—a uniquely structured timespace.

In contrast to cultural relativism, relativity theory takes this very difference to be relational, that is, a matter of a mutually constituted system of movement. It is grounded in the philosophical premise that time is not an essence but a relation. Time is not a substance that “flows” or an area that “begins” or “ends.” It is not a thing but a relation between things. Anthropologists, Bogoraz included, have shared this premise in regard to sociocultural time. But this shared premise has different implications for perspectives that are relational and relativist. My question is how to extend the relational perspective to relations between temporalities, in addition to treating each individual temporality as a relation.

But this question is linked to a trickier issue. What is the status of temporal multiplicity in relation to what it describes—that is, to time? What does it actually mean to say that sociocultural time is multiple? When we say that something happened at the same time as something else, “at the same time” refers to the simultaneity of the two events. But how it is that a different *time* exists “at the same time”? My third question is precisely this: what is this “same time” in which others exist? In what way, if at all, does this “same time” constitute

simultaneity? If so, what exactly is “simultaneity” in relation to different notions of time that it encompasses?

Two Lenins

This book’s title refers to two different persons at the center of two kinds of material on which I draw in the discussion of these questions. One is the Soviet leader, Vladimir Lenin, whom readers will see receiving gifts from American businessman Armand Hammer in early 1920s Moscow. The other will take us to a very different territory, four time zones away from Moscow, to the north of the Siberian Krasnoyarsk province, where we will see an indigenous Evenki hunter, also named Vladimir and jokingly nicknamed “Lenin,” living through late socialism and postsocialism.

The Evenki “Lenin” visited Lenin’s Tomb in Moscow in the 1960s and received his nickname after that trip. But the book is not about this or any other encounter between the two Lenins, nor about their juxtaposition. This is not a study of Lenin’s cult in Russia (cf. Dickerman 2001; Tumarkin 1987; Yurchak 2015). Chapters of this book do not add up to a “provincialized” (Chakrabarty 2000) exploration of the Russian and Soviet imperial space, although they include materials on its “central” and “remote” locations on an equal footing, nor are they episodes of the global history of the Soviet project, although some of the discussion links Russia and the United States. Some of this material is about the 1920s and other material is about the 1990s, but this book is not a cross-temporal comparison (cf. Armitage 2015). If anything, the book is brought together by the issue of Soviet modernity, and modernity more broadly. In chapters 5 and 6, I offer some conclusions about this. I suggest that while modernity is associated with the homogenized chronological time, it is important to approach it as a temporal multiplicity. I also suggest viewing modernity not merely as a distinct condition that has its own temporal organization but as itself a form of time. But these substantive observations are tentative. My primary goal in this book is, rather, to put forward a methodological argument. I ask not just what the multiple temporalities are at work in the cases of the two Lenins; I also ask how they are interrelated in each of them. My aim is to link the ethnographic questions of *how* (how to see relatedness in a temporal multiplicity? how does it work?) with the theoretical questions of *what* (that is, what about the implications of this relatedness for the understanding of the temporalities in question). Case studies about two Lenins highlight two

different ways in which I suggest we can think about relatedness within a temporal multiplicity.

Change and exchange

This book is a thought experiment with two kinds of relationships between temporalities that I call *change* and *exchange*. Let me use the example of Hammer’s gift to introduce them both. As we have already seen, in this particular instance, Christianity, Darwinism, and Marxism easily form a sequence of competing truth claims about time. *Change* (my first form of relatedness) here is not so much—and not just—a linear change assumed by these temporal frameworks. Rather, it is a change from one temporal framework to another in a way that renders a preceding framework untrue completely (e.g., Darwinism in regard to Christianity) or partially (e.g., Marxism splitting Darwinian time into biological and social).

