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MODERN NARRATIVE TIME-SENSE.

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1975

SIMULTANEITY IN THE NOVEL:  
A Study of a Modern Narrative Time-Sense

by

HENRY KURT PAUL

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate  
Faculty in Comparative Literature in partial  
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PREFACE

Some portions of this essay are descriptive and derive from the thesis which governs the whole: that certain recent novels embody in varying degrees a new and different time-sense, a sense of simultaneity.

Other portions, clearly normative, are based on the general assumption that a novel, no matter how flexible or amorphous the genre, must provide one with a significant sense of form. A following assumption is that the novel is progressive in nature and that its form depends primarily on two developing elements: character and story-line. Third, that the function of another vital developing element, time-sense, is to frame these primary elements. And fourth, that such a framing element must not dominate formally; if it grows out of balance and diminishes the other two, serious distortion results and the reading experience suffers.

More about the thesis and these assumptions will follow. We begin, however, with an overview of the concept of time-sense in literature and in the novel.

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CHAPTER I

CRITICS, ARTISTS, AND THE CONCEPT OF TIME-SENSE

I. All works of literature begin and end, have a duration, are enclosed, as it were, by time. This is an essential and special relationship between time and literature. From the relation it follows that all literary works will contain, and will exhibit to an audience, a distinctive chronological time-sense: according to their forms, works will be short or long, contracted or dilated, compressed or expanded--in time. But they may also contain and exhibit a psychological time-sense: according to their manner of development, they will appear to be slow or fast, retardative or progressive, frozen or fluid--in time. Before the present century, few literary theorists or artists explored that relationship and its implications in depth.

Aristotle was the first to do so. In the Poetics he distinguished generally the time-sense of epic poetry from that of tragedy:

Epic poetry resembles tragedy in so far as it is an imitation in verse of what is morally worthy; they differ in that the epic has only one meter and is narrative in form. They also differ in length, for tragedy tries to confine itself, as much as possible, within one revolution of the sun or a little more, whereas the time of an epic is unlimited. <sup>1</sup>

He further specified that the plot of a tragedy must have an appropriate length if it is to be both unified and beautiful:

We have established that a tragedy is the imitation of an action which is whole and complete, and also of a certain length, for a thing can be whole without being of any particular size. "Whole" means having a beginning, a mid-

dle, and an end. . . . However, an animal, or indeed anything which has parts, must, to be beautiful, not only have these parts in the right order but must also be of definite size. Beauty is a matter of size and order. An extraordinarily small animal would not be beautiful, nor an extraordinarily large one. Our view of the first is confused because it occupies only an all but imperceptible time, while we cannot view the second all at once, so that the unity of the whole would escape us if, for example, it were a thousand miles long. It follows that, as bodies and animals must have a size that can easily be perceived as a whole, so plots must have a length which can easily be remembered. <sup>2</sup>

Turning later to the epic, he said this about its plot: "Imitation through narrative in verse obviously must, like tragedy, have a dramatic plot structure; it must be concerned with one complete action, it must have a beginning, middles, and an end, in order that the whole narrative may attain the unity of a living organism and provide its own peculiar kind of pleasure." <sup>3</sup> That pleasure, apparently, derives not only from unity of plot but also from the characteristic length of the epic:

The epic has a special and important feature which allows its length to be greater: tragedy cannot represent different parts of the action at the same time but only that part which is enacted upon the stage, whereas the epic, being narrative in form, can make different parts of the action come to a head simultaneously, so that these scenes, appropriate to the epic, increase the bulk of the poem. Thus the epic has an advantage which contributes to its grandeur, enables it to vary the story for the audience, and to illustrate it by diverse incidents. <sup>4</sup>

It is clear that "length" in these passages means a chronological time-sense. It is also clear that the time-sense of a work must suit its form: compressed for the tragedy, expanded for the epic. But another important norm is implied here: the time-sense of both tragedy and epic will be orderly, progressive, and linear, for the plot has to develop

along the established line of beginning, middle, and end to become an organic whole.

From Aristotle to Lessing in the 18th century is a considerable chronological leap, but during that span while so much happened in the development of European literature there was little significant theoretical discussion of time's relation to literature. To be sure, after the Renaissance neo-classicists greatly exercised themselves over the "unity of time," but they were concerned with tragedy and their theory and practice basically did not alter the classical concept of an appropriate time-sense, orderly, progressive, and linear. Neither the epic, nor its descendants the romance and the novel, received such attention, and this form and its variants with their freer and more expansive time-sense continued to develop more or less independently.

It was Gotthold Ephraim Lessing who, while waging a battle in Germany to free poetry from subjugation to traditional laws governing the visual arts, brought the matter of time's relation to literature to the theoretical foreground again. One general feature of Laocoön was to establish successive time as the particular domain of literature, simultaneous space as that of painting. Lessing reasoned from first principles:

[If] it is true that in its imitations painting uses completely different means or signs than does poetry, namely figures and colors in space rather than articulated sounds in time, and if these signs must indisputably bear a suitable relation to the thing signified, then signs existing in space can express only objects whose wholes or parts co-exist, while signs that follow one another can express only objects whose wholes or parts are consecutive.

Objects or parts of objects which exist in space are called bodies. Accordingly, bodies with their visible proper-

ties are the true subjects of painting.

Objects or parts of objects which follow one another are called actions. Accordingly, actions are the true subjects of poetry. <sup>5</sup>

It is true that in Laocoön Lessing was grinding an aesthetic axe: he wanted poetry, especially German poetry, to move away from static spatial description and to concern itself with the representation of successive actions in time. It is also true that, in the passage above, he basically emphasizes and amplifies what Aristotle had begun to work out to distinguish poetry from other arts. Also, his reasoning concerning successive actions implies--as did Aristotle's--that literature will be informed by a progressive, linear chronological time-sense. But the overall contribution of Laocoön was of immense value at the time because it helped free the verbal arts from accretive restrictions, and it helped give verbal artists the impetus to explore more fully the creative potential of "articulated sounds in time."

Here the focus of this overview narrows in order to concentrate on the time-sense of the novel, and on an unusual artist who broke the conventional mold of orderly linearity in narration. The long narrative, episodic in structure and realistic in nature, had begun to achieve notable popularity in the 18th century, particularly in England. Six years before Laocoön was published on the Continent in 1766, an obscure British clergyman with a fertile and comic imagination, Laurence Sterne, had produced a book which played havoc with the concept of linear time-sense. Through digressions, typographical eccentricities, and other interruptions, and through a series of intricate time-manipulations, Sterne fractured and disordered the linearity of Tristram Shandy. The

result was surprising: while endowing his narrative with a curious, digressive psychological time-sense, he managed at the same time to preserve the thread of linear progression.

Through the voice of his narrator, Sterne discussed his radical experiment with the relation of time to literature. Defending a lengthy digression early in the novel, Tristram says: "By this contrivance the machinery of my work is of a species by itself; two contrary motions are introduced into it, and reconciled, which were thought to be at variance with each other. In a word, my work is digressive, and it is progressive too,--and at the same time." <sup>6</sup> Shortly thereafter, Tristram anticipates from a "hypercritic" reader a niggling objection to a time-manipulation and introduces another defense:

If the hypercritic will go upon this; and is resolved after all to take a pendulum, and measure the true distance betwixt the ringing of the bell, and the rap at the door;--and, after finding it to be no more than two minutes, thirteen seconds, and three fifths,--should take upon him to insult over me for such a breach in the unity, or rather the probability of time;--I would remind him, that the idea of duration, and of its simple modes, is got merely from the train and succession of our ideas,--and is the true scholastic pendulum,--and by which, as a scholar, I will be tried in this matter, --abjuring and detesting the jurisdiction of all other pendulums whatever. <sup>7</sup>

And much later, Chapter XXV of Book Four is devoted entirely to the subject: "'Tis a point settled,--and I mention it for the comfort of Confucius, who is apt to get entangled in telling a plain story--that provided he keeps along the line of his story,--he may go backwards and forwards as he will,--'tis still held to be no digression. This being premised, I take the benefit of the act of going backwards myself." <sup>8</sup>

To digress and progress simultaneously in narration; to create in a novel a unified balance between a sense of psychological time and a sense of chronological time--these were Sterne's unprecedented time-oriented achievements in Tristram Shandy. The immediate success of the book both in England and on the Continent prompted many imitations. With the exception of Jean Paul in Germany, Sterne's followers were not very proficient. Throughout the 19th century elements of disordered linearity--going backward and forward as one willed along a chronological line--may be found in many European and American narratives; but radical experiments like Sterne's with the time-sense of the novel were rare.

From the time of Sterne and Lessing to the 20th century is another considerable chronological leap. But Sterne was a singular artist and Tristram Shandy an exceptional novel. After Lessing had reaffirmed the essentially temporal nature of literature, there were few attempts by literary theorists to pursue the matter further with regard to the novel. Artistic and critical explorations of time in the novel would not be undertaken in force until the present century.

II. The modern preoccupation with time in the novel stemmed partly from a philosophic and scientific preoccupation with time at the beginning of the century. The writings of William James and Henri Bergson on human consciousness and human time had great impact in their era on thought and literature. Leon Edel makes the point in his study of the modern novel of subjectivity: "[And] it is to Bergson, in his influence on Proust

(and to some extent on Joyce), and to William James, in his account of thought-experience, that we must look as the creators of the intellectual atmosphere in which the novel of subjectivity came into being. As has often been the case, changes in philosophical thought heralded technical innovations in the arts." <sup>9</sup> Also contributing heavily to that atmosphere earlier in the century were the studies of the scientists: Freud and others on consciousness and memory, Einstein and others on the physics of space and time. As in no other century, thought now became predominantly time-oriented.

A contemporary preoccupation with novel time also stemmed far more directly from increasingly frequent attempts by modern artists and theorists to say what the novel was and how it worked. Formal definition of the novel had long been neglected, mainly because extended episodic and mimetic narrative did not lend itself easily to such definition. Critical interest from the Renaissance to the 19th century barely touched on longer forms but centered rather on definitions for shorter forms such as the drama and lyric poetry. But through the 19th and into the 20th century, the novel commanded more and more attention as the most popular form of literary expression; and so the time came for serious examination of its formal aspects.

Few such examinations could ignore the role of time in the novel. The prefaces to the New York Edition of Henry James's works, published between 1907 and 1909, comprise one of the most thorough examinations of novel art ever attempted. While looking back over the composition of Roderick Hudson, James discovered what he felt to be a weakness in

the psychological time-sense of his novel. Roderick's disintegration seems to happen too quickly: "My mistake on Roderick's behalf--and not in the least of conception, but of composition and expression--is that, at the rate at which he falls to pieces, he seems to place himself beyond our understanding and our sympathy." 10 From there, James went on to discuss novel time as one of the most interesting and difficult questions faced by the writer:

To give the image and the sense of certain things while still keeping them subordinate to his plan, keeping them in relation to matters more immediate and apparent, to give all the sense, in a word, without all the substance or all the surface, and so to summarise and foreshorten, so to make values both rich and sharp, that the mere procession of items and profiles is not only, for the occasion, superseded, but is, for essential quality, almost "compromised". . . . This eternal time-question is accordingly, for the novelist, always there and always formidable; always insisting on the effect of the great lapse and passage, of the "dark backward and abysm," by the terms of truth, and on the effect of compression, of composition and form, by the terms of literary arrangement. 11

After James had set the tone for formal studies, many followed. In the 1920's a significant group appeared in England. Percy Lubbock published in 1921 a study of novel form in which he expressed a preference for novels which were rendered rather than merely told. In the course of a critique on Tolstoy's War and Peace, he emphasized the importance of rendering clearly the progressive chronological time-sense of a novel:

The passage of time, the effect of time, belongs to the heart of the subject; if we could think of War and Peace as a book still to be written, this, no doubt, would seem to be the greatest of its demands. The subject is not given at all unless the movement of the wheel

of time is made perceptible. I suppose there is nothing that is more difficult to ensure in a novel. Merely to lengthen the series of stages and developments in the action will not ensure it; there is no help in the simple ranging of fact beside fact, to suggest the lapse of a certain stretch of time; a novelist might as well fall back on the row of stars and the unsupported announcement that "years have fled." It is a matter of the build of the whole book. 12

E. M. Forster's Aspects of the Novel appeared in 1927. There he defined the aspect "story" in terms of a chronological time-sense: "And now the story can be defined. It is a narrative of events arranged in their time-sequence--dinner coming after breakfast, Tuesday after Monday, decay after death, and so on." 13 Then, he pointed out that while in daily life one can deny this sense, it is fatal for the novelist to do so: "But in it, in the novel, allegiance to time is imperative: no novel could be written without it. . . . [It] is never possible for a novelist to deny time inside the fabric of his novel: he must cling however lightly to the thread of his story, he must touch the interminable tapeworm, otherwise he becomes unintelligible, which, in his case, is a blunder." 14

In the following year Edwin Muir published The Structure of the Novel, an attempt to define the form by arranging it into types or categories. He distinguished among novels of action, of character, the dramatic novel, the chronicle, and the period novel. Time was a central concept for Muir: he postulated the imaginative world of the character novel (Vanity Fair, e.g.) as informed by space, that of the dramatic novel (Wuthering Heights, e.g.) as informed by time. And, to distinguish between the dramatic novel and the chronicle (War and Peace,

e.g.), he conceived of the former as having a predominantly psychological time-sense, the latter a predominantly chronological time-sense:

Time in the dramatic novel is internal; its movement is the movement of the figures; change, fate, character, are all condensed into one action; and with its resolution there comes a pause in which time seems to stand still; the arena is left vacant. In the chronicle, on the other hand, time is external; it is not seized subjectively and humanly in the minds of the characters; it is seen from a fixed Newtonian point outside. It flows past the beholder; it flows over and through the figures he evokes. Instead of narrowing to a point fixed by passion, or fear, or fate in the dramatic novel, it stretches away indefinitely, running with a scarcely perceptible check over all the barriers which might have marked its end. 15

Meanwhile, what of the writers of novels in England? According to Wayne Booth, in the 1920's a significant number of them were experimenting with reforming the concept of a strictly progressive chronological time-sense; in the following he cites Ford Madox Ford, a leading reformer:

Under the impact of James's insistence on presenting one troubled vision through another troubled vision, and of the experiments by Conrad and others with distorted chronologies, there had by the mid-twenties developed a theory that a technique using flashbacks was more realistic than the old-fashioned routine chronology. . . . To get a vivid impression of any strong character in fiction, "you could not begin at his beginning and work his life chronologically to the end. You must first get him in with a strong impression, and then work backwards and forwards over his past." A great many of the most serious young novelists were by this time not only following Ford's principle but repudiating traditional notions of plot altogether. 16

Another wave of theoretical discussions of time in the novel, not so geographically limited, came in the decade following World War II. These were of a different character from those mentioned above--some more

general and philosophical, others more specifically structural. Important among the former are studies by Jean Pouillon, A. A. Mendilow, Georges Poulet, and Hans Meyerhoff.

Jean Pouillon's book, Temps et roman (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), is based on an assumption that one comprehends people in a novel in the same way one comprehends others in reality. He began by defining different modes of comprehension, applicable both to real life and to the novel--la vision "avec", la vision "par derrière", la vision "du dehors"--and continued by analyzing two modes employed by modern authors to realize their visions--"presentation" and "participation". Of course, he argued, to comprehend others in a novel is to comprehend them in a duration; thus, novel time becomes a vital aspect for study. In the second part of his book, L'expression du temps, he first analyzed causality and its temporal nature; then he concluded by examining in detail works which reflect temporal causality psychologically in different ways: Les romans de la durée (in which the causality of time unfolds or is unfolded) and Les romans de la destinée (in which the causality of time appears as an ineluctable necessity). His work is actually less a study of time and more a study of psychological perception.

At the heart of Mendilow's book, Time and the Novel (London: Peter Nevil, 1952), is an examination of these time-relationships as they operate both chronologically and psychologically: the writer to the fictive time he creates in his work, and the reader to the work and its time-sense. Mendilow turned strongly normative in his study: he ar-

gued that in good novels--containing minimal authorial intrusions and maximal dramatic presentation--the illusion of time is given in such a way that the reader can transform pastness into a sustained, intimate "fictive present"; in lesser novels--often told in the first person, or full of authorial commentary--the intimate "fictive present" cannot be maintained because the time-illusion is constantly being shattered by awkward manipulation or gratuitous interruption. He followed this section with an excellent study of the time-sense of Tristram Shandy; it remains one of the most valuable contributions of his book.

In Études sur le temps humain I (Paris: Plon, 1950), and in Études sur le temps humain II: La distance intérieure (Paris: Plon, 1952), Georges Poulet undertook a prodigious investigation of the relation of time to French literature. Basically, he proceeded as follows: he examined philosophical, theological, and scientific concepts of time which concerned the French in different centuries from the 16th to the present; he demonstrated how various poets, dramatists, essayists, and novelists mirrored those concepts in their writings; and, most importantly, he presented--through a meticulously-detailed analysis of how writers in specific works both reflected and created time-concepts--a unique perspective on the nature of literature. Throughout these essays on human time one perceives the intense historical interplay between man's sense of chronological time and his sense of psychological time.