These sequences are relations of rupture. Also, in this particular linear movement (change) from one temporality to another, these relations of change are at the same time the relations of truth. These *change* relations of truth are modernist in a broad sense of the term: they include both modernity’s secular contexts and monotheistic background. A disagreement about the true meaning of time (whether it is Christian, Darwinist, or Marxist) is underpinned by a shared understanding that the truth, like God, is one (Yanagisako and Delaney 1995). Since this movement takes place on the grounds of the truth-value of each of these frameworks, to maintain one of them is possible only at the expense of the other: the temporality of the world was thought to be X but “in fact,” as it turns out, it is not X but Y. The relation “X is in fact Y” is not equivalent to $X = Y$. The equation works only in one direction: X is revealed as Y. But that does not then mean that Y could be revealed as X. X is Y, but Y is not X. If these different frameworks coexist—as they do inscribed on the ape figurine—they form a hierarchy or chronotope (Bakhtin 1975) in which it is the transition “X is in fact Y” that is actually depicted. These are hierarchies of things that are true and those that are not at all, or less so. From the point of view of Marxist time in the composite aesthetics of *Eritis sicut deus*, it is this time that forms the top of a hierarchy of truth; Darwinian time is the next step down, while Christian time is at the bottom.

Exchange is another modality of relatedness between temporalities. Recall this gift’s ambiguity. Perhaps it was a gift of gratitude to Lenin for Soviet

Russia's socialism as a gift to the world. Perhaps it was a token of the American gift of modernity to Russia. Perhaps this was a way to begin relations that led to Hammer's business empire. The point is, none of this is actually untrue. Each of these meanings is temporal, highlighting not just capitalist and socialist temporalities but also biographical temporalities of Lenin and Hammer, and the biography of Hammer's wealth. Hammer had communist sympathies, but this did not stop him from being a shrewd capitalist. Neither Marxism nor capitalism, neither Leninist Communist plans nor the Social-Darwinist jungle of the market is rendered false in this particular instance of giving. Rather, as I discuss in detail in chapter 3, each temporality is a resource for others. Each takes the other in, uses it, and absorbs it, without, however, transforming it into itself completely. To stress this difference, I call these relations of exchange (and not change). They substitute X with Y; in doing so, they displace X but do not erase it.

This *exchange* works very differently from *change*. As noted above, in *change*, when the temporality of the world was thought to be X, it turns out to be not X but Y. X is Y but Y is not X. In *exchange*, $X = Y$ and $Y = X$. There is no linear progress from one meaning of time to the other; instead, there is a trade and an accumulation. Soviet Russia benefits from Hammer's gifts of capitalism and Hammer undoubtedly benefits from Soviet Russia. Exchange is a way to conceptualize temporalities that transpire when time is taken and time is given.

But, if *change* is a relation of unbridgeable difference, *exchange* is a relation of identity ($X = Y$), which nonetheless preserves difference. As Marx (1996) famously put it for economic exchange, if grain is exchanged for iron, there is something common in both, and in the same proportion. But if they really were equivalent, there would be no need for exchange. Marx himself sees this exchange through the lens of labor *time* that underscores each of these commodities. Abstract labor time is what is common, for Marx, in both grain and iron, and in the same proportion, while it is the concrete labor time of making grain and iron that is being exchanged. This Marxist analytic is useful here, but with a qualification that it is not merely something that explains, but something that needs explaining—it is one of the temporalities to be explored in a relationship of exchange with others. Now, let us think of Marxist time itself as exchanged for the time of social Darwinism, as in Lenin's complex exchanges with Hammer. There is something common there, and in the same proportion. But if these temporalities really were equivalent, there would be no need for exchange. Here, different temporalities are substituted and translated into one another, but not

erased. Furthermore, each works as a measuring device for the other. If, in Marx' example, grain is a measure of value for iron, and iron for the value of grain, here Marxist temporality is a measure of value for the time of social Darwinism. But unlike Marx's discussion, there is no real time that in fact underscores these exchanges, as labor time does for Marx in his understanding of the value of commodity. Marx' proposition of labor time would be a case in relations of *change* between temporalities in which one modality of time falsifies others, such as the temporalities of the market that do not just mask the labor time but also “eternalize” the “Darwinian theory of the struggle for life” (Engels 1991: 107) and require a Marxist description of the truth of these processes of alienation and naturalization. In contrast, *exchange* measures but it does not falsify. It just shows exactly how Marxism and social Darwinism are different, while change follows from one out of the two being false. These two forms of relations between temporalities, change and exchange, are detailed in chapter 2 and chapter 3.

Simultaneity

In what ways, if at all, does this multiplicity constitute simultaneity? What is the time in which these different times exist *at the same time*? One way to think about simultaneity is structural. For instance, consider Marcel Mauss' concept of “total” social phenomena, such as gifts, which express “*all at once and at a stroke* all sorts of institutions” that are “*at the same time*” religious, economic, political, familial, aesthetic, etc. (Mauss 2016: 59; emphasis added). In the case of meaning of time of Hammer's gift, the temporal multiplicity that it articulates could be a Maussian total social fact. To paraphrase Mauss, in this multiplicity, all kinds of temporalities of modernity are given expression *at the same time*: religious (Christian), scientific (Darwinist), economic (social-Darwinist), political (Marxist), etc. Although Mauss himself acknowledged that this is “multiplicity of social things in motion” (Mauss 2016: 59), simultaneity as a structural construct is itself out of time in his conceptualization of the gift, that is, it works by the omission of any detailed qualification of its own temporality. The structural timelessness of the simultaneity of total social fact seems to be the flip side of what Johannes Fabian (1983) critiqued: the timelessness of the ethnographic present, “the other time” in which the subjects of ethnography existed, distinct from linear and historical time of anthropology itself. “One and the same time” stands for the totality, and truth, of the perspective of the anthropologist as an outsider.

In chapter 4, I add my own research time to the temporalities that this book explores. While in this analytical move I am inspired by Fabian's critique of classical anthropological temporalities, it made me note the limitations of Fabian's own notion of simultaneity, which he terms as *coevalness*. Fabian develops it with the aim to counter structural, evolutionary, and relativist orderings of cultural multiplicity. His aim is to explore the ways in which assumptions about time enter the construction of objects of anthropological research. But while Fabian calls for anthropology "to meet the Other on the same ground, in the same Time" (1983: 165), he does not ask what this "same time" is. He describes this simultaneity merely as a "spatialization"—that is, as positioning differences, including differences between anthropologists and informants and, by implication, between different cultural models of time, "side by side." There are different articulations, frequencies, pitches, and tempos of interactions, he concludes, and all are contemporary. All these "dimensions of time" can and should be "transcribed as spatial relations" (Fabian 1983: 162–63).

But space, while good for cataloging, for putting things "side by side," is not necessarily good for conceptualizing dynamic relatedness. As Doreen Massey puts it, we can only imagine a spatial concept of simultaneity through a particular time—as if "an instant flashing of a pin-ball machine." This notion of space "is inadequate" precisely because it is also time (Massey 1992: 80). I argue that in order to understand simultaneity, we do need to incorporate space into the discussion of time, not in the sense of Fabian but following Henri Bergson (1965). However, this would not be in contradiction with Fabian's key thesis that the temporalities of the observer and the observed are on the par with each other. This, in fact, also incorporates Mauss, but only if we recall, following Claude Lévi-Strauss, that "to call the social fact total is not merely to signify that everything observed is part of the observation but also, and above all, that . . . the observer himself is a part of the observation" (Lévi-Strauss 1987: 29).

Bergson argues that our (that is, modern philosophical) conceptualization of time is spatial. We "spatialize time" when we think about it—we imagine it as a line or a circle. In this imagination, *instant* and *duration* are properties of space ("dot" and "line"). For Bergson, however, this space is not the physical space or "the same ground" as we saw with Fabian, where we "put side by side" cultural and temporal differences. Bergson's space is that of "time that is spatialized" as a matter of measurement. Time is measured through motion. But measurement is possible "because we are capable of performing motions ourselves and because

these motions then have a dual aspect. As muscular sensation, they are a part of the stream of our conscious life, they endure; as visual perception, they describe a trajectory, *they claim a space*” (Bergson 1965: 50; emphasis added). For example, in order to measure time, we imagine it as a line.

The motion that we perform ourselves is “contemporaneous” with the motion with which we measure time. Motion is a relationship between at least two bodies, and thus it is already a matter of *simultaneity*:

But, if we can correlate these two unwindings, it is only because we have at our disposal the *concept* of simultaneity; and we owe this concept to our ability to perceive external flows of events either together with the flow of our own duration, or separately from it, or, still better, both separately and together, *at one and the same time*. If we then refer to two external flows which take up the same duration as being “simultaneous,” it is because they abide within the duration of yet a third, our own. (Bergson 1965: 51; emphasis added)

Bergson defines simultaneity as at least two instantaneous perceptions in the same mental act, out of which we should be able to make one or two “at will” (1965: 51). But we can have, he goes on to say, the idea of an “instant” as long as we are cable of converting time into space. Duration has no instants, while a line, a spatial representation of duration, is divisible into points.