In his book Time in Literature Meyerhoff took up the ancient argument over the epistemological worth of literature. Science, he ar-

gued, for all of its proficiency at measuring the physical world is nevertheless limited to conceptualizing only chronological time; in literature, on the other hand, one finds psychological time amply explored and defined. At some length he discussed those aspects of human time which science cannot express and which literature expresses so well: subjective relativity; duration; dynamic fusion of the causal order in experience and memory; duration and the temporal structure of memory in relation to self-identity; eternity; and transitoriness. <sup>17</sup> And in his conclusion, he proposed that literature, because of the special way it represented time, did provide valid philosophical knowledge:

In this sense the literary treatment of time may itself have human or philosophical significance. The existentialist movement in modern thought, for example, regards Tolstoi's story of Ivan Ilyitch as a philosophical document. This means that literature--a reminder of aspects of time and the self which may be neglected, buried, or lost because of our enslavement to the physical and social categories of time and the self--may bring to light, or may set us free to see, certain aspects of human experience and existence from an entirely different perspective. <sup>18</sup>

Among the important structural analyses of narrative time in this second wave are those of Günther Müller and Eberhard Lämmert. In the late 1940's Müller presented in two essays his thesis that time-studies were the key to an authentic morphological examination of narrative forms. In "Die Bedeutung der Zeit in der Erzählkunst" (1947), he concluded: "Für die Gestaltung der Erzählkunst nun ist die Bildung der Zeit, wie sich erwiesen hat, von grundformender Bedeutung. Sie ist diejenige Gestaltungskraft, die ein Vergleichen aller Erzählwerke unter-

einander in einem massgebenden Zug der Gesamtgestalt erlaubt und damit die Bildung morphologischer Reihen und Gruppen ermöglicht. Das aber ist die unentbehrliche Voraussetzung für eine anzustrebende Typologie der Erzählkunst." <sup>19</sup> There, and in "Erzählzeit und erzählte Zeit" (1948), he attempted to show by reference to specific works how a study of the tension between the two time-senses provided a guiding thread through the labyrinthine world of narrative forms: "Das Verhältnis von Erzählzeit und erzählter Zeit bietet einen ersten Leitfaden durch die verwirrende Gestaltenfülle der Erzählkunst, und solche Leitfäden . . . sind unentbehrlich, wenn Gestaltgesetze gefunden werden sollen." <sup>20</sup>

Erzählzeit is "narrative time," measured by the number of pages in the work, how long it takes to tell the story, how long it takes to read it; erzählte Zeit is "narrated time," the moments, days, weeks, or years selected by the writer for emphasis and intensified depiction. <sup>21</sup> According to Müller, the constantly shifting tension between the two time-senses--the former primarily chronological, the latter both chronological and psychological--is what gives narration its special rhythms.

Using Müller's concept of shifting tension between Erzählzeit and erzählte Zeit as a foundation, Eberhard Lämmert published in 1955 Bauformen des Erzählens, an ambitious and systematic study of how narrative forms are constructed and how they work. After examining larger structures in narration (story-threads, and means of connecting them; story-phases, and means of selecting and presenting them), he proceeded to study individual parts of the whole:

Sobald sich nämlich das Augenmerk des Lesers auf den Gesamtvorgang richtet, werden gerade die Einzelzüge mit dem

stärksten Beharrungsvermögen am sichersten ihre zellenhafte Autonomie verlieren und als bleibende und färbende Eindrücke in jede neue Phase mitverwoben sein. . . . Wir erfassten die Gestalt von Erzählwerken bislang unter dem Gesichtspunkt ihrer entschiedenen zeitlichen Konsequenz. Gerade diese Konsequenz scheint nun aufgehoben, sobald wir von der Koexistenz der Glieder im Vollzug der Dichtung reden. Aber es wird sich zeigen, dass gerade sie Spannung zwischen dem linearen Erzählablauf und der Vergegenwärtigung vergangener und künftiger Phasen jenes Zusammenspiel ergibt, in dem wir eine "Bedeutsamkeit" empfinden. 22

These individual parts--various moments of retardation (Rückwendung) or of anticipation (Vorausdeutung), various moments of direct or indirect speech--he analyzed in great detail, demonstrating basically how, informed by erzählte Zeit and in tension with Erzählzeit, they allowed the writer to escape from the monotony of strict succession and to expand his story to artistic roundness and fullness.

Meanwhile, what of the major novelists of Europe and America in relation to such theorizing? They preceded it of course and thus were responsible for most of it. In the first three decades of the century many of them--Proust, Mann, Joyce, Woolf, Faulkner--had published works which dealt in different ways with time and which often experimented radically with time-sense. It is to some of them and their experiments, and to some experiments of others, that this essay shortly will turn.

Fundamental conclusions to be drawn from this overview are these: from one perspective, the novel is primarily a time-structure, a creation existing in and informed by time; this flexible narrative form is also capable of exhibiting two distinct time-senses, one chronological and the other psychological.

It should be clear from the remarks of Aristotle and Lessing, of

James, Lubbock, and Forster, that a chronological time-sense, linear and progressive, is indispensable in narration. It also should be clear from Sterne's experiment that the chronological time-sense remains even if the linear progression does not occur in strict chronological order.

What is not so clear, however, is what is meant by a psychological time-sense. Within the framework of its linear and progressive chronological time-sense a novel can contain and exhibit psychological time, or time as perceived irregularly, non-chronologically, by the human mind. A novel can exhibit this time-sense through content: a major theme of the book may be the vagaries of human time, or its actions may occur in imagined time, past or future; in various parts the author or characters may express the idea of psychological time--"The years flew by like so many minutes," or, "When one is in love each minute seems like an eternity"; and, in various parts the author or characters may foresee a future or re-create a past. The psychological time-sense can also be exhibited through form: a work may be structured in such a way that its story seems to happen very quickly, or seems to take a long time to complete itself; parts of the work may be manipulated so that some seem to flow while others virtually crawl along; and, parts may be manipulated so that they are temporally out of sequence--present coming before past, future coming before present, and so on.

Or, a somewhat different psychological time-sense may enter the work through structuring: wholly or in parts, time in the novel may appear to be stopped while different actions seem to occur at once and characters' lives lose their discreteness and seem to coexist. This is

simultaneity, created by formal manipulation, one mode of psychological time. We turn next to further definition and examination of this unique psychological time-sense.

NOTES: CHAPTER I

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, On Poetry and Style, trans. G. M. A. Grube (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 51-52.

<sup>5</sup> Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Laocoön, trans. E. A. McCormick (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1962), p. 78.

<sup>6</sup> Laurence Sterne, The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman (1760; rpt. New York: Pocket Books, 1957), p. 55.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 79-80.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>9</sup> Leon Edel, The Modern Psychological Novel (1955; rpt. New York: Grove Press, 1959), p. 28.

<sup>10</sup> R. P. Blackmur, ed., The Art of the Novel: Critical Prefaces by Henry James (1934; rpt. New York: Scribners, 1962), p. 12.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> Percy Lubbock, The Craft of Fiction (New York: Scribners, 1921), p. 49.

<sup>13</sup> E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (1927; rpt. New York: Harvest--Harcourt, Brace & World, 1955), p. 27.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>15</sup> Edwin Muir, The Structure of the Novel (1928; rpt. New York: Harbinger--Harcourt, Brace & World, date unindicated), pp. 103-104.

<sup>16</sup> Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (1961; rpt. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 191.

- 17 Hans Meyerhoff, Time in Literature (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1955), Chapter Two.
- 18 Ibid., pp. 118-119.
- 19 Günther Müller, Morphologische Poetik: Gesammelte Aufsätze, hg. von Elena Müller (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer Verlag, 1968), p. 267.
- 20 Ibid., p. 274.
- 21 For example, Ibid., p. 270: "'Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre' haben einen Umfang von rund 650 Druckseiten, und die Druckseite kann als Mass für die physikalische Zeit genommen werden, die der Erzähler zum Erzählen seiner Geschichte braucht. Die in den 'Lehrjahren' erzählte Zeit lässt sich nicht auf Monat und Tag genau bestimmen, doch ergibt sich, wenn man auf die zeitlichen Erstreckung der verschiedenen Phasen achtet, eine Dauer von etwa acht Jahren."
- 22 Eberhard Lämmert, Bauformen des Erzählens (1955: N. A. Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler Verlag, 1972), pp. 98-99.

CHAPTER II

SIMULTANEITY: A MODERN NARRATIVE TIME-SENSE

I. The concept of simultaneity in fiction has not only a chronological but a psychological meaning as well. It is the latter with which this essay is concerned--"it seems as if everything happened at once"--but there is something to be learned from first examining briefly the chronological definition.

In Albert Einstein's brief analysis "On the Idea of Time in Physics,"<sup>1</sup> simultaneity appears initially to be a relatively uncomplicated, easily verifiable time-event. First, Einstein asks one to suppose lightning striking two points A and B along a railroad embankment; then, one is to suppose an observer standing at point M, exactly midway between A and B; by using two mirrors inclined at 90°, the observer sees lightning strike A and B at precisely the same moment. That it strikes the points simultaneously is not only experienced empirically by the observer, but also can be verified empirically by using a series of clocks in the situation: if the clocks, set to go at the identical rate, show that light requires equal time to travel from A to M as from B to M, then the lightning flashes are indeed simultaneous.

In the next chapter, the concept of simultaneity begins to increase in complexity. Einstein now has one posit a train traveling along the embankment; an observer on the train would not experience the same two flashes simultaneously; instead he would see one before the other because the train would be moving at velocity  $v$  away from point A and

toward point B. Some difficult questions arise from the addition of motion to the simultaneity situation. Under what conditions would the observer on the train perceive simultaneous flashes? How could his perception of simultaneity while moving be verified? These and related questions Einstein deals with later on; at this stage of the development of his theory he wishes primarily to emphasize relativity. He concludes:

We thus arrive at the important result: Events which are simultaneous with reference to the embankment are not simultaneous with respect to the train, and vice versa (relativity of simultaneity). Every reference body . . . has its own particular time; unless we are told the reference-body to which the statement of time refers, there is no meaning in a statement of the time of an event. Now before the advent of the theory of relativity it had always tacitly been assumed in physics that the statement of time had an absolute significance, i.e. that it is independent of the state of motion of the body of reference. But we have just seen that this assumption is incompatible with the most natural definition of simultaneity. <sup>2</sup>

Comprehension of Einstein's two-phased explanation of the chronological time-event simultaneity has an interesting requirement. To follow his revolutionary leap--from simultaneity simply perceived and measured in stasis, to simultaneity as a complicated relative event--requires an act of the imagination. What he presents in both phases is logically developed and clearly evident, but to absorb and understand simultaneity as relative requires one to work out an intricate picture in the mind. The same is true for comprehension of the psychological time-event simultaneity as it appears in the novel. It does not occur if the author merely states that two events happened at the same time. It is far more complicated than that, requiring on the part of the author

a picturing of events as simultaneous, requiring on the part of the reader a complex act of imagination.

There is a more striking parallel between physical and fictional simultaneity: like the former, the latter is relative. In a general sense simultaneity in the novel is relative to a tacit understanding between author and reader. The author says, in effect: "Here is my representation of experience; it is a fiction, but you will find truth and pleasure in it nevertheless." And the reader says, in effect: "I will try it; for now, I accept its fictional limitations, and when finished, I will judge whether there is truth and pleasure in the representation." It is a matter of the "willing suspension of disbelief" on the part of the reader. And if the author is a skilled artist, he will capitalize on that suspension to maintain the reader's involvement while he depicts all manner of things in his fiction, including the time-sense simultaneity.

More specifically, novel simultaneity is relative to the narrative techniques employed by the author to create this psychological time-sense in his work. A primary requirement for its creation is the apparent "absence" of the author; as mentioned above, the time-sense occurs when a reader imagines or pictures simultaneity, not when he is merely told about it. One basic technique involves the creation of a large spatial cross-section. The author fills the section with people, things, and actions; the sense that they are coeval is created by juxtaposing one with the next in rapid succession, using as few words and as little punctuation as possible to effect transitions. The second

basic technique involves the depiction of a character in mental isolation, alone with his thoughts. The author fills the character's mind with images related to his past, present, and future; the sense that all these times are co-existent is also created by juxtaposition, as memories, present awarenesses, and anticipations flow into one another with a minimum of verbal or typographic transition.

Novel simultaneity, then, is all of these things: a unique psychological time-sense perceived by an act of the imagination; a relative fictional illusion within a larger fictional illusion, both of which exist by means of a conditional agreement between author and reader; and, a time-sense realized in the novel through the employment of specific narrative techniques.

It remains to distinguish two modes of novel simultaneity: integrated and organizational. Integrated simultaneity appears in the form of brief "frozen" moments within the linear and progressive chronological framework of a novel. Organizational simultaneity takes the form of massive "frozen" spatial cross-sections, which constitute the major phases of the work and which, as a result, strongly affect the linearity and progression of its chronological time-sense.

II. Novel simultaneity as described here did not exist before the present century. This may be explained partly in terms of social history: before modern technological discoveries helped reduce the sense of the world to a relatively small and interconnected place, people tended to think of themselves and their contexts as discrete; the feeling of

being simultaneously at one with many others in many places was an experience shared by no more than a handful of mystics, romantics, and dreamers. In our era, with its world-shrinking advances in communication and transportation technology, the feeling of simultaneous oneness is more common because more experientially possible. It is therefore not surprising that contemporary novelists would be the first to attempt to re-create the simultaneity experience in their works.

More directly, however, the newness of the time-sense simultaneity in the novel can be explained through an analysis of the patterns of narration and their development. To tell a story is to express oneself successively, to narrate events in a chronological sequence--this is the fundamental time pattern of narration. From ancient times to the present, from stories intoned by bards to the writing of modern novels, the root formula for simple narration has been: "First, this happened . . . and then . . . and then . . . and finally, this happened." Traditional novels, predecessors like the epic and the romance, and many works published today, all basically follow this formula.

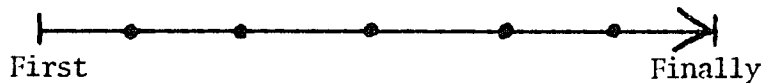
There is little one can do to modify the root formula of narration except to vary the rhythm of progression. In the 18th century Laurence Sterne effectively changed the formula by reforming the concept of strict chronological succession, thus creating new rhythms for the novel. Many after him have created their own but related rhythms, employing various forms of retardation, anticipation, and chronological disordering. As generally modified, the formula might read: "First this . . . and then . . . however, this happened previously (or before the start of the story)

. . . and then . . . now, look for this to happen soon (or even after the story is ended) . . . and then . . . finally, this happened."

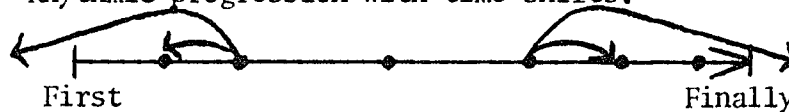
In some modern novels, both integrated and organizational simultaneity appear as a new form of retardation. By definition simultaneity is not successive; therefore, its appearance in the formula significantly alters the rhythm of progression by introducing vertical "frozen" moments into the linearity. As altered by the time-sense simultaneity, the root formula would read: "First this . . . and then . . . (then, time seemed suspended while many things happened at once) . . . and then . . . (again, a time suspension encompassing simultaneous actions) . . . and then . . . finally, this happened."

Schematically, simple progression, rhythmic progression with time shifts, and new rhythms through simultaneity and verticality might be represented this way:

- A. Simple progression (with each dot representing a new event preceded by "and then").



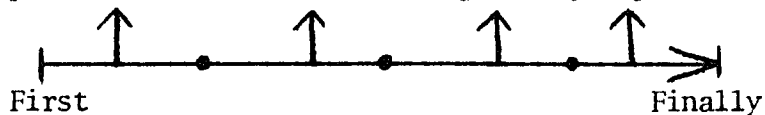
- B. Rhythmic progression with time shifts.



- C. Integrated simultaneity (with brief "frozen" moments of verticality).



- D. Organizational simultaneity (with "frozen" and vertical spatial cross-sections serving as major phases).



Before psychological simultaneity could enter and alter the traditional time pattern of narration, other, interrelated patterns--of plot, characterization, narrative voice--had to reach certain stages of development in the novel. Such stages were not arrived at until fairly recently.

The pattern of narrative voice, for instance, which traditionally incorporated an intruding and commenting author or his obvious surrogates, did not begin to dispense with such subjectivity until the time of Flaubert: "The great trick of modern literary magicians of the Jamesian school is said to be the disappearance of the author. In English fiction Henry James and James Joyce both adopted this as an aim, having imbibed the notion from a reading of Flaubert's letters, where it is written--and more than once--that the author should be in his work like God in the universe: everywhere present but nowhere apparent." <sup>3</sup> James disguised his voice within his "central intelligences," his "lucid reflectors," and Joyce felt a narrative voice should emanate from a detached, God-like figure who pared his fingernails while telling. More recently, Jean-Paul Sartre has argued that a narrator may not even play God, that his voice must be refined virtually out of existence. The time-sense simultaneity, which depends for its full effect on depiction rather than statement, became possible in narration only after the voice of the author had receded far into the background of the novel.

The pattern of plot in narration also has recently undergone significant change. According to Scholes and Kellogg, shifts in plot pat-

terns began to occur as time began to dominate plotting:

With the coming of the twentieth century, plotting in narrative became dominated by time as it never had been before. First the old chronological formulas of the various kinds of historical narrative were given their most thorough employment yet in non-historical narrative; then plots began to be developed which were based on rearranging time so that the resolution became not so much a stasis of concluded action as a stasis of illumination, when the missing pieces of the temporal jigsaw puzzle were all finally in place and the picture therefore complete. 4

In many earlier novels action was of prime importance, and the emphasis on developing a progressive thread (or threads) of action gave these works a characteristic sense of movement, dynamic and external. In many modern novels, on the other hand, there has been a turning inward, external actions have been de-emphasized, and a sense of movement has been replaced by a sense of stasis. Because novel simultaneity is basically a time-sense created during either temporary or extended static moments, it would be difficult to find a place for it in dynamic, action-filled plots. It could begin to appear in narration only when plots became less dependent on a series of externalized actions and more reliant on a series of internalized, static moments of experience.

Changes in patterns of narrative voice and of plot were accompanied by changes in the pattern of characterization: as action-filled plots faded into the background along with the voice of the author, characters assumed foreground dominance. Traditionally, characters had been developed generally from without: their inner feelings and motivations were explained by an intruding authorial voice, or were demonstrated through their involvement in external actions. In modern novels, char-

acters began to be developed from within, seemingly expressing their thoughts, feelings, and impressions for themselves. Before this could occur, techniques had to be found which would render inner experience realistically, which would capture the non-logical syntactical patterns of inner speech. Tolstoy, as Scholes and Kellogg point out, was one of the first moderns to change from logical to associative syntax in representing inner experience:

One of the first places where the truly modern note is sounded in monologue--the sustained stream of consciousness with its associative patterns of language--is toward the end of Tolstoy's Anna Karenina. It is highly likely that James Joyce learned as much from this as he did from encountering Dujardin's Les Lauriers sont coupés, though he chose to give the little-known Frenchman the credit. The last four chapters of Part Seven of Anna Karenina, and particularly Chapters 27-29, are devoted to Anna's interior monologue in the period just prior to her suicide. . . . To present her state of mind dramatically--and it is always his habit to dramatize mental process with interior monologue--Tolstoy abandons the more or less logical and coherent syntactical patterns he normally uses in the interior monologue, and employs the associative patterns of stream of consciousness. <sup>5</sup>

Some moments of integrated simultaneity depend particularly on realistically depicted inner landscapes, for it is only in the human mind that past, present, and future can mingle and appear to exist at one and the same time. Furthermore, both integrated and organizational simultaneity depend on associative syntactical patterns for their representation, for it is only through a language employing minimal logical transitions and multiple sudden shifting that they can exist. Until the stream of consciousness technique was employed in characterization, and until associative patterns of language were introduced in narration, it was not possible to render simultaneity effectively.

Simultaneity, then, is a thoroughly modern narrative time-sense. It probably could not have been conceived of realistically and with regularity until this century, when technological discoveries were made which radically altered our perceptions of the world. And it certainly could not be represented fully and effectively in the novel until recently, when patterns of narration changed and developed to allow for its realistic depiction.

III. The appearance of this different psychological time-sense in modern narration raises an important aesthetic question: what are the consequences when simultaneity--a time-sense implying stasis, verticality, the freezing of action--is introduced into an art form that is by nature linear and progressive? The remainder of this essay is an attempt to deal with that question.

At the heart of the matter is the inherent conflict between linear form, essentially the province of verbal art, and vertical form, essentially that of visual art. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, having made the classic case for distinguishing between verbal and visual arts on the basis of linearity (succession in time) versus verticality (simultaneity in space), nevertheless pointed out that in some instances the two might, like friendly neighbors, encroach on one another's territory: "But as two equitable and friendly neighbors do not permit the one to take unbecoming liberties in the heart of each other's domain, yet on their extreme frontiers practice a mutual forbearance by which both sides make peaceful compensation for those slight aggressions which,

in haste and from force of circumstance, the one finds himself compelled to make on the other's privilege: so also with painting and poetry."<sup>6</sup> Not completely satisfied with this analogy, he went on to argue more pointedly:

A mere analogy neither proves nor justifies anything. The following consideration must be their real justification: just as in the painter's art two different moments border so closely on one another that we can, without hesitation, accept them as one, so in the poet's work do the several features representing the various parts and properties in space follow one another in such rapid succession that we believe we hear them all at once. <sup>7</sup>

To create the psychological time-sense simultaneity in narration is to translate into verbal terms a visual effect. It has already been indicated that novel simultaneity is a relative "illusion," that it must be "depicted" by the author and "pictured" by the reader. If the illusion is successful, not only do we believe--as Lessing would have it--that we "hear" several features in space all at once because they follow each other in such rapid succession, but also we believe we are "seeing" them in their immediate oneness.

As for the conflict between simultaneous verticality and progressive linearity when the former encroaches on the territory of the latter: as long as the linearity is not severely disturbed at the "heart" of its "domain," as long as the encroachment occurs on its "extreme frontiers," there is no significant conflict.

Integrated simultaneity represents an encroachment on the extreme frontiers of linearity. Brief "frozen" moments, which radically retard linear progression and alter its rhythms, nevertheless are not extensive

enough to subvert linearity. The three sections which follow analyze this mode of simultaneity in specific works and demonstrate how the novel can, without negative consequences, accomodate it.

Organizational simultaneity, on the other hand, represents an encroachment at the very heart of the linear domain. Massive spatial cross-sections, constituting major phases of a work, are so vertically predominant, so radically retarding, that they act to destroy linearity. The last three sections of this essay analyze this mode of simultaneity in three separate novels and demonstrate how much they lose by attempting to accomodate it.

NOTES: CHAPTER II

<sup>1</sup> Albert Einstein, Relativity: The Special and General Theory (1916; rpt. New York: Crown Publishers, 1961), Chapter VIII.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 26-27.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative (1966; rpt. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971), p. 268.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 235.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>6</sup> Lessing, Laocoön, p. 91.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 93.

CHAPTER III

INTEGRATED SIMULTANEITY, I:

Simultaneity of Mind and Matter: Some Interior Monologues

I. Within the chronological framework of James Joyce's Ulysses a great deal happens, yet there is not much movement in the conventional novel sense. Obviously, during the single day of June 16, 1904, years cannot pass, nor can characters undergo a broad spectrum of adventures, enter multiple new relationships, or experience numerous changes as they grow older. The one day's events in Dublin, then, move fully and slowly from morning to night in a linear fashion. During this gradual progression there are pauses which retard the deliberate movement even more, bringing it almost to a halt and creating the time-sense simultaneity. Some of these occur while a character speaks to himself from within.

The first two scenes of the book are basically exterior, and they pass rather quickly because they consist mainly of brief conversational exchanges. Stephen Dedalus and Buck Mulligan spar continually with each other at the Martello tower; Stephen re-opens a recent wound in this typical sample of their talk:

Stephen, depressed by his own voice, said:

--Do you remember the first day I went to your house after my mother's death?

Buck Mulligan frowned quickly and said:

--What? Where? I can't remember anything. I remember only ideas and sensations. Why? What happened in the name of God?

--You were making tea, Stephen said, and I went across the landing to get more hot water. Your mother and some visitor came out of the drawingroom. She asked you who was in your room.

--Yes? Buck Mulligan said. What did I say? I forget.  
--You said, Stephen answered, O, it's only Dedalus whose  
mother is beastly dead.  
A flush which made him seem younger and more engaging  
rose to Buck Mulligan's cheek.  
--Did I say that? he asked. Well? What harm is that? <sup>1</sup>

And at the school most of Stephen's exchanges with the boys and with Mr. Deasy have the same terse rhythms. Movement in the third scene, however, is noticeably slower, and Stephen's solitary seashore stroll closes the first section with a sense of "frozen" time.

During the day, a sudden heavy rainstorm rages over the land; while sheets of water pour from the skies, activity halts and time appears temporarily to stand still. Something similar happens in the third scene of Ulysses. The storm comes boiling up out of Stephen's depths, and sheets of words flow down the pages while the time of the book momentarily halts. In the course of the "frozen" moment a tremendous expansion of Stephen's interior occurs; his consciousness leaps and tumbles through a vast range of thoughts and feelings.

His monologue begins with metaphysics, passes on through scenes of family troubles, through memories of student days in Paris, and of last night's dreams; it continues with speculations on his image in other's eyes, on his shadow, on his sexuality; and it ends in a rush of sounds as he makes poetry inspired by the incoming waves. His is a remarkable inner landscape, explored in the tranquility of stopped time--an excellent context for feelings and ideas to roam uninhibited from present to past and back again in free association.

The torrents of words fill the pages, not with the clipped rhythms of conversation with others, but with the powerful flow of plunge into

self. Some samples from the scene can only hint at the flow. In this brief flash, for instance, rich memories of a Paris morning are released:

Paris rawly waking, crude sunlight on her lemon streets.  
Moist pith of farls of bread, the froggreen wormwood,  
her matin incense, court the air. Belluomo rises from  
the bed of his wife's lover's wife, the kerchiefed house-  
wife is astir, a saucer of acetic acid in her hands. In  
Rodot's Yvonne and Madeleine newmake there tumbled beau-  
ties, shattering with gold teeth chaussons of pastry,  
their mouths yellowed with the pus of flan breton. Faces  
of Paris men go by, their wellpleased pleasers, curled  
conquistadores. <sup>2</sup>

Or, in this one, Stephen ruminates on his relationship with his country-  
men, past and present:

Galleys of the Lochlanns ran here to beach, in quest of  
prey, their bloodbeaked prows riding low on a molten  
pewter surf. Dane vikings, torcs of tomahawks aglitter  
on their breasts when Malachi wore the collar of gold.  
A school of turlehide whales stranded in hot noon,  
spouting, hobbling in the shallows. Then from the  
starving cagework city a horde of jerkined dwarfs, my  
people, with flayers' knives, running, scaling, hacking  
in green blubbery whalemeat. Famine, plague and slaugh-  
ter. Their blood is in me, their lusts my waves. I  
moved among them on the frozen Liffey, that I, a change-  
ling, among the spluttering fires. I spoke to no-one;  
none to me. <sup>3</sup>

Or, as the waves lap the strand, he pours forth liquid poetry:

In long lassoes from the Cock lake the water flowed full,  
covering greengoldenly lagoons of sand, rising, flowing.  
My ashplant will float away. I shall wait. No, they  
will pass on, passing chafing against the low rocks,  
swirling, passing. Better get this job over quick. Lis-  
ten: a fourworded wavespeech: seesoo, hrss, rss, rss-  
eeiss oos. Vehement breath of waters amid seasnakes,  
rearing horses, rocks. In cups of rocks it slops: flop,  
slop, slap: bounded in barrels. And, spent, its speech  
ceases. It flows purling, widely flowing, floating foam-  
pool, flower unfurling. <sup>4</sup>

During the scene, however, Stephen is not entirely immobilized,  
sunk in self. As he walks and ponders, he sees. He has begun this

monologue examining a metaphysical theme: "INELUCTABLE MODALITY OF THE VISIBLE . . . ." <sup>5</sup> The sights that he registers at the beach--sand, shells, a porterbottle, the Pigeon-house, rocks, a dog's carcass, a live dog, the Cocklepickers, his shadow, his boots, his ashplant--all ignite some associative spark within, each one sending him off into a new area of inner exploration.

In fact, these visual stimuli affect Stephen's awareness in a fairly regular pattern. First he sees, then he plunges--and a powerful alternating rhythm dominates the segment: he scans the south shore; Click--he resolves, proud-poor, not to return to the tower and Mulligan and Haines, finally envisioning himself as Hamlet; he notices the dead dog; Click--he dives into a discourse on philology; he sees the live dog; Click--he fears, he plays with his recently-coined fox riddle, he imagines an Irish past on the beach; the dog barks; Click--he reviews bits of English history, he continues to fear, he mocks his feelings, he agonizes some more over his mother's death; and so forth. <sup>6</sup>

These are the ingredients for representing a type of integrated simultaneity: first, a sense of "frozen" time; second, a massive expansion in inner space created by a torrential flow of thoughts; and finally, a rhythmic alternation between the world of matter and the world of the mind. One becomes caught up in the temporal suspension; one is plunged into Stephen's being, hearing his voice and seeing his visions; and, because the rapid alternations create a curious flickering effect, one derives from the scene a sense of things in it having happened practically all at the same time. The scene appears vertical and simultan-

eous, rather than linear and progressive.

II. Stephen is, however, only the Telemachus of the novel. One may catch him again where time stops briefly and the play between mind and matter occurs--at the library that afternoon, for example--but none of his later scenes has the same intensity or extent of the scene at the beach. It is left to the interior meanderings of Leopold Bloom--the Ulysses--to continue the thread of this particular form of integrated simultaneity.

In Blooms's early scenes one takes a lively tour with him through Dublin streets as he goes out to buy a breakfast kidney, visits the public baths, and attends Dignam's funeral. All this time Bloom's interior pours forth thoughts and feelings, but there is little "freezing" of his moments because he is constantly on the move.

During several notable moments of his day, however, Bloom slows and so does his time. There is a "freezing," an expansion, and a sense of simultaneity in these scenes. The first, occurring quite naturally at lunch, builds slowly as Bloom's walking and looking excite his appetite, and ends in crescendo in Davy Byrne's pub. Inside the restaurant there is a preliminary flickering between mind and matter as Bloom simultaneously carries on a distracted conversation with Davy Byrne and Nosey Flynn, smells and tastes food, and notices small details of his surroundings. Then, left alone to concentrate on eating and sipping wine, he releases a powerful monologue filled with images of food and eating and other sensual delights:

Mild fire of wine kindled his veins. I wanted that badly. Felt so off colour. His eyes un hungrily saw shelves of tins, sardines, gaudy lobsters' claws. All the odd things people pick up for food. Out of shells, periwinkles with a pin, off trees, snails out of the ground the French eat, out of the sea with bait on a hook. Silly fish learn nothing in a thousand years. If you didn't know risky putting anything in your mouth. Poisonous berries. Johnny Magories. Roundness you think good. Gaudy colour warns you off. One fellow told another and so on. Try it on the dog first. Led on by the smell or the look. Tempting fruit. Ice cones. Cream. Instinct. Orangegroves for instance. Need artificial irrigation. Bleibtreustrasse. Yes but what about oysters. Unsightly like a clot of phlegm. Filthy shells. Devil to open them too. Who found them out? Garbage, sewage they feed on. Fizz and Red bank oysters. Effect on the sexual. Aphrodis. He was in the Red bank this morning. Was the oyster old fish at table. Perhaps he young flesh in bed. No. June has no ar no oysters. But there are people like tainted game. Jugged hare. First catch your hare. Chinese eating eggs fifty years old, blue and green again. Dinner of thirty courses. Each dish harmless might mix inside. . . . 7

The rush of words continues until he notices two flies, stuck and buzzing, on the window pane. Suddenly he remembers a stimulating afternoon frolic with Molly; the flies buzz and move again; he shifts to fantasizing about gods and goddesses, their food and their sculptured appearances; then, the monologue ceases as his bladder signals him to leave the table. 8

Although not as extensive, Bloom's simultaneous moment here is very much like Stephen's at the beach. There is in the pub a similar sense of things having come to a halt, of things having happened together, of a verticality in the scene. There is also, however, a significant difference between the monologues of Telemachus and Ulysses. Whereas Stephen's mind is richly filled to overflowing with metaphysics, guilt, memories, self-consciousness, and poetry, Bloom's mind is more one-

tracked. Practically all through the noon hour he focuses on eating and drinking, on food and digestion; at his next full stopping point, his obsession is with sex.

Leopold Bloom has had quite a busy day; he has peered at the statues in the library, has bought a titillating novel at the book-stalls, has had his supper and a dose of the cuckold's humiliation at the Ormond, and has been roundly humiliated by anti-Semites at Barney Kiernan's. Now it is time to pause and recoup along Sandymount shore.

Gerty MacDowell, Cissy Caffrey, and Edy Boardman are there, the latter two tending to children, the former preening herself while thinking outrageously romantic thoughts. Bloom sits nearby, conscious of Gerty's attention and gradually becoming aroused. The fireworks begin, the others go off to watch, and Gerty limps away slowly and coquettishly in their wake. Bloom's monologue begins:

Poor girl! That's why she's left on the shelf and the others did a sprint. Thought something was wrong by the cut of her jib. Jilted beauty. A defect is ten times worse in a woman. But makes them polite. Glad I didn't know it when she was on show. Hot little devil all the same. Wouldn't mind. Curiosity like a nun or a negress or a girl with glasses. That squinty one is delicate. Near her monthlies, I expect, makes them feel ticklish. I have such a bad headache today. Where did I put the letter? Yes, all right. All kinds of crazy longings. Licking pennies. Girl in Tranquilla convent that nun told me liked to smell rock oil. Virgins go mad in the end I suppose. Sister? How many women in Dublin have it today? Martha, she. Something in the air. That's the moon. But then why don't all women menstruate at the same time with same moon, I mean? depends on the time they were born, I suppose. Or all start scratch then get out of step. Sometimes Molly and Milly together. Anyhow I got the best of that. 9

It continues through a stream of sexual fantasies, while Bloom si-

multaneously masturbates. Detumescent, he begins to remember past sexual experiences; suddenly he catches sight of Gerty off in the distance; he recalls Milly's early sensuality; a rocket goes up; he reviews the recent flirtation, dwells on Molly again, and trails off into an analysis of male and female bodily odors; the lighthouse light comes on; more memories of love-play with Molly; a bat flies by; and so on. 10

Within this massive novel such stilled moments of simultaneity have particular functions. They occur at lazy times of day--after breakfast, at lunch, after supper--and they serve to retard the movement (such as it is) of the novel so that the characters and the reader may catch a breath. They form an integral part of the rhythmic pattern of the novel: with their slowed tempos, they reflect the ebb moments of daily life; they are momentary pauses in the flow of experience. Also, when the metabolism of the characters is slowed to such a point, it gives Joyce an opportunity to enlarge greatly their dimensions and our knowledge of them by plumbing their conscious and unconscious depths.