“As soon as we make a line correspond to a duration, to portions of this line there must correspond ‘portions of duration’ and to an extremity of the line, an ‘extremity of duration’; such as the instant—something that does not exist actually, but virtually” (Bergson 1965: 53). Bergson insists on the intuitive match between these perceptions and the world. For him, this is possible because these perceptions are already given to us in the shape of the world that we have. It is not just “entirely in our interest” to take a motion that is independent of the motion of our own body, consciousness and concepts for the “unfolding of time.” “In truth, we find it already taken. Society has adopted it for us. It is the earth’s rotational motion” (Bergson 1965: 51).

Bergson aims at a philosophical critique of relativity theory and insists that there are multiple “real” times, rather than the relativity of the single real time (cf. Canales 2015). However, in this book, what I have taken from this is not what anthropology has already taken for granted—for example, what is “real” is multiple. Rather, I am interested in thinking with Bergson’s relatedness of motion—more precisely, the reciprocity of motion (cf. Bergson 1965: 75–79)—in

order to “spatialize” conceptually not merely time but relatedness between different temporalities.

Benedict Anderson (1983) comes close to this when he proposes the notion of “homogeneous, empty time” as a particular kind of simultaneity that is central to nation as an imagined community. He speaks of “simultaneity-along-time” and simultaneity as “transverse, cross-time, marked not by prefiguring and fulfillment, but by temporal *coincidence*, and measured by clock and calendar” (1983: 24; emphasis added). Anderson discusses this simultaneity by drawing on Walter Benjamin and Erich Auerbach rather than Bergson. But it is possible to put this in Bergson’s terms. These simultaneities-along-time are measuring devices, which enable temporalities to be perceived, via Bergson, either together or separately—“or, still better, both separately and together, *at one and the same time* (Bergson 1965: 51; emphasis added). This has been my point precisely when I proposed above that the Christian, Darwinist, Marxist, and gift temporalities of *Eritis sicut deus* mirror of each other, and in doing so they measure each other. This mirroring and measuring is exchange between them.

In turn, Tom Boellstorff (2007) queries the notion of coincidence. Boellstorff takes Indonesia as his point of departure (which was also Anderson’s concern), focusing on the coincidences of discourses on the nation and sexuality, and develops his interpretive frame out of coincidences of these discourses and those of anthropology and queers studies. Boellstorff problematizes the notion of flow, which can include a taken-for-granted assumption of linear “straight” time. He “queers” this straight time from the point of view of oscillations and convergence of the temporalities of nation, sexuality, research, and activism (Boellstorff 2007: 26–32). He suggests that coincidence is, first, a moment when two or more temporal regimes meet, and, second, that it is a temporality of its own, rather than thinking of coincidence as something that happens within a singular, overarching time.

Temporal mapping

Simultaneity and coincidence, as Anderson and Boellstorff see them, are not categories of a universal philosophy of time, as they are for Bergson. They are empirical devices that account for cultural roots of nationalism (Anderson) or those of sexuality and desire as well as temporalities of Indonesian modernity and anthropology (Boellstorff). In this book, my goal is also similarly

ethnographic. I am concerned with specific configurations of temporal multiplicity that are at work in socialist modernity. Here, I would like to make a leap from Bergson's "time that is spatialized" to Alfred Gell's "temporal mapping." Gell (1992) draws on J. M. E. McTaggart and the subsequent analytical philosophy of time that develops time-maps as the formal concept of temporal series "A" and "B." A-series are culturally or perceptually different notions of past, present, and future. B-series are categorizations of time according to whether they occur before or after one another. This before/after series "is just a row of events strung together, like the beads on a necklace" (Gell 1992: 151).

According to McTaggart (1908), the distinction between A- and B-series was subsequently appended by two camps of theorists that disagreed as to which of these two models of time is correct (cf. Prior 1957; Mellor 1998). For Gell, A-series are cultural constructs, or "perceptions" while B-series are their elementary units that are, in contrast, objective and "real," and reflect the temporal relationships between events "as they really are, out there." But, he argues, we do not have direct access to the B-series: "we know B-series time through temporal models [the A-series], which reflect the structure of B-series time without accessing it directly" (1992: 161, 240). Analytical philosophers may well disagree with this, depending on which camp they are in; and an anthropological objection would be to question who exactly the *we* are who draw a distinction between a cultural perception and reality. If *we* are anthropologists who can see elementary units of true time, we construct a hierarchy between scientific knowledge and cultural constructs. If *we* are all those who do not have direct access to the B-series, how do we know about it?