He does so in a way which seems remarkably real. After all, these expansions of fictional interiors in the book reflect accurately a human state which all of us experience daily. Through the waking hours our inner voice natters away constantly, but we manage to keep it in its place because the outer world demands most of our attention. From time to time the outer world recedes--we are quite alone--and our inner voice takes over to talk about our past, present, and future in wave after wave of both concrete and fragmented images. We do not become totally

submerged, however, because part of us continues to be aware of our simultaneity with the matter surrounding us. There is that flickering in alternating patterns: our eyes and part of our mind automatically register some bit of matter; no apparent need for reaction, so the voice runs on; another registering, nothing significant, and on goes the voice. Sooner or later some thought or thing recalls us, breaking the rhythms of the moment, and the next part of living out the day begins. And this is exactly what happens to Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom during certain simultaneous moments in Ulysses.

There is another important quality to these peculiar periods in the work, with their sense of stopped time, of expansion, of verticality, and of simultaneity: they have a strong feeling of immediacy surrounding them. They are happening right now. Because there are so few distracting elements in the scenes--Joyce intrudes minimally, and the characters' brief registerings of the outer world are judiciously spaced, just in the right places to move the monologue along--one tends to lose one's own sense of time and place. One has an increasing sense of being enveloped within the private world of another, and of living intensely there in the present with that other for the duration of the moment.

III. In William Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury, more than two-thirds of which unfolds through some form of interior monologue, there are similar moments during which the time-sense simultaneity is created by a rhythmic interplay of mind and matter inside a character's consciousness.

They occur during Quentin's day--June 2, 1910--which, as only one

part of an entire work, resembles on a far smaller scale Bloom's day. Quentin, like Bloom, roams about a city and its environs; there is not a great deal of conventional novel movement here, but extraordinary things happen to him during this ordinary day. And, also like Bloom, Quentin is a wanderer, an outsider, and a contemplator with deep obsessions.

There are, on the other hand, important differences between the two days. Quentin's has an air of pastness, of deadness about it; it is back-dated in relation to the other sections of the novel,<sup>11</sup> and it serves as a prelude to his suicide. Bloom's day, for all its inherent sadness, implies some hope for him and those about him. Bloom and all his people are organically connected with, and expressive of, their epic day--they live it. Quentin's less than epic day seems poorly integrated into the fabric of Faulkner's book. Quentin gives the impression of being a disembodied recorder of his last moments, and it is bothersome to work out the origins of his recording: how, for instance, was it "obtained," unless in addition to writing his suicide notes he kept a detailed, running account of his activities just before he died?

In spite of these differences, certain of Quentin's monologues have a strong resemblance to those of both Bloom and Stephen. His first notable act of the day is literally to kill time by breaking off the hands of his watch,<sup>12</sup> an action which rather obviously insures that his time will be "frozen" during his segment. It takes him an hour of walking and riding streetcars to lose his sense of time, and then, after leaving a suicide note for his roommate with the Deacon,<sup>13</sup> he heads out through

the suburbs of Boston to the countryside. All along he is depicted as living quite inside himself, his consciousness expanding continually on the following themes from his past: his life in the mythical Jefferson, Mississippi, his decadent southern family, their disturbed relationships with each other, and especially his psychologically incestuous relationship with his sister, Caddy. There is not a sense of simultaneity yet because Quentin is moving quickly from spot to spot, but there is a perceptible alternating rhythm building between him and his surroundings. While dwelling on a theme, he will briefly look out at activity on the street, or on the river, or on the streetcar; also, while walking, he will watch his shadow, which brings him out of himself again and again as he childishly attempts each time to lose or kill this reflection of his corporeal self. <sup>14</sup>

For two relatively long periods in the country he concentrates his attention on the world outside himself. First, he meets the boys with their fishpoles at the bridge, <sup>15</sup> and later, he becomes involved with the little immigrant girl, gets her lost, and is arrested on the complaint of her brother. <sup>16</sup> Saved from jail by the appearance of Harvard friends out on a picnic, he begins an extended and complicated outpouring.

The whole day has been building to this scene, what with those drumming notes from the past beating in his skull, and with his recent innocent but disastrous walk with the girl around the small town. In Mrs. Bland's car, Quentin starts to laugh uncontrollably; the flickering rhythm suddenly speeds up as flashes of people and their chatter

alternate rapidly with Quentin's obsessions:

"If that hamper is in his way, Mr. MacKenzie, move it over on your side. I brought a hamper of wine because I think young gentlemen should drink wine, although my father, Gerald's grandfather" ever do that have you ever done that In the grey darkness a little light her hands locked about

"They do, when they can get it," Spoade said. "Hey, Shreve?" her knees her face looking at the sky the smell of honeysuckle upon her face and throat

"Beer, too," Shreve said. His hand touched my knee again. I moved my knee again. like a thin wash of lilac coloured paint talking about him bringing

"You're not a gentleman," Spoade said. him between us until the shape of her blurred not with dark

"No. I'm Canadian," Shreve said. talking about him the oar blades winking him along winking the Cap made for motoring in England and all time rushing beneath and they two blurred within the other forever more he had been in the army had killed men

"I adore Canada," Miss Daingerfield said. with one hand he could lift her to his shoulder and run with her running Running

"No," Shreve said. running the beast with two backs and she blurred in the winking oars running the swine of Euboeus running coupled within how many Caddy. . . . I7

A minute later, Quentin just explodes--we later learn he has leaped in fury on the pampered and privileged Gerald Bland for "[talking] about the body's beauty and the sorry ends thereof and how tough women have it, without anything else they do except lie on their backs" 18-- and simultaneously he sinks deep down in himself to remember a scene with Caddy, during which he threatened to confess incest to the family, and then attempted to kill the two of them. The monologue runs on for some time in this manner:

I held the point of the knife at her throat  
it wont take but a second just a second then I can do  
mine I can do mine then  
all right can you do yours by yourself  
yes the blades long enough Benjys in bed by now

yes  
it wont take but a second Ill try not to hurt  
all right  
will you close your eyes  
no like this youll have to push it harder  
touch your hand to it  
but she didnt move her eyes were wide open looking  
past my head at the sky  
Caddy do you remember how Dilsey fussed at you be-  
cause your drawers were muddy  
dont cry  
Im not crying Caddy  
push it are you going to  
do you want me to  
yes push it  
touch your hand to it  
dont cry poor Quentin  
but I couldnt stop she held my hand against her damp  
hard breast I could hear her heart going firm and slow  
now not hammering and the water gurgling among the wil-  
lows in the dark and waves of honeysuckle coming up the  
air my arm and shoulder were twisted under me. . . . 19

At this point, realizing his impotence, he feels crushed and beaten by the curse on the family. Later, he recalls how he went to confront Caddy's seducer. They met on a bridge, where the fiercely passionate but debilitated Quentin struck Dalton Ames--"did you ever have a sister did you/no but theyre all bitches" 20--and was easily defeated by the detached, stronger, and more experienced man. Then, Caddy came looking for her brother:

do you love him Caddy  
do I what  
she looked at me then everything emptied out of her  
eyes and they looked like the eyes in the statues blank  
and unseeing and serene  
put your hand against my throat  
she took my hand and held it flat against her throat  
now say his name  
Dalton Ames  
I felt the first surge of blood there it surged in  
strong accelerating beats  
say it again

her face looked off into the trees where the sun  
slanted and where the bird  
say it again  
Dalton Ames  
her blood surged steadily beating and beating against  
my hand  
It kept on running for a long time, but my face felt  
cold and sort of dead, and my eye, and the cut place on  
my finger was smarting again. . . . 21

And here the monologue ends, as Shreve and Spoade bring Quentin out of himself and back to awareness. It is a segment halted in time and simultaneous, a massive expansion of an inner landscape. It is a result both of the tremendous tensions of the day, and of those inside the speaker, and it is sparked when mind and matter race together flickeringly at such a pace that something gives and snaps in Quentin and a sense of the whereness and whenness of the narrative is temporarily lost.

A similar scene will close the day. Quentin has managed to make his way back to his room, where he prepares for the final act. Once more, the movement from self to world and back to self accelerates to give the impression of simultaneity. He busies himself with little last-minute details, but while he is puttering his inner voice keeps exploding its familiar themes inside his head. The rhythm throbs like a migraine headache: he turns out the light to stare out the window; he starts to recall oppressive night scenes from the past; he walks to and from the bathroom, carefully noting small details of his setting; he begins to associate another night scene; he hears a clock strike ("A quarter hour yet. And then I'll not be.")<sup>22</sup>; tastes, sounds and visions assault his consciousness, then more memories of depressing family scenes and troubles; the clock strikes once more; finally, he plunges

into the last inner expansion.

In this he recalls an intense scene with his father, during which they discussed the sin of incest. The segment has its own driving rhythms:

he every man is the arbiter of his own virtues whether or not you consider it courageous is of more importance than the act itself than any act otherwise you could not be in earnest and i you dont believe i am serious and he i think you are too serious to give me any cause for alarm you wouldnt have felt driven to the expedient of telling me you have committed incest otherwise and i i wasnt lying i wasnt lying and he you wanted to sublimate a piece of natural human folly into a horror and then exorcise it with truth and i it was to isolate her out of the loud world so that it would have to flee us of necessity and then the sound of it would be as though it had never been and he did you try to make her do it and i i was afraid she might and then it wouldnt have done any good but if i could tell you we did it would have been so and then the others wouldnt be so and then the world would roar away and he and now this other you are not lying now either but you are still blind to what is in yourself to that part of general truth the sequence of natural events and their causes which shadows every mans brow even benjys you are not thinking of finitude you are contemplating an apotheosis in which a temporary state of mind will become symmetrical above the flesh and aware both of itself and of the flesh it will not quite discard you will not even be dead. . . . 23

On and on this goes, until the clock strikes the hour. Quentin tidies up a bit more, brushes his teeth, and he and his day are done.

IV. Both in Joyce's Ulysses and Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury, a rhythmic interplay between a character's consciousness and his environment serves to create the sense of simultaneity in suspended time which surrounds certain interior monologues. There is another rhythm at work in these segments, helping to sustain the simultaneous time-sense. Each

character's inner voice has a unique tempo particularly suited to the individual speaking: thus, Stephen's voice virtually sings, running up and down scales of experience, pouring forth rich poetic measures; Bloom's, on the other hand, emits more deliberate measures, rather monotonously, while dwelling on mundane considerations; and Quentin's is a voice of repetitious measures, going over and over its themes, extracting their essences, attempting to comprehend their mysteries. Without the consistent development of these rhythms, one could not maintain a belief in the inner lives and states of the characters, and as a consequence one would lose the simultaneity effect permeating these scenes.

Also, one would lose the characteristic dimension of verticality in the scenes, which derives from the integrity and sustenance of the simultaneous time-sense. Especially different and effective in portions of these modern novels is narration which seems not to progress in an ordinary linear fashion from point to point, but which appears to expand upward for a period while inner spaces are dramatically and thoroughly explored. We shall examine in greater detail the operation of verticality in succeeding chapters on other types of integrated simultaneity.

NOTES: CHAPTER III

- 1 James Joyce, Ulysses (Modern Library ed., 1934; rpt. New York: Random House, 1946), pp. 9-10.
- 2 Ibid., p. 43.
- 3 Ibid., p. 46.
- 4 Ibid., p. 50.
- 5 Ibid., p. 38.
- 6 Ibid., pp. 45-46.
- 7 Ibid., p. 172.
- 8 Ibid., pp. 172-174.
- 9 Ibid., p. 361.
- 10 Ibid., pp. 362-371.
- 11 Benjy's day is "April Seventh, 1928," and Jason's is "April Sixth, 1928"; the last day of the novel (narrated by Faulkner) is "April Eighth, 1928."
- 12 William Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury (1929; rpt. New York: Vintage--Alfred E. Knopf and Random House, 1956), p. 98.
- 13 Ibid., p. 122.
- 14 See, for instance, Ibid., pp. 114, 118, 119, 138, 149, and 166.
- 15 Ibid., pp. 145-153.
- 16 Ibid., pp. 155-173.
- 17 Ibid., pp. 183-184.

- 18 Ibid., p. 207.
- 19 Ibid., pp. 188-189.
- 20 Ibid., p. 199.
- 21 Ibid., pp. 202-203.
- 22 Ibid., p. 216.
- 23 Ibid., pp. 219-222.

CHAPTER IV

INTEGRATED SIMULTANEITY, II:

Simultaneity of Past and Present: The Remembering Character

I. This particular type of integrated simultaneity occurs when the past and the present of a character intermingle so fully that the span between them appears to dissolve and a sense of their temporal oneness pervades. These moments of simultaneity, like those just discussed, are accompanied by impressions of briefly "frozen" time and of verticality in the narration.

So that this psychological time-sense can be sustained, the vehicle of the illusion, the remembering character, must be created with special traits. Often, he or she emerges in the work as possessed of a rich inner life and a powerful sense of recall. Sensitivity to the fullness and nuances of past moments and a unique ability to maintain the constant flow into a present moment, also mark this type. Occasional dream-recounters or idle revery-enjoyers do not serve the illusion. In other cases, the remembering character's mental make-up is such that he or she is constitutionally unable to distinguish past from present; here, the past-present flow is automatic and uncontrolled. Settings for sustained moments of remembering are also special. The character is placed in naturally static situations where stimuli from the material world do not interfere with the flow of recall. Nighttime scenes, just before sleep overcomes consciousness, are particularly well-suited.

II. In Du côté de chez Swann Marcel Proust, an originator of such illusionary psychological moments in modern fictions, provides an intriguing analysis of how they could be created by a human consciousness. The book begins with the remembering narrator describing his odd nighttime habits. His sleep was fitful, with periods of awakening occurring all night long; he became accustomed to re-orienting himself in his dark room by reviewing all the rooms he had slept in in the course of his life. This was his tentative first step toward melding his past and present.

One of these rooms, to which he attached special memories, was at his grandparents' home in Combray. For an extended period in the narrative, he concentrates on relating some everyday events in that home which took place when he was quite young. Concepts to be explored and developed later in the novel are introduced here: the narrator's exceptional sensitivity to his own feelings and to intricate human relationships; his deep sensual perceptions of the arts and of his material environment; and his fascination with the history of the vaguely mysterious M. Swann. At this stage in testing his recall powers, however, the past was still incomplete, still quite dead:

C'est ainsi que, pendant longtemps, quand réveillé la nuit je me ressouvenais de Combray, je n'en revis jamais que cette sorte de pan lumineux, découpé au milieu d'indistinctes ténèbres, pareil à ceux que l'embrasement d'un feu de Bengale ou quelque projection électrique éclairaient et sectionnent dans un édifice dont les autres parties restent plongées dans la nuit. . . . [En] un mot, toujours vu à la même heure, isolé de tout ce qu'il pouvait y avoir autour, se détachant seul sur l'obscurité, le décor strictement nécessaire (comme celui qu'on voit indiqué en tête des vieilles pièces pour les représenta-

tions en province) au drame de mon déshabillage; comme si Combray n'avait consisté qu'en deux étages reliés par un mince escalier et comme s'il n'y avait jamais été que sept heures du soir. . . . Tout cela était en réalité mort pour moi. <sup>1</sup>

But many years later the dimension missing from his memory exercises was provided by a seemingly insignificant incident on a cold winter day: he accepted from his mother a "petite madeleine" and dipped a fragment in his tea. Suddenly, as the taste experience registered, a powerful feeling flooded his entire being: "Mais à l'instant même où la gorgée mêlée de miettes de gâteau toucha mon palais, je tressaillis, attentif à ce qui se passait d'extraordinaire en moi. Un plaisir délicieux m'avait envahi, isolé, sans la notion de sa cause." <sup>2</sup>

Here, Proust subtly heightens the immediacy of the scene by switching into the present tense. As the feeling fades all too quickly, the narrator attempts to trace its origins. Several more sips of tea are unrewarding, but when he concentrates fiercely, shutting out the immediate material world and focusing his thoughts on the taste of the tea, something returns: [Je] sens tressailler en moi quelque chose qui se déplace, voudrait s'élever, quelque chose qu'un aurait désancré, à une grande profondeur; je ne sais ce que c'est, mais cela monte lentement; j'éprouve la résistance et j'entends la rumeur des distances traversées."<sup>3</sup> He continues straining mightily to recapture the feeling whole; then, something even more substantial returns--a fully-realized memory of Sunday mornings at Combray, when he would go to his Aunt Leonie's room to bid her good-day and she would give him some crumbs from her "petite madeleine" dipped in lime-blossom tea. The scene is so real

that he believes to taste and smell it:

Mais, quand d'un passé ancien rien ne subsiste, après la mort des êtres, après la destruction des choses, seules, plus frêles mais plus vivaces, plus immatérielles, plus persistantes, plus fidèles, l'odeur et la saveur restent encore longtemps, comme des âmes, à se rappeler, à attendre, à espérer, sur la ruine de tout la reste, à porter sans fléchir, sur leur gouttelette presque impalpable, l'édifice immense du souvenir. <sup>4</sup>

And, like lime blossoms unfolding in a cup of tea, now the entirety of a Combray past begins to unfold within him--not merely a room or a scene this time, but the house, the town, the streets, the countryside, the people, the weather. . . all of it. The narrator will dedicate himself to exploring consciously and thoroughly all those sensations, images, and forms from before that make up the fabric of his being. At this point, the novel becomes a meticulous recounting and intensive re-creating of his searches and discoveries.

III. [Tout] cela faisait d'elle pour moi quelque chose d'entièrement différent du reste de la ville: un édifice occupant, si l'on peut dire, un espace à quatre dimensions -- la quatrième étant celle du Temps --, déployant à travers les siècles son vaisseau qui, de travée en travée, de chapelle en chapelle, semblait vaincre et franchir, non pas seulement quelques mètres, mais des époques successives d'où il sortait victorieux. . . . <sup>5</sup>

Thus, the Proustian narrator describes an effect which the grand old church at Combray had upon him. Perhaps the remainder of this work, and the other works comprising A la recherche du temps perdu, can have a similar cumulative effect on readers of Proust, causing the entire fiction to appear to exist in a fourth dimension. The total impact of the remembering character's voluminous account is not at issue here, how-

ever, but rather the particular moments in this novel which resemble that moment of tasting the tea-dipped "madeleine" crumb, which re-create intensely the taste, smell, sound, sight, and "soul" of the past, and which appear uniquely present and simultaneous.

Such moments come in flashes. Among the rich memories flooding the pages of Du côté de chez Swann, these are the sharply-etched ones. They cause time to stand stock-still in the midst of a very gradual linear progression, and in this stillness the narration appears to expand vertically. By virtue of their verticality, they allow for a leisurely savoring of their richness. Masterful illusions of simultaneity, they often seem so real that one enters and leaves them overwhelmed.

There are, for instance, those moments when one enters a remarkably real place; the setting is so precisely delineated that its moment in the novel provides not only a full sense of the room or area remembered but also a strong associative image of the character who once reigned there. One perceives Aunt Leonie's room at Combray filled with the spirit of her idiosyncratic invalidism,<sup>6</sup> or one senses in Odette's Paris apartment, all done up in Oriental trappings, her uncouth voguishness.<sup>7</sup> Another of these memorable moments occurs upon entering the kitchen of Françoise. The "soul" of the room is fixed at a glance; one senses there the terrible efficiency of Françoise as she creates culinary order out of a chaotic welter of implements and foodstuffs, and one senses a current flowing beneath the surfaces of the room, a virtual life of sound and sight and bustling activity:

A cette heure où je descendais apprendre le menu, le dîner était déjà commencé, et Françoise, commandant aux

forces de la nature devenues ses aides, comme dans les féeries ou les géants se font engager comme cuisiniers, frappait la houille, donnait à la vapeur des pommes de terre à étuver et faisait finir à point par le feu les chefs-d'oeuvre culinaires d'abord préparés dans des récipients de céramistes qui allaient des grandes cuves, marmites, chaudrons et poissonnières, aux terrines pour le gibier, moules à pâtisserie et petits pots de crème, en passant par une collection complète de casseroles de toutes dimensions. Je m'arrêtais à voir sur la table, où la fille de cuisine venait de les écosser, les petits pois alignés et nombrés comme des billes vertes dans un jeu; mais mon ravissement était devant les asperges, trempées d'outre-mer et de rose et dont l'épi, finement pignoché de mauve et d'azur, se dégrade insensiblement jusqu'au pied -- encore souillé pourtant du sol de leur plan -- par des irisations qui ne sont pas de la terre. 8

The "soul" of this place, and of similar others in the novel depicted with unique intensity, is re-created through a structural massing of details and through wonderful comparisons. Françoise is aptly likened to a military commander: foodstuffs and utensils stand ever ready for her inspection, her adjutant arranges the peas in neat rows at attention, and even the asparagus, focal point of the narrator's active imagination, appears to be upright in soldierly formation. Also, one is assaulted here by mass detailing; in every kitchen there are pots and pans, but in this one they are enumerated with exceptional precision: "cuves," "marmites," "chaudrons," "poissonnières," "terrines," "moules," right down to the "petit pots de crème." Not only has this rememberer remarkable recall, he also has singular perceptions of details; through him, for instance, one is forced to look at asparagus with new eyes, to see its very color gradations: ". . . trempées d'outre-mer et de rose et dont l'épi, finement pignoché de mauve et d'azur, se dégrade insensiblement jusqu'au pied. . . ."

One also encounters special moments during which the essence of a mood is re-created with striking effect. In one such moment Marcel the narrator reaches back to late childhood to capture that awful feeling one has when, having planned the perfect day, one awakens to find the overcast heavens throwing a pall over one's entire universe. In the throes of pre-pubescent love for Gilberte, Marcel had eagerly anticipated meeting and frolicking with her on the Champs-Élysées that particular day; instead, he had had to spend the entire morning in torture, desperately watching the skies for an omen of clearing.<sup>9</sup> In another such moment Marcel recounts the feelings of Swann in the throes of a more mature but equally passionate infatuation. Swann's love for Odette was in its early and growing stages; like many a person in this state, Swann had invested a concurrent melody with so much associative emotion that it became a symbol for his newly heightened sense of being; and, whenever he heard the melody repeated, he was virtually overcome by the feelings that it released in him. The analysis of Swann thus in love and enraptured by a refrain from the Vinteuil sonata constitutes a richly intensified "frozen" moment.<sup>10</sup>

The concluding segment of the novel is an extended mood piece. The narrator has left the confines of his memory-provoking room to wander through the Bois de Boulogne; it is November and the day has a rather sad, late fall feeling about it. He brings the park to life by describing its trees, lake, and contours in beautiful detail, but in the course of his walk he is struck by the contrast between the mundane people who promenade there now and those whom he has been re-creating in his narra-

tive. Once more, the past suddenly rises up into his present to overwhelm him; the moment "freezes" and intensifies:

L'idée de perfection que je portais en moi, je l'avais prêtée alors à la hauteur d'une victoria, à la maigreur de ces chevaux furieux et légers comme des guêpes, les yeux injectés de sang comme les cruels chevaux de Diomède, et que maintenant, pris d'un désir de revoir ce que j'avais aimé, aussi ardent que celui qui me poussait bien des années auparavant dans ces mêmes chemins, je voulais avoir de nouveau sous les yeux, au moment où l'énorme cocher de Mme. Swann, surveillé par un petit groom gros comme le poing et aussi enfantin que saint Georges, essayait de maîtriser leur ailes d'acier qui se débattaient effarouchées et palpitantes. Hélas! il n'y avait plus que des automobiles conduites par des mécaniciens moustachus qu'accompagnaient de grands valets de pied. Je voulais tenir sous les yeux de mon corps, pour savoir s'ils étaient aussi charmants que le voyaient les yeux de ma mémoire, de petits chapeaux de femmes si bas qu'ils semblaient une simple couronne. Tous maintenant étaient immenses, couverts de fruits et de fleurs et d'oiseaux variés. Au lieu des belles robes dans lesquelles Mme. Swann avait l'air d'une reine, des tuniques gréco-saxonnes relevaient avec les plis des Tanagra, et quelquefois dans le style du Directoire, des chiffons liberty semés de fleurs comme un papier peint. Sur la tête des messieurs qui auraient pu se promener avec Mme. Swann dans l'allée de la Reine-Marguerite, je ne trouvais pas le chapeau gris d'autrefois, ne même un autre. Ils sortaient nu-tête. . . . Quelle horreur!

A moment later, the visions recede, the present totally reclaims him, and the narrative ends with his melancholy realization that: "[Le] souvenir d'une certaine image n'est que le regret d'un certain instant; et les maisons, les routes, les avenues, sont fugitives, hélas! comme les années." 12

In this, as in other "frozen" moments of mood re-creation, one perceives the skillful selection of details, the artful use of comparison, to elicit the "soul" of the past in order to make it realistically pres-

ent. The mood of longing and regret for what was derives its strong effect from the great disparity between those magnificent bloody-eyed horses from the past, fierce and fleet as wasps, their vividly-depicted handlers straining to keep them from virtually flying away, and the automobiles of the present, with no flash or fire, with only the graceless mustachioed mechanics and tall footmen to attend them. And there is a similar disparity between the lovely hats and queenly gowns from the past and those of the present: current headwear is immense and gross, laden with fruits, flowers, and birds, while the modish dresses are patterned so that they resemble sheets of wallpaper. During this vertical moment of narration, where past and present seem simultaneous, one perceives that the images from the past are the more real and vibrant because they have been given order, life, and form, in contrast with figures from the present which are random, bloodless, and flat.

Finally, throughout the book one participates in experiential moments with similar intense and real qualities; one is drawn into the presentness of an event to feel there the perceptions and emotions of the narrator. It is obvious, for example, how painfully and hopelessly smitten Marcel is upon first meeting Gilberte Swann in her father's garden amidst the heady essence of hawthorne blossoms; <sup>13</sup> it is touching how well he conceals his disillusion when, seeing the noble Mme. Guermites in person, his dream of her is shattered by her real presence; <sup>14</sup> and it is fascinating how controlled but piercing his laughter is when he depicts the pretentious gatherings of the Verdurin circle, <sup>15</sup> or when he describes pompous flunkies in the service of aristocrats. <sup>16</sup>

A superb rendering of the simultaneity of past and present occurs when he recalls being privy to a grotesque scene between Mlle. Vinteuil and her lesbian lover. He remembers wandering the countryside one hot day, and falling asleep on the hillside right in back of the Vinteuil house. It was dark when he awoke, people were in the house, and although he wanted to leave he could not because he would be discovered and his presence there would be suspect. When the event happened he was still an innocent, so that its impact on him was primarily visual and auditory. He remembers hearing the ugly verbal sparring between the lovers, but all he understood of it at the time was Mlle. Vinteuil's basic generosity, gentleness, and goodness, in contrast with her friend's brutal coarseness; he remembers seeing Mlle. Vinteuil kissed and chased by the other woman, and his sympathy went out to the pursued who, he sensed, was acting out a role; and at the end of the scene, he heard and saw enough to know that, just after the shutters closed, the companion would spit--a horrid desecration--on the photograph of Mlle. Vinteuil's late father.

Now, in his present remembering state, he is able to comprehend deeply what he witnessed then. The potent memory gives rise to a sensitive, probing insight into the nature of Mlle. Vinteuil's "sadism":

Une sadique comme elle est l'artiste du mal, ce qu'une créature entièrement mauvaise ne pourrait être, car le mal ne lui serait pas extérieur, il lui semblerait tout naturel, ne se distinguerait même pas d'elle; et la vertu, la mémoire des morts, la tendresse filiale, comme elle n'en aurait pas le culte, elle ne trouverait pas un plaisir sacrilège à les profaner. Les sadiques de l'espèce de Mlle. Vinteuil sont des êtres si purement sentimentaux, si naturellement vertueux que même le plaisir

sensuel leur paraît quelque chose de mauvais, le privilège des méchants. Et quand ils se concèdent à eux-mêmes de s'y livrer un moment, c'est dans la peau de méchants qu'ils tâchent d'entrer et de faire entrer leur complice, de façon à avoir eu un moment l'illusion de s'être évadés de leur âme scrupuleuse et tendre, dans le monde inhumain du plaisir. 17

Adding to the particular sense of simultaneity in this segment is the skillful juxtaposition of past with present. There is only a brief introductory sentence to prepare one for an especially significant event: "C'est peut-être d'une impression ressentie aussi auprès de Montjouvain, quelques années plus tard, impression restée obscure alors, qu'est sortie, bien après, l'idée que je me suis faite du sadisme." 18 In deft, efficient strokes the drama between the two women is then sketched fully, interrupted occasionally by commentary from the observing narrator. The climactic brutal scene (which takes place off-stage) ends the first phase, the past phase, of the event. Then there is another spare transitional passage--"Et pourtant j'ai pensé depuis que si M. Vinteuil avait pu assister à cette scène, il n'eût peut-être pas encore perdu sa foi dans le bon coeur de sa fille, et peut-être même n'eût-il pas eu en cela tout à fait tort." 19--which begins the second phase, the present phase, of the event. It is carried at last to its conclusion by the penetrating analysis of sadism.

All the special moments of the work--of place, of mood, or of significant experience--are given substance and "soul" by means of specific narrative techniques. In some of the moments, a careful juxtaposing of Then with Now creates a strong rhythm of alternation, retards progression, causes vertical expansion, and allows memory to flow freely into

the consciousness of the narrator where it becomes simultaneous with his present. Here, memory often has a heightened presentness and reality because the narrator's recalled images are depicted more vividly than those impinging from his immediate surroundings.

In other moments--where there is no juxtaposing of Then with Now, which consist of pure memory--presentness, substance, and "soul" are achieved through an additive narrative technique. Details abound; multiple sensual particulars associated with the moment are ordered and massed so that one is filled with visual, aural, olfactory, and tactile impressions of people and surroundings. Comparisons abound; the words comme and comme si are used over and over to introduce just the right likenesses which lend subtle nuance and coloration to the feeling of the moment. These moments are intensified and "frozen" by the piling of detail upon detail, of comparison upon comparison, until the exceptionally rich and real effect is accomplished.

IV. Another notable remembering character appears in James Joyce's Ulysses. Molly Bloom does not dominate in this novel as the narrator does in Proust's, but one leaves Ulysses with her voice resounding in one's head because hers is the powerful final monologue. It is set in the dark, wee hours of the morning; Molly cannot fall asleep because Bloom a little while before brought Stephen Dedalus home and made a fuss getting into the house.

What a range of memories, opinions, concepts, and fantasies flows through Molly's consciousness as she mulls over in bed the distant past,

the day just past, and, occasionally, the days to come. If there is a dominant note running through her monologue it is her preoccupation with her sexuality. She remembers: her awakening to womanhood in Gibraltar and early sexual experiences there; what it was like to make love with Bloom before their son died; the desperate aberrations practiced on her by Bloom as a result of his current impotence; the wonderfully satisfying coupling with Blazes Boylan that afternoon; her body and self and feelings at various stages of development of her robust sensuality. She runs on with her opinions and notions of Bloom's deviant behavior, of that of sex criminals, of her body's urgent demands and needs, of the natural power of women, and of adultery. She fantasizes about future assignations with Boylan, about new singing engagements where her beauty will be on display, about seducing Stephen Dedalus, about cruising the streets for strange men, and about punishing Bloom for abandoning her to such visions.

The sense of past-present oneness in Molly's moment is sustained (as are certain moments of Proust's narrator) by an artful juxtaposing of Then with Now. Like a diver exploring various depths beneath the sea, Molly swims up and down in her past for long periods, rises to the surface of her present for a breath of air, and then sinks back down again into her memories. In this respect, the monologue breaks into three divisions. At the end of the first third, she is just recalling with lustful pleasure being in bed with Boylan that day, when a train whistle brings her to the surface; she listens for an instant, and then re-submerges, falling into musing on Bloom's idiosyncrasies and on

life at Gibraltar. <sup>20</sup> At the end of the second third, she is in the midst of examining the implications of the recent arrival of Bloom with Stephen when she has to leave the bed because she has found herself suddenly menstruating; she ministers to her needs, climbs back into bed, and drifts off into recalling similar occasions in her history. <sup>21</sup> And toward the end of the final third, she floats up to the present to plan for the next day, to hear the clock strike the unearthly hour, to try to doze off by counting flowers in the wallpaper, and, at last, to remember the first time with Bloom before she drifts off to sleep. <sup>22</sup>

The transitions from Then to Now to Then are beautifully fluid. There is barely a pause in the narration, primarily because there is no punctuation of her flowing thoughts. Just before the end, for instance, in one breath she remembers their apartment on Lombard street, plans redecorations for the present house, and delivers an opinion on the beauties of nature; without stopping, she delivers next another opinion, on atheists, which streams into the concluding memory:

. . . ah yes I know them well who was the first person in the universe before there was anybody that made it all who ah that they dont know neither do I so there you are they might as well try to stop the sun from rising tomorrow the sun shines for you he said the day we were lying among the rhododendrons on Howth head in the grey tweed suit and his straw hat the day I got him to propose to me yes. . . . <sup>23</sup>

As is the case with Proust's remembering character, much of the intensity of Molly's past-present simultaneity derives from a rich abundance of detail and comparison. The details she notes or recalls are fresh and funny. In this narcissistic fragment, she begins by examining closely her proud breasts and then wanders off into a discourse with

herself on comparative anatomy:

yes I think he made them a bit firmer sucking them like that so long he made me thirsty titties he calls them I had to laugh yes this one anyhow stiff the nipple gets for the least thing Ill get him to keep that up and Ill take those eggs beaten up with marsala fatten them out for him what are all those veins and things curious the way its made 2 the same in case of twins theyre supposed to represent beauty placed up there like those statues in the museum one of them pretending to hide it with her hand are they so beautiful of course compared with what a man looks like with his two bags full and his other thing hanging down out of him or sticking up at you like a hatrack no wonder they hide it with a cabbageleaf the woman is beauty of course thats admitted when he said I could pose for a picture naked to some rich fellow in Holles street when he lost the job in Helys and I was selling the clothes and strumming in the coffee palace. . . . 24

Or, in another typical segment, she depicts Boylan's masculine crudeness with singular imagery:

no thats the way for him has he no manners nor no refinement nor no nothing in his nature slapping us behind like that on my bottom because I didnt call him Hugh the ignoramus that doesnt know poetry from a cabbage thats what you get for not keeping them in their proper place pulling off his shoes and trousers there on the chair before me so barefaced without even asking permission and standing out that vulgar way in the half of a shirt they wear to be admired like a priest or a butcher or those old hypocrites in the time of Julius Caesar of course hes right enough in his way to pass the time as a joke. . . . 25

Not only does the intensity of her remembering derive from a flow of massed details and unique comparisons, it also derives from the effective mixing of her unordered, trivial mind-clutter with more significant thoughts and feelings. One follows her associative leaps with fascination, because among the clutter one finds the true nature of Molly Bloom and her relationships revealed. In the following segment, for example, amidst the ramblings on about uniforms, regiments, and

the Boer war, she shows how essentially romantic and self-centered she is as she re-creates that bittersweet moment when she bade farewell to her first love, a handsome young officer ordered to the front:

. . . Gardner Lieut Stanley G 8th Bn 2nd East Lancs Rgt of enteric fever he was a lovely fellow in khaki and just the right height over me Im sure he was brave too he said I was lovely the evening we kissed goodbye at the canal lock my Irish beauty he was pale with excitement about going away or wed be seen from the road he couldnt stand properly and I so hot as I never felt they could have made their peace in the beginning or old Oom Paul and the rest of the old Krugers go and fight it out between them instead of dragging on for years killing any finelooking men there were with their fever if he was even decently shot it wouldnt have been so bad I love to see a regiment pass in review the first time I saw the Spanish cavalry at La Roque it was lovely. . . . 26

Or, in this revealing passage, she recalls with detailed clarity her first impressions of Bloom:

. . . he excited me I dont know how the first night we ever met when I was living in Rehoboth terrace we stood staring at one another for about 10 minutes as if we met somewhere I suppose on account of my being jewess looking after my mother he used to amuse me the things he said with the half sloothering smile on him and all the Doyles said he was going to stand for a member of Parliament O wasnt I the born fool to believe all his blather about home rule and the land league sending me that long stroll of a song out of the Hugenots to sing in French to be more classy O beau pays de la Touraine that I never even sang once explaining and rigmaroling about religion and persecution he wont let you enjoy anything naturally then might he as a great favor the very 1st opportunity he got a chance in Brighton square running into my bedroom pretending the ink got on his hands to wash it off with the Albion milk and sulphur soap I used to use and the gelatine still round it O I laughed myself sick at him that day. . . . 27

Here, by extracting significant utterances from the clutter--"he excited me"; "he used to amuse me"; "O wasnt I the born fool to believe all his blather"; "he wont let you enjoy anything naturally"; "O I laughed

myself sick at him that day"--one gets a strong impression of Molly's discordant feelings about herself and Bloom, and one also gains insight into the shaky foundations of their relationship and into why it presently is fraught with tension.