My own take on these questions is close to McTaggart's original notion. Both A- and B-series are perceptions or theories, but both are necessary: "It is essential to the reality of time that its events should form an A series as well as a B series" (McTaggart 1908: 458). But I apply the A- and B-series distinction differently. Temporalities that I discuss as examples here, such as the ones of Christianity, Darwinism, and Marxism can be described as an A-series. But *relations* of change and exchange between these temporalities that can be put in terms of the B-series: if Darwinism is true, and not Christianity, then Darwinism is after Christianity. In other words, the reason I turn to this particular language of description of time is that it is useful for developing a relational (and not relativist) perspective on temporal multiplicity. I apply the concept of B-series to sequences of competing truth claims about time. It is these sequences that can be categorized on the basis on what comes first and what comes second.

One of the problems that I consider below is an extent to which “exchange” may be characterized in terms of such B-series. The problem is that while B-series of time can be thought of as “a row of events strung together, like the beads on a necklace” (Gell 1992: 151), not all exchange can be imagined as a movement of a bead, as in a circular row of a rosary. The actual complexities of exchange relations between temporalities break the linearity of the B-series distinctions (see chapters 3 and 5). It is also important to acknowledge that the vocabulary of A- and B-series has formalist overtones, and so does my typology of change versus exchange. This suggests finding formal plots and stories, and is indeed close to the Russian formalism of Vladimir Propp and Victor Shklovski. But in what follows below, there will be very little formal plot analysis and no Bergson lines and dots. Instead of plots there will be narratives of change and exchange as descriptions of ethnographic situations. What I take from formalism is a broad interest in morphology in the sense of Goethe’s, as it was used by Propp—that is, not so much assuming that “there is a single . . . type that runs through all organic creatures,” but that “a theory of form is a theory of transformations” (Goethe cited in Propp 1968: 20, 80).

In addressing this question, it is instructive to keep in mind another cultural conceptualization of timespace that originated in the 1920s: Mikhail Bakhtin’s notion of “chronotope” (which, as a term, also borrows from Einstein). Bakhtin is widely credited for demonstrating that time and space constitute a narrative and cultural unity. But what is rarely acknowledged is that one of his key conclusions is that a single chronotope is likely to be a multiplicity. Internally, each “major” chronotope, he submits, contains a number of “minor” ones to the point that each literary motif in a novel is a chronotope of its own kind; further, and very importantly, each textual chronotope “extends” to external world. It exists *in a relation* to the chronotope of this text’s performer, listener, and reader (Bakhtin 1975: 400–401)—and, by implication, as I will discuss in chapter 4 below, in relation to the chronotope of the scholar as a particular kind of listener and reader.

The book will unfold in the following chapters. Chapter 2, “Lenin and the combined fodder” will take us to a post-Soviet collective farm. I use a case of the disappearance of a load of combined fodder to illustrate the relations of change between a linear temporality of Soviet developmental time, cyclical rhythms of

travel and infrastructure, and a modality of time that appears as timelessness. Chapter 3, "An American in Moscow" charts a beginning of Armand Hammer's business in the Soviet Union and his encounter with Lenin as a case in point of exchange relations between market, gift, and state temporalities. In chapter 4, "Time for the field diary," I turn to the temporalities of my own ethnography. I focus on relatedness between research temporality and the temporalities that this research charts. I will be interested in the exchange relationships of state time and research time in the two projects, on a northern Siberian collective and on gifts to Soviet leaders, which provide ethnographic material for this book. The next two chapters constitute this book's conclusion. In these chapters, I ask what are configurations of modernity (Western and Soviet) in specific relations among the various agents and institutions that I chart and that include an American, a Soviet leader, an Evenki hunter, the Kremlin, a Siberian state farm, a Soviet American Concession, and more. I discuss this in chapter 5, "Hobbes' gift," and chapter 6, "Modernity as time."