Just as the Proustian narrator's special moments of past-present simultaneity are marked by a sense of verticality, so is the special moment of Molly Bloom. Stasis pervades her entire monologue; except for her occasional shifting about in bed, and except for her visit to the chamber pot, nothing happens during her act of remembering. Such narrative stasis contributes to the sense of verticality which dominates the ending of Ulysses.

This sense of verticality stems also from the rhythmic intensity of her moment. The fluid temporal juxtapositioning, the massing of details and comparisons, the artful mixing of the trivial with the important, the breaks and gaps in the logic of her associative flow--all these narrative techniques create the peculiar rhythms informing the monologue. One finds them especially intense toward the end, where Molly starts to drift off to sleep; images of Gibraltar and Bloom rise from the past, flood her present, and become simultaneous with it:

. . . yes and those handsome Moors all in white and turbans like kings asking you to sit down in their little bit of a shop and Ronda with the old windows of the posada glancing eyes a lattice hid for her lover to kiss the iron and the wineshops half open at night and the castanets and the night we missed the boat at Algeciras the watchman going about serene with his lamp and O that awful deepdown torrent O and the sea the sea crimson sometimes like fire and the glorious sunsets and the figtrees in the Alameda gardens yes and all the queer little streets and pink and blue and yellow houses and

the rosegardens and the jessamine and geraniums and cactuses and Gibraltar as a girl where I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes. 28

Here and throughout the monologue one perceives dominating rhythms of alternation, accumulation, and pulsation. They are not expressive of progressive action and movement; they are rhythms which tend to retard, which cause the moment to appear "frozen," and which help to create the sense of verticality.

Verticality in narration, occurring when the time-sense simultaneity is in operation, contrasts sharply with linearity, or the development of a novel's action and movement along a line of progress from a starting point to an ending point. When an especially potent memory starts to vibrate within the context of a novel like Joyce's or Proust's, and the memory appears to merge and become simultaneous with the rememberer's present, there is a retardation, a "freezing," of the progressive linear movement. One is swept "upward" for a brief period, away from the normal linearity of the story-line, to participate in the vast expansion. Both in Joyce's Ulysses and in Proust's Du Côté de chez Swann there are these distinctive vertical expansions, resulting from the artistic and imaginative exploration of inner space in the minds of remembering characters.

V. The remembering character who creates the illusion of past-present simultaneity need not be integrated into the novel as a dominant or predominant force, nor need the character's act of search and association occur in the stillness of the night. In Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse, a less prominent character reaches into her memory on a quiet summer morning to illuminate the personality of the focal character of the novel.

Years have passed since the opening scenes of the book, in which Mrs. Ramsay was depicted at length, surrounded by her relationships. She has died, so have two of her children, and the house in the Hebrides where the family and their friends spent summers is all but dead. A reunion of sorts is in progress, involving a return to the place by Mr. Ramsay, two remaining children, and some old friends. One of these, Lily Briscoe, old maid and amateur artist, is quite agitated by the atmosphere surrounding this attempt by them all to pick up old threads of life. While Mr. Ramsay and the children sail that morning to the lighthouse to pick up their threads, Lily stands on a highland overlooking the sea, alone (except for the dozing old poet) and painting, trying desperately to make sense out of the chaos of this return and the odd feelings it has given birth to. During her remembering the material world intrudes now and then, but for the most part she is sunk deeply within, working on a disturbed inner state.

She somehow needs Mrs. Ramsay--the lady's memory will help her complete the painting she has begun to work on again after all these years, just as it will help her create something coherent from her awful confu-

sion. Lily begins to recall the past, shaping Mrs. Ramsay in stages. At first, the dead lady is only a dim figure, endowed nonetheless with an extraordinary power:

[Mrs. Ramsay] bringing them together; Mrs. Ramsay saying, "Life stand still here"; Mrs. Ramsay making of the moment something permanent (as in another sphere Lily herself tried to make of the moment something permanent)--this was of the nature of a revelation. In the midst of chaos there was shape; this eternal passing and flowing (she looked at the clouds going and the leaves shaking) was struck into stability. Life stand still here, Mrs. Ramsay said. "Mrs. Ramsay! Mrs. Ramsay!" she repeated. She owed it all to her. 29

As Lily falls deeper into herself and into the past, the details of the remembered figure become sharper. Mrs. Ramsay said something that day long ago, and as she spoke she made a slight movement:

"Is it a boat? Is it a cask?" Mrs. Ramsay said. And she began hunting around for her spectacles. And she sat, having found them, silent, looking out to sea. And Lily, painting steadily, felt as if a door had opened, and one went in and stood gazing silently about in a high cathedral-like place, very dark, very solemn. Shouts came from a world far away. Steamers vanished in stalks of smoke on the horizon. Charles threw stones and sent them skipping. 30

Now the details to complete the image flow in Lily's mind in profusion.

She recalls, for instance, Mrs. Ramsay's exceptional beauty:

The figure came readily enough. She was astonishingly beautiful, as William said. But beauty was not everything. Beauty had this penalty--it came too readily, came too completely. It stilled life--froze it. One forgot the little agitations; the flush, the pallor, some queer distortion, some light or shadow, which made the face unrecognisable for a moment and yet added a quality one saw for ever after. It was simpler to smooth that all out under the cover of beauty. But what was the look she had, Lily wondered, when she clapped her deer-stalker's hat on her head, or ran across the grass; or scolded Kennedy, the gardener? 31

The rapidly emerging figure seems next to grip Lily with a frightening realism:

Oh, Mrs. Ramsay! she called out silently, to that essence which sat by the boat, that abstract one made of her, that woman in grey, as if to abuse her for having gone, and then having gone, come back again. It had seemed so safe, thinking of her. Ghost, air, nothingness, a thing you could play with easily and safely at any time of day or night, she had been that, and then suddenly she put her hand out and wrung the heart thus. 32

And at the end of this scene, Lily, with tears running down her cheeks, actually calls out to the almost-corporeal figure: "'Mrs. Ramsay!' she said aloud, 'Mrs. Ramsay!'" 33

Lily's extreme agitation momentarily subsides. Returning to her canvas, she takes time out to analyze problems of distance and perspective confronting her while she paints. But Mrs. Ramsay will not go away, and Lily does not yet fully comprehend what the weird experience means. Emotionally drained, she attempts to free herself from the spirit haunting her by probing some negative feelings she still attaches to it. The probing, however, gradually leads to the recall of even more substantial details: for example, the deeply human relationships which obtained between Mrs. Ramsay and her husband, between her and her children, and between her and others. What is it Lily finally perceives? The powerful aura of love which surrounded the living Mrs. Ramsay, which touched all about her with its rich life-force, which continues to emanate from her even though she is gone? It is difficult to state precisely what; one can only speculate.

It is clear, however, that Lily at last succeeds in coming to terms with the figure from the past. With trepidation she brings it up one

more time, only to free herself from it by willing the manifestation into ordinariness:

"Mrs. Ramsay! Mrs. Ramsay!" she cried, feeling the old horror come back--to want and want and not to have. Could she inflict that still? And then, quietly, as if she refrained, that too became part of ordinary experience, was on a level with the chair, with the table. Mrs. Ramsay--it was part of her perfect goodness--sat there quite simply, in the chair, flicked her needles to and fro, knitted her reddish-brown stockings, cast her shadow on the step. There she sat. <sup>34</sup>

Having made peace with the memory of Mrs. Ramsay, Lily senses that her own past and present have achieved some sort of coherence. Her painting, too, is suddenly coherent--she puts the finishing touches on it and declares: "I have had my vision." <sup>35</sup> Throughout, Lily's vivid experience has been fascinating to observe, but it is the principal character Mrs. Ramsay--extraordinary woman, singular wife, mother, and friend, orderer of chaos, love-catalyst--who becomes greatly amplified by this act of intense remembering.

What makes Lily's act special among comparable acts by similar characters is her creation of the vision. As vital and intense as their memories are, neither Proust's Marcel nor Joyce's Molly Bloom calls up apparitions from the past into the present. Given the atmosphere hovering over the familiar setting, given Lily's peculiar frame of mind and severe state of excitement, one tends to believe her capable of producing such a vision. And one finds her moment in the novel static and "frozen" because patterns of Then and Now are skillfully interwoven in her consciousness to create alternating and retarding rhythms in the narration. The effect is that she seems to merge her past and present

into simultaneity with such force that she virtually brings to life, recreates in a strange new dimension, the fantastic figure of her old, loving friend.

VI. Another special act of remembering occurs in William Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury. Here, too, the character neither dominates the narrative nor recalls in a nighttime setting. Benjy, idiot Compson child and symbol of the family's decline, is different from the above rememberers in that his sense of time and place is terribly vague. As a result, getting one's bearings during Benjy's fractured mixing of Now and Then is a difficult task. A careful reading, however, reveals that there is some order in this pathetic character's ramblings.

Benjy's day begins in a Now. He remembers how he and Luster (a teenager who cares for the incompetent thirty-three year old) were watching the men on the golf course:

Through the fence, between the curling flower spaces, I could see them hitting. They were coming toward where the flag was and I went along the fence. Luster was hunting in the grass by the flower tree. They took the flag out, and they were hitting. Then they put the flag back and they went to the table, and he hit and the other hit. Then they went on, and I went along the fence. Luster came away from the flower tree and we went along the fence and they stopped and we stopped and I looked through the fence while Luster was hunting in the grass. 36

Until Benjy's day is over, the reappearance of Luster--walking with him, teasing him, amusing him, chiding him--signals a return to this Now.

At the end of the first scene Luster and Benjy crawl through a hole in the fence. The act triggers in Benjy's head a memory of crawling through the fence in some other time with his sister Caddy. The text

shifts abruptly from roman print to italic. The memory is over in an instant, and there is a shift back to roman. Each time such typographical shifting occurs, it signals a transition in the monologue to Now, or to one of the many Thens.

With the preceding patterns in mind one can begin to make sense from Benjy's hodge-podge of memories. On one level, he is capable of registering various tactile, olfactory, and visual sensations which strongly affect his simple being and which continually set him off into acts of association. A slipper, for instance, given to him by Luster to quiet him down at bedtime, sends him back to another bedtime when he and his sister and brothers were small.<sup>37</sup> A smell "like trees"--Caddy's smell--reminds him always of the beloved sister: he cannot quite remember how or when she went away, but he does know he "couldn't smell trees anymore" and that he then began to cry.<sup>38</sup>

The sight of fire never fails to stimulate his remembering. For example, at one point during this Now-day, his birthday, he and Luster are sitting in the kitchen with a cake in front of them:

"You cant blow out no candles," Luster said. "Watch me blow them out." He leaned down and puffed his face. The candles went away. I began to cry. "Hush." Luster said. "Here. Look at the fire while I cuts this cake." <sup>39</sup>

(Immediately, Benjy returns to a Then):

I could hear the clock, and I could hear Caddy standing behind me, and I could hear the roof. It's still raining, Caddy said. I hate rain. I hate everything. And then her head came into my lap and she was crying, holding me, and I began to cry. Then I looked at the fire again and the bright, smooth shapes went again. I could hear the clock and the roof and Caddy. <sup>40</sup>

(And just as abruptly he comes back to Now, and Luster, and the fire):

I ate some cake. Luster's hand came and took another piece. I could hear him eating. I looked at the fire. A long piece of wire came across my shoulder. It went to the door, and fire went away. I began to cry. . . . 41

One gradually realizes that flowers, cushions, slippers, the odors of trees, leaves, and rain, and mirrors and fires--all have special meanings for Benjy. One also gradually realizes that on a second level, he recalls the different Thens of his experience in relatively meaningful patterns. At first, most of his memories keep revolving around Caddy's warm, reassuring presence and the love that flowed from her to him. Later, he recalls with vague understanding key events that significantly touched his life, such as his grandmother's death (he could smell it) and Caddy's wedding (he was tipsy and kept falling down). Particularly vivid to him are moments when others were cruel: when Caddy's boyfriend, for instance, taunted him; <sup>42</sup> when the school girls screamed at him; <sup>43</sup> when his brother Jason cut up his paper playthings; <sup>44</sup> and when Versh scared him about his name-change. <sup>45</sup> But it was Caddy on whom his simple existence centered. And at the end of his day, he comes back, fittingly, to a final memory of her and of bed and of nighttime:

Father went to the door and looked at us again. Then the dark came back, and he stood black in the door, and then the door turned black again. Caddy held me and I could hear us all, and the darkness, and something I could smell. And then I could see the windows, where the trees were buzzing. Then the dark began to go in smooth, bright shapes, like it always does, even when Caddy says that I have been asleep. <sup>46</sup>

However little this rememberer resembles the others in mental competence, the results of his isolated activity are comparable to the re-

sults of theirs. Past and present seem, because they are juxtaposed in an alternating pattern, to flow and blend into a simultaneity, in which state the illusion persists that there is only one time sense in operation. And one feels upon experiencing the illusion that there is little or no progression in the narration; rather, one is suspended in the time of the novel while an extended expansion into verticality obtains.

VII. We have analyzed intense periods of remembering by four dissimilar characters. Proust's narrator Marcel is the gifted and sensitive memory artist: he carefully sifts through the mass of people, places, events, and feelings constituting his past, and then, through his talent for selecting, ordering, and representing their images, gives them a vivid and realistic "life" in his present. Molly Bloom is a freely-associating Everywoman: her archetypal feminine mind leaps unhindered from topic to topic, from feeling to feeling, in a colorful, lively medley of association, and as this rich flow gathers momentum, her past and her present appear to merge into one and the same time. Lily Briscoe is a neurotic rememberer: she fills a desperate need in her sad and unproductive life by willing into the present a weird image of the woman she loves, relying on the apparition, just as she relied on the living person, to help her through a rough emotional passage. And Benjy Compson is a mental incompetent: he has no control over his memories, which float continually into his present in the form of pure sensations; he is capable only of apprehending them, reacting to them, sensing their disappearance, and waiting helplessly for their return.

Although these characters are given vastly different personalities, and different positions and functions in their respective novels, their creators employ similar techniques to depict their moments of remembering. We have seen how Proust, Joyce, Woolf, and Faulkner place their rememberers in static situations. We have seen how they create a particular intensity in the moments of remembering by piling and massing details and comparisons one on the other in a realistic reflection of the human mind in a state of recollective flux. And we have seen how all four meld past and present in their characters' minds by juxtaposing Then with Now in rapid succession, thus creating strong alternating rhythms which retard the moment and give it its characteristic verticality. The effect of these rhythms is similar to that analyzed in the preceding chapter: there, the effect is a flickering between mind and matter in the character's consciousness; here, there is a parallel flickering between memory and immediacy. The realistic intensity and the rhythmic flickering effect are ultimately responsible both for the sense of "frozen" verticality surrounding the moment, and for the sense of simultaneity which informs it.

Vertical moments of past-present simultaneity are related to vertical moments of mind-matter simultaneity in another way. One is confronted in both cases with complex representations and explorations of interior landscapes. But one must reconstruct the images of these landscapes for oneself; the authors offer no assisting commentary, since to do so would shatter the illusion of a human mind engaged in an interior monologue. In the process of thus experiencing these landscapes,

one's sense of the characters is tremendously enlarged; new dimensions of personality, of private thoughts and feelings, are constantly being opened up to one as one becomes deeply immersed in piecing together the inner lives of these fictional beings.

NOTES: CHAPTER IV

<sup>1</sup> Marcel Proust, Du côté de chez Swann (1913; rpt. Paris: Gallimard, 1954), pp. 56-57.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 63-67.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 263-266.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 467-472.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 250-254.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 500-501.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 504.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 165-172.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 208-213.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 240-250; also, pp. 299-317.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 381-386.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 197.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 191.

- 19 Ibid., p. 196.
- 20 Joyce, Ulysses, p. 739.
- 21 Ibid., pp. 754-755.
- 22 Ibid., pp. 765-768.
- 23 Ibid., p. 767.
- 24 Ibid., p. 738.
- 25 Ibid., p. 761.
- 26 Ibid., pp. 733-734.
- 27 Ibid., p. 756.
- 28 Ibid., pp. 767-768.
- 29 Virginia Woolf, To the Lighthouse (1927; rpt. New York: Harvest--Harcourt, Brace & World, 1955), pp. 240-241.
- 30 Ibid., p. 255.
- 31 Ibid., p. 264.
- 32 Ibid., p. 266.
- 33 Ibid., p. 268.
- 34 Ibid., p. 300.
- 35 Ibid., p. 310.
- 36 Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 1.
- 37 Ibid., pp. 88-90.

- 38 Ibid., p. 48.
- 39 Ibid., p. 69.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Ibid., p. 70.
- 42 Ibid., pp. 56-58.
- 43 Ibid., pp. 62-64.
- 44 Ibid., pp. 79-80.
- 45 Ibid., pp. 84-85.
- 46 Ibid., p. 92.

CHAPTER V

INTEGRATED SIMULTANEITY, III:

Simultaneity of Place: The Metropolitan Scene

I. Thus far, in several modern novels unique moments of "frozen" time, retardation, and vertical expansion have been shown to be based on two types of integrated simultaneity, the one created by a rhythmic alternation between mind and matter, the other by an intense merging of past and present during an act of remembering. In both types the expansion involves a probing of interior spaces--the minds and feelings of characters. In a third type, expansion involves the exploration of exterior spaces--in particular, fictional metropolitan environments.

That the city has often been chosen as a setting by contemporary novelists is not surprising--it is, after all, the center of action in our times. Creating a coherent image of such a multiform and multifarious place, however, presents a special problem for the writer: how is it possible to capture the essence of so much movement going on at once within such a sprawling, soaring whole? Some novelists solve the problem by employing the time-sense simultaneity. They select for depiction representative city cross-sections, and through narrative techniques give their urban setting a strong sense both of interconnected space and of the concurrence of people and events.

II. Early in Mrs. Dalloway Virginia Woolf sketches a fragmented, simultaneous London street scene, a perfect setting for introducing the dis-

tracted, fragmented Clarissa. From the moment one encounters her stepping out the door on a lovely June day, one is subtly prepared for the simultaneity soon to be experienced in the City. Although haunted by the premonition that "something awful was about to happen,"<sup>1</sup> Clarissa begins by confronting the morning bravely, listening to the familiar sounds of Big Ben and feeling at one with the hustle and bustle of her surroundings: "In people's eyes, in the swing, tramp, and trudge; in the bellow and the uproar; the carriages, motor cars, omnibuses, vans, sandwich men shuffling and swinging; brass bands; barrel organs; in the triumph and the jingle and the strange high singing of some aeroplane overhead was what she loved; life; London; this moment of June."<sup>2</sup> Shortly thereafter, she feels an even more cosmic sense of her own simultaneity:

. . . but that somehow in the streets of London, on the ebb and flow of things, here, there, she being part, she was positive, of the trees at home; of the house there, ugly, rambling all to bits and pieces as it was; part of people she had never met; being laid out like a mist between the people she knew best, who lifted her on their branches as she had seen the trees lift the mist, but it spread ever so far, her life, herself.<sup>3</sup>

After walking on a bit, doing some window shopping, and conversing intently with herself, Clarissa next enters a shop to order flowers for the elegant party she will give that evening. It is here, when a motor car backfires, that the time-sense simultaneity begins to predominate in the narration.

The mysterious car, its unknown but prominent passenger hidden by a blind, winds its way past shops, pedestrians, parks, and streets. The vehicle becomes a narrative vehicle which serves to link places and peo-

ple in apparent temporal oneness during the first half of the scene. As it goes from point to point disparate characters, ignorant of each other but constituting parts of the total scene, are affected by it or react to it. Edgar J. Watkiss, workingman, has his little joke, defining it as "The proime Minister's kyar." <sup>4</sup> Septimus Warren Smith (war-torn, near-mad, imminent suicide, and a parallel character reflecting Clarissa's state this day) overhears him and becomes vaguely apprehensive. The attention of Clarissa and others is drawn to the thing: "Mrs. Dalloway, coming to the window with her arms full of sweet peas, looked out with her little pink face pursed in enquiry. Every one looked at the motor car. Septimus looked. Boys on bicycles sprang off. Traffic accumulated. And there the motor car stood, with drawn blinds. . . ." <sup>5</sup>

The car drives toward Piccadilly, but is halted in a jam. Clarissa leaves the shop and must also wait. Sir John Buckhurst, across the street from her, notes her appearance with approval. <sup>6</sup> The car starts on again toward Buckingham Palace and moves out of sight:

. . . but it had left a slight ripple which flowed through glove shops and hat shops and tailors' shops on both sides of Bond Street. For thirty seconds all heads were inclined the same way--to the window. Choosing a pair of gloves--should they be to the elbow or above it, lemon or pale grey?--ladies stopped; when the sentence was finished something had happened. Something so trifling in single instances that no mathematical instrument, though capable of transmitting shocks in China, could register the vibration; yet in its fulness rather formidable and in its common appeal emotional; for in all the hat shops and tailors' shops strangers looked at each other and thought of the dead; of the flag; of Empire. In a public house in a back street a Colonial insulted the House of Windsor which led to words, broken beer glasses, and a general shindy, which echoed strangely across the way in the ears of girls buying white underlinen threaded with pure white ribbon

for their weddings. For the surface agitation of the passing car as it sunk grazed something very profound. <sup>7</sup>

On the way to the Palace it passes the flower-woman Moll Pratt who, though Irish, has good wishes for the Prince of Wales. In front of the Palace as the car drives up are diverse others: Sarah Bletchley repeats a tidbit about the Prince; Emily Coates is awed by the mass of the building; and little Mr. Bowley suddenly spills over with patriotism. <sup>8</sup> As abruptly as it appeared in the narrative, the car is gone. It has left in its wake an assortment of city people frozen for an instant in near-simultaneity; their fleeting temporal connection is a result of their all having been touched, in one way or another, by some subtle and potent force emanating from the mysterious moving object.

Taking its place is a vehicle with a far wider range, the skywriting aeroplane, which carries the second half of the simultaneity scene. Everywhere heads pop up to see what the puffs of smoke will spell:

"Glaxo," said Mrs. Coates in a strained, awe-stricken voice, gazing straight up, and her baby, lying stiff and white in her arms, gazed straight up. "Kreemo," murmured Mrs. Bletchley, like a sleep-walker. With his hat held out perfectly still in his hand, Mr. Bowley gazed straight up. All down the Mall people were standing and looking up into the sky. As they looked the whole world became perfectly silent, and a flight of gulls crossed the sky, first one gull leading, then another, and in this extraordinary silence and peace, in this pallor, in this purity, bells struck eleven times, the sound fading up there among the gulls. <sup>9</sup>

As the plane swoops and spells, disappears and reappears, it, like the motor car, touches the lives of the disparate characters--some familiar, some new--somehow linking them all together in the same temporal moment. Septimus Warren Smith takes the letters as beautiful signals,

given only to him; his wife Rezia watches his eerie reactions and frets about his mental state and her own. <sup>10</sup> Miss Maisie Johnson, fresh from the provinces, passes this queer couple and their actions frighten her; Mrs. Dempster observes Maisie, notes her newness, reflects on her own fading life, and dreams of foreign travel as the plane passes overhead. <sup>11</sup>

It shoots away across the City, becoming a symbol of "man's soul" to Mr. Bentley tending his lawn in Greenwich; <sup>12</sup> and as a shabby, unnamed, truth-seeking character hesitates to enter and seek solace in St. Paul's, the plane flies out over Ludgate Circus. <sup>13</sup> At last, even Clarissa becomes indirectly aware of its presence: "It was strange; it was still. Not a sound was to be heard above the traffic. Unguided it seemed; sped of its own free will. And now, curving up and up, straight up, like something mounting in ecstasy, in pure delight, out from behind poured white smoke looping, writing a T, an O, and F. . . . 'What are they looking at?' said Clarissa Dalloway to the maid who opened her door." <sup>14</sup>

This simultaneous street scene, ending with Clarissa's stepping indoors, is structured like a montage. There is no continuous image of the environment, but a patchwork one: one catches here and there brief glimpses of the car starting and stopping in traffic, or of the plane diving, climbing, and circling, and one receives only scattered flashes illuminating the interiors of the observing characters. The fragmentation is achieved by the juxtaposing of machines with people, by the abrupt shifts from mechanical activity to human activity and back again

with little or no transition. The external visual elements of the scene (machines in motion) provide the glue holding the design together; the internal emotional elements (agitated feelings of the various observers) are at the heart of the design. They give the montage its aggregate unsettling effect.

On one level the author has used the car and the plane to create an audience as subject of the narration. The group seems a random one, but they are gathered together for a specific purpose: to demonstrate the contrast between the world of the supposedly sane and that of the supposedly insane.<sup>15</sup> It is also interesting to note how Woolf uses the setting as an echoing scene. The disquiet and disorder running thread-like through it reverberate through the novel. It is permeated with little nagging mysteries--who is in the car? what is the plane spelling? Elusive tremors, currents, and murmurs flow in and about the fictional place, causing vague anxieties to surface among the different characters. And the scene has an odd overall quality: with its enlarging and exploding spaces, it seems to achieve a disturbing life of its own, appears to grow beyond control. Clarissa Dalloway's day--what is it in sum if not a day "out of control," a day during which a series of events and perceptions increases her awareness of the disquiet and disorder of her life?

Lady Bruton's exclusive luncheon, Peter Walsh's surprise visit, Miss Kilman's continuing grip on her daughter, the pressures of preparing for the party--all in one way or another fracture her equilibrium. Throughout, she is nagged by a growing comprehension that she is still

ill, that she may soon die, that time is slipping away. And at the party that evening (in a setting more contained but echoing the street scene with its bustle and confusion) an ultimate sense of disquiet touches her when she learns of the suicide of the young stranger, Septimus Smith. At first she reacts with a mixture of terror, guilt, and indignation. But then, because she is the Clarissa Dalloway revealed to us through her own thoughts and those of others--a woman sometimes perceptive and sometimes blind, sometimes grand and sometimes fatuous, a woman who finds it difficult consistently to face harsh reality--she subdues her agitated thoughts about mortality and returns to her party: "She felt somehow very much like him--the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away. The clock was striking. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. He made her feel the beauty; made her feel the fun. But she must go back. She must assemble. She must find Sally and Peter. And she came in from the little room." 16

This is a final echo of the earlier setting. Just as she then withdrew from the chaotic streets and entered the quiet house, she now turns away from death to seek comfort and diversion in the surface flow of life.

III. In Ulysses James Joyce uses a simultaneous city scene to enlarge greatly the perspective of Dublin. It is mid-afternoon, June 16, 1904. Earlier in the novel, Stephen Dedalus has held forth eloquently on Hamlet in the library; a while later, Leopold Bloom will confront his

cuckoldry at the Ormond hotel. Now, however, it is 3:00 p.m., a time in the city when many a person in many a place goes about his business.

Father Conmee, S.J., opens the scene and becomes an integral link in sustaining the time-sense simultaneity through its first part. Joyce had his fun depicting this essential Irish priest, who relishes a Latin pun and who is quite aware of who really matters in his parish:

THE SUPERIOR, THE VERY REVEREND JOHN CONMEE S.J. RESET HIS smooth watch in his interior pocket as he came down the presbytery steps. Five to three. Just nice time to walk to Artane. What was that boy's name again? Dignam, yes. Vere dignum et justum est. Brother Swan was the person to see. Mr. Cunningham's letter. Yes. Oblige him, if possible. Good practical catholic: useful at mission time. 17

We take a detailed tour with the good father as he heads to the near suburbs to read his breviary: he passes through Mountjoy square, meets Mrs. Sheehy, patronizes some schoolboys, walks down great Charles street, heads along North Circular road, then North Strand road, and steps on a tram at Newcomen bridge; after examining his fellow passengers critically, after being waved to by a black man at Annesley bridge, he gets off at Howth road; he completes his trip by walking the Malahide road and arriving finally at Clongowes field.

Here Joyce drops him from the narrative temporarily, but cannot resist a parting shot at his proper priestliness:

He walked calmly and read mutely the nones, walking and reading till he came to Res in Beati immaculati: Principium verborum tuorum veritas: in eternum omnia iudicia iustitioe tuoe.

A flushed young man came from a gap of hedge and after him came a young woman with wild nodding daisies in her hand. The young man raised his cap abruptly: the young woman abruptly bent and with slow care detached from her light skirt a clinging twig.

Father Conmee blessed both gravely and turned a thin page of his breviary. Sin: Principes persecuti sunt me gratis: et a verbis tuis formadavit cor meum. 18

As if Joyce were presenting a flickering, colorful magic-lantern show of Dublin and its citizens, the next slide drops into place to reveal Corny Kelleher idling about the coffin shop:

Corny Kelleher closed his long daybook and glanced with his drooping eye at a pine coffinlid sentried in a corner. He pulled himself erect, went to it and, spinning it on its axle, viewed its shape and brass furnishings. Chewing his blade of hay he laid the coffinlid by and came to the doorway. There he tilted his hatbrim to give shade to his eyes and leaned against the doorcase, looking idly out.

Father John Conmee stepped into Dolymount tram on Newcomen bridge.

Corny Kelleher locked his largefooted boots and gazed, his hat downtilted, chewing his blade of hay.

Constable 57C, on his beat, stood to pass the time of day.

--That's a fine day, Mr. Kelleher.

--Ay, Corny Kelleher said.

--It's very close, the constable said.

Corny Kelleher sped a silent jet of hayjuice arching from his mouth while a generous white arm from a window in Eccles street flung forth a coin.

--What's the best news? he asked.

--I seen that particular party last evening, the constable said with bated breath. 19

This second scene in the slide-show, brief and undramatic as it is, demonstrates nevertheless the basic technique Joyce employs to create a sense of simultaneity within the spaces of the sprawling metropolis. Flashing across the screen while attention is focused on Kelleher's actions and conversation are two interrupting messages drawing us away for a split-second to actions occurring at virtually the same moment in diverse parts of the city. The effect of the first flash is to remind us of the priest's trek to Clongowes field, which is fresh in our con-

sciousness; the other prepares us for something about to happen--Molly Bloom's adulterous romp with Blazes Boylan--for we learn in the next and in later slides that it was her white arm at the window preparing to do something to insure that the Eccles street doorbell would not ring for a while. The pattern--introducing within a scene flashing images of simultaneous acts pointing sometimes backward and sometimes forward in the narrative--repeats throughout the segment.

Although Father Conmee is not a substantial character in either the novel or the segment, he is first on the scene and his slide establishes the rapid pace and often comic tone of the entire 3:00 p.m. episode. Flashes of his synchronous actions continue to appear, serving as support for a simultaneous time-sense through the first half of the show. While the fourth slide depicting the Dedalus children is in focus, for instance, Father Conmee is shown simultaneously walking across Clongowes field, his ankles tickled by the stubble.<sup>20</sup> Later, at the same time Ned Lambert, J.J. O'Molloy, and a visiting clergyman are poking around Lambert's historic warehouse, another reminder of the priest's movements flashes on the screen: the young woman about to be blessed by him carefully picks a twig from her skirt.<sup>21</sup> The priest last appears in a slide portraying Stephen Dedalus wandering the streets; at the very moment the young man stops to examine some books, "Father Conmee, having read his little hours, walked through the Hamlet of Donnycarney, murmuring vespers."<sup>22</sup>

There is much going on in Dublin at this hour. The slides keep clicking into place revealing, among other things: the one-legged

begging sailor (who earlier received only a blessing from Father Conmee) getting a coin from Molly Bloom; Blazes Boylan, dashing about, making for the rendezvous at Eccles street; Tom Rochford, bookie, demonstrating a new tote machine; Leopold Bloom purchasing a titillating bit of literature for his wife; Lenehan and M'Coy making jokes about him behind his back; Simon Dedalus withholding money from his poverty-stricken family; Cashel Boyle O'Connor Fitzmaurice Tisdall Farrell muttering to himself, Buck Mulligan and Haines having tea, Master Patrick Aloysius Dignam puzzling over the recent death of his father, and a cluster of important personages parading the city in carriages.

Father Conmee drops from sight in the middle of the segment; meanwhile, other agents take his place to sustain the simultaneity sense through the second part of the slide-show. All the time these things are happening, for example, a crumpled handbill announcing "the coming of Elijah" floats skiff-like along the river Liffey. It flashes into sight first while Katey and Boody Dedalus argue in the kitchen; <sup>23</sup> it reappears while Mr. Kernan preens himself in a shop window; <sup>24</sup> and while Mulligan and Haines discuss Stephen in the tea room, "Elijah, skiff, light crumpled throwaway, sailed eastward by flanks of ships and trawlers, amid an archipelago of corks, beyond new Wappings street past Benson's ferry, and by the threemasted schooner Rosevean from Bridge-water with bricks." <sup>25</sup> Then, flashing in and out of different slides are the sandwichmen, their signboard hats advertising Hely's establishment. They pass Blazes Boylan at Tangier lane; <sup>26</sup> while he is in an office flirting with the secretary they turn at the corner and march

back the way they came; <sup>27</sup> and at the end of the segment they appear once more as the parade of carriages goes by: "At Ponsonby's corner a jaded white flagon H. halted and four tall-hatted white flagons halted behind him, E. L. Y'. S., while outriders pranced past and carriages." <sup>28</sup>

Bringing the segment to a grand simultaneous conclusion is this parade of carriages, the viceregal cavalcade. It first appears on the screen, barely noticeable and pointing forward in the narrative, just when Dilly Dedalus is asking her father for another shilling; <sup>29</sup> Mr. Kernan is quoting poetry to himself when it passes Pembroke quay; <sup>30</sup> and John Wyse Nolan, chatting with Martin Cunningham, sees it go by Parliament street. <sup>31</sup> Gradually picking up momentum, it meanders through the city, until in the final slide it passes by a whole host of characters already seen going about their business at mid-afternoon:

The viceroy was most cordially greeted on his way through the metropolis. . . . On Ormond quay Mr Simon Dedalus, steering his way from the greenhouse for the subsheriff's office, stood still in midstreet and brought his hat low. His Excellency graciously returned Mr Dedalus' greeting. . . . On Grattan bridge Lenehan and M'Coy, taking leave of each other, watched the carriages go by. . . . Over against Dame gate Tom Rochford and Nosey Flynn watched the approach of the cavalcade. Tom Rochford, seeing the eyes of lady Dudley on him, took his thumbs quickly out of the pockets of his claret waistcoat and doffed his cap to her. . . . From the window of the D. B. C. Buck Mulligan gaily, and Haines gravely, gazed down on the viceregal equipage over the shoulders of eager guests, whose mass of forms darkened the chessboard whereon John Howard Parnell looked intently. In Fownes's street, Dilly Dedalus, straining her sight upward from Chardenal's first French primer, saw sunshades spanned and wheelspokes spinning in the glare. . . . Blazes Boylan presented to the leader's skyblue frontlets and high action a skyblue tie, a widebrimmed straw hat at a rakish angle and a suit of indigo serge. His hands in his jacket pockets forgot to salute but he offered to the

three ladies the bold admiration of his eyes and the red flower between his lips. 32

As these characters and many others pass thus in review, their lives in various ways touched by the procession on the move, we are reminded at the end of the magic-lantern show that they all have been fused together in time and space for a brief moment in the Dublin city scene.

Or, so it seems. For we have been treated to a skillfully structured illusion of simultaneity. The foundation of the illusion rests on the piling of scenes one on the other in rapid succession with no obvious transitions between them. There is such a mass of scenes, and they accumulate so quickly, that the entire episode seems to expand in a vertical dimension, and time in the novel appears to stand still for an hour or so. The framework of the illusion is created and maintained by the subtle and constant manipulation of our attention, memory, and anticipation. Because we are busy enough just keeping track of richly-detailed focal actions, and of concomitant interruptions which point to other things occurring while the scenes are unfolding, we tend not to notice the great leaps the author takes from one end of the city to another.

Joyce's simultaneous metropolitan scene is also a form of montage. Compared with Woolf's montage--a patchwork collection of suggestive visual and emotional fragments--Joyce's is a veritable olio of realism. It is quantitatively rich with descriptive minutae; flashes of sight, sound, and motion crowd every inch of the panoramic slide-show screen. The effect is additive; as the cluster of realistic details conglomerates during the scene's unfolding, the reader is virtually overwhelmed

with impressions of and information about the total setting.

By means of this montage-like segment of simultaneity, Joyce significantly enlarges the perspective of Dublin. Until now in the novel we have seen the city primarily through the eyes of Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom. Here, however, is a much broadened view: dancing before us is a large array of people, involved in a considerable assortment of everyday activities, existing in a great variety of environments. The result is a massive expansion of our sense of the place. The London scene in Mrs. Dalloway is less massive and less expansive. But just as that simultaneity scene seemed to assume a life of its own because space, place, and action were emphasized more than the development of individual characters, here, too, Dublin takes on a pulsating life of its own and appears to burst into being as another persona in the novel.

IV. In contrast with Virginia Woolf's brief, tense, and exploding simultaneity scene, and with James Joyce's swarming, colorful, and amplified one, are those created by Alfred Döblin to probe the environs of Berlin. In his Berlin Alexanderplatz he employs the time-sense simultaneity several times to provide a deepened sense of queer undercurrents of life flowing in the city.

Döblin's main approach to delineating the settings in which his simple street vendor, Franz Biberkopf, struggles to be respectable against the heavy odds of life, involves gathering various details from an environment and piecing them together in a montage. Compared with

Woolf's or Joyce's montages, Döblin's are more cinematic. The scenes of the first two are controlled by the view point of the narrator so that one "sees" their city streets from only one perspective; Döblin, on the other hand, attempts to illuminate his settings from several odd, discrete, but nonetheless related, angles. The second book of the novel, for instance, opens with a motley collection of visual and verbal snippets which are literally plumped down on the page without explanation or apparent connection.<sup>33</sup> First, there is a pictorial display of shields depicting business, cultural, and governmental activities that go on in the bustling metropolis. After this, one reads three disconnected newspaper announcements, one concerning site-plans open for public inspection, one concerning the hunting of wild dogs on park land, and one concerning the retirement of the master-furrier, Albert Pangel. Next, without elucidation, is a curious lead sentence--"Der Rosenthaler Platz unterhält sich"--which is followed by a weather report and a series of guide-book descriptions of streets and tram lines running to and from Rosenthaler Platz.

A closer examination of this latter half of the montage reveals that the "objective" guide-book descriptions are interlaced with not-so-objective details. In the middle of the presentation, for example, one is shown Franz Biberkopf--it is his ironic grand entrance to the city after leaving prison--stepping off Tram #41; blatant and manipulative advertisements are repeatedly aimed at one's senses; and yesterday, one is told, in a little hotel on a dark street off the Invalidenstrasse a couple shot each other. The montage concludes with a look at four per-

sons boarding Tram #4 at Lothringer Strasse; the future of one of them, a fourteen-year old named Max Rüst, is reported. It dawns on the reader that the Rosenthaler Platz is "conversing" and actually is supposed to be pointing out all these things!

This incongruous scene, with its miscellany of drawings, clippings, and an anthropomorphic city square which chats and gossips with the reader, is a strange and perplexing creation. Yet, even though one perceives it from diverse angles, one still gets certain dominant feelings about the place Franz has just returned to to start his life afresh. Like many city scenes, it is outwardly full of people, color, sound, and activity; underneath, however, it looms cold, heartless, and threatening, indifferent to the small ironies and tragedies acted out each day within its confines. Threads of these feelings run through all the settings in Berlin Alexanderplatz.

Before he picks up the main story, Döblin generally begins each new book of the novel with a sketch of the environment where Franz next will wrestle with his demons. The fourth book offers the first detailed view of the Alexanderplatz. A title announces "Eine Handvoll Menschen um den Alex"; another montage unfolds:

Am Alexanderplatz reissen sie den Damm auf für die Untergrundbahn. Man geht auf Brettern. Die Elektrischen fahren über den Platz die Alexanderstrasse herauf durch die Münzstrasse zum Rosenthaler Tor. Rechts und links sind Strassen. In den Strassen steht Haus bei Haus. Die sind vom Keller bis zum Boden mit Menschen voll. Unten sind die Läden. Destillen, Restaurationen, Obst- und Gemüsehandel, Kolonialwaren und Feinkost, Fuhrgeschäft, Dekorationsmalerei, Anfertigung von Damenkonfektion, Mehl und Mühlenfabrikate, Autogarage, Feuersozietät: Vorzug der Kleinmotorspritze ist einfache Konstruktion, leichte Bedienung, geringes Gewicht, geringer Umfang. -- Deutsche

Volksgenossen, nie ist ein Volk schmälicher getäuscht worden, nie wurde eine Nation schmälicher, ungerechter betrogen als das deutsche Volk. Wisst ihr noch, wie Scheidemann am 9. November 1918 von der Fensterbrüstung des Reichstags uns Frieden, Freiheit und Brot versprach? Und wie hat man das Versprechen gehalten! -- Kanalisationsartikel, Fensterreinigungsgesellschaft, Schlaf ist Medizin, Steiners Paradiesbett. . . . 34

It continues in this vein, pieced together from scraps of conversations and advertisements, interrupted by word-play and ironic commentary, until the focus fixes on the house where Franz lies in a drunken stupor. Here, complementing the montage, a simultaneity scene commences.

Basically Döblin's technique for creating the sense of simultaneity is simple: he moves rapidly up the floors of the building one by one and peers in at the characters housed there. At street level is a shoe shop; the first story contains the offices of a lawyer, the superintendent and his family live on the second, three working-class families live on the third, and two more such families are above them.

As Döblin pauses to look inside the apartments, one's sense of the turbulent streets recedes while a static, vertical moment takes over the narrative. During the moment the occupants assume dimension as Döblin reports on their very ordinary lives. He is a master sketcher; using quick, broad strokes he encompasses in a few lines their essential histories and their present states.

There is a story in the shoe shop, for instance:

Das schöne grosse Schuhgeschäft gehört einer alten Frau, die hat ihren Geschäftsführer geheiratet, und seitdem schläft sie hinten, und es geht ihr schlecht. Er ist ein fescher Mann, den Laden hat er hochgebracht, aber er ist noch nicht 40, und das ist das Unglück, und wenn er spät nach Hause kommt, dann liegt die alte Frau wach und kann vor Ärger nicht einschlafen. 35

A longer sketch depicts the lawyer, one flight up. One can practically smell the dusty, legalistic air of the offices in which Herr Rechtsanwalt Löwenhund--himself as dry and legalistic as his environment--sits this evening, poring over cases, writing letters, considering fine legal points, and phoning clients.

Up and up Döblin goes, presenting his city dwellers. On the third level there are three more mundane stories to tell: one about the widowed old man with a heart condition whose divorced daughter keeps house for him; one about the young lathe operator, also widowed, who has a touch of tuberculosis and a young child, and who tinkers with radio sets late into the night; and one about the waiter whose second wife is as unfaithful to him as he was to his first.

At the opening of this latter story, Döblin emphasizes the simultaneity of the occupants of the building:

Dann ein Kellner mit einer Frau, Stube und Küche, proper eingerichtet, Gaskrone mit Glasbehang. Der Kellner ist vormittags bis zwei zu Haus, so lange schläft er und spielt Zither, zur selben Zeit, wo der Rechtsanwalt Löwenhund auf Landgericht 1, 2, 3 mit schwarzem Talar herumrast über die Korridore, aus dem Anwaltszimmer, in das Anwaltszimmer, in den Gerichtssaal, aus dem Gerichtssaal, wir vertragen, ich beantrage gegen den Beklagten Versäumnisurteil. 36

And at the end, one views the couple in the present as their pathetic relationship is revealed: "Jetzt aber sitzt er auf seinem Sofa, hat ein nasses Kopftuch um, weint, und sie muss ihn bedienen. Er ist auf der Strasse lang ausgerutscht und liegeengeblieben. Sagt er. Dem Mann hat einer was gestossen. Sie geht nicht ins p.p. Geschäft. Ob er was gemerkt hat, wär schade, ist doch son lieber Dussel. Den werden wir schon

wieder einrenken." 37

Finally, Döblin introduces two families on the top level of the apartment house:

Ganz oben ein Darmhändler, was natürlich schlecht riecht und wo es viel Kindergeschrei und Alkohol gibt. Daneben zuletzt ein Bäcker Geselle mit seiner Frau, die Anlegerin ist in einer Druckerei und eine Eierstockentzündung hat. Was die beiden vom Leben haben? Na erstens einer den andern, dann letzten Sonntag Bühnenschau und Film, dann mal die und mal die Vereinssitzung und Besuch bei seinen Eltern. Weiter nichts? Na, treten Sie sich nicht auf'n Frack, Herr. Kommt noch hinzu schönes Wetter, schlechtes Wetter, Landpartie, am Ofen stehen, frühstücken und so weiter. Was haben Sie denn, Herr Hauptmann, Herr General, Herr Jockey? Machen Sie sich nichts vor. 38

The last lines demonstrate how Döblin differs significantly from Woolf and Joyce in his implementation of the simultaneity scene. Whereas they remain hidden behind their scenes and skillfully weave them into their narratives to make it seem as if their spaces have an independent "life," Döblin steps in deliberately to address an audience and thus in effect shatters his illusion of simultaneity.

The shattering is part of a noticeable pattern in the delineation of city settings in Berlin Alexanderplatz. The montages give one a panoramic but fragmented sense of Berlin streets; the focused illusions of simultaneity of place momentarily unify that sense; then, when Döblin enters to destroy the illusions the sense of the city fragments again. As a result, one's progress through these settings, much like one's progress through the entire novel, is jerky, fitful, and disordered.

The next complete simultaneity scene appears early in the seventh book. 39 Another Alexanderplatz montage--pieced together mainly from

gossipy current news stories--opens the setting. <sup>40</sup> This time the complementing simultaneous moment takes place in a building housing an Arbeitsgericht. Döblin presents more sketches of commonplace lives, wandering first into the cafeteria, then into several hearing rooms where court is in session, then outside onto the street, and finally into an apartment in the same building.

Once again the brief stories imply entire histories of habitude and desperation. The most moving concerns the girl alone in the apartment. She is twenty-six and out of work. Her mother is away shopping. She has no one to talk to, so she puts her secret thoughts and feelings on paper. She reveals that she: is constantly agitated and weak; finds it almost impossible to complete the smallest act; cries often; has been this way since twelve; tried suicide at twenty-four; and cannot now sustain sexual activity. This is her final entry:

14. August. Seit einer Woche geht es mir wieder sehr schlecht. Ich weiss nicht, was aus mir werden soll, wenn das so bleibt. Ich glaube, dass ich, wenn ich niemanden auf der Welt hätte, mir unbedenklich den Gasahn aufdrehen würde, aber so kann ich das meiner Mutter nicht antun. Aber ich wünsche mir wirklich sehr, dass ich eine schwere Krankheit bekommen möchte, an der ich dann sterben würde. Ich habe alles so niedergeschrieben, wie es wirklich in mir aussieht. <sup>41</sup>

Once again, in contrast with the more panoramic opening montage, the simultaneity moment is both vertical and static. The sense of oneness in time and place is heightened by a motif which helps link the diverse characters together. Each one must deal with some form of writing which relates portentously to his or her life: the corpulent cafeteria diner, having read the menu, has ordered it all in spite of his unhealthy

girth; defendants and complainants in the courtrooms give names and statements to the indifferent, officious recorders; the girl on the streets puts a righteous, affair-ending letter to her boyfriend into a mailbox; and the sick girl in the apartment pens her sad, hopeless words.

And, just as he interrupted the other simultaneity illusion in order to shatter it, Döblin tries to destroy this one, too. The difference here, however, is that he intrudes at the beginning of the section rather than at the end:

Da das Wetter so überaus schlecht ist, empfiehlt es sich, wir gehen lieber in ein Haus, die Zentralmarkthalle, aber da ist grosser Lärm, man wird von den Handwagen beinahe umgerissen und die Kerls rufen nicht mal. Da fahren wir lieber auf das Arbeitsgericht in der Zimmerstrasse und frühstücken da. Wer sich viel mit den kleinen Existenzen befasst hat -- und schliesslich ist ja auch Franz Biberkopf kein berühmter Mann --, fährt auch gern mal nach dem Westen und sieht, was es da gibt. 42

One knows from the start that one is going on another tour of a building with the author, and one anticipates the scaling of walls and the peering in at various lives.

Interestingly, in spite of Döblin's attempts to set up a certain type of time-sense illusion and at the same time to leave no illusions, his creations of a sense of simultaneity of place are effective. One tends to forget or ignore his presence while his little anecdotal pieces, skillfully told and revealing so much by means of so few essentials, are in focus. His racy, staccato style moves one along through the buildings and deep into the lives inside in rapid rhythms, so that one's attention becomes fixed--to the exclusion of Döblin's voice--on the play

of flickering life images. The simultaneous moments, like the montages they are part of, give off cumulative impressions. During the brief instants that the narrative "freezes" vertically, one becomes caught up in the strong feelings of impotence, vulnerability, and emptiness which pervade these pathetic "little existences."

In addition to forming an integral part of the montages, Döbblin's simultaneity scenes have other functions. For one thing, they keep pointing toward the focal character of the novel, for the implication is that the sad lives at their centers are simultaneous not only with each other but also with Franz Biberkopf. The existential problems of these city dwellers seem to mirror his--one realizes that there are multitudes like him, who live in the massive, impersonal city near the Alexanderplatz, who get beaten down repeatedly by the harsh environment, and who must learn to survive or be crushed.

More importantly, the scenes serve to enlarge one's sense of Berlin. They are less complex and less extensive than comparable scenes of Woolf and Joyce, but they, too, are informative probes into hidden spaces of the city. While the montages provide basically a sense of what goes on on the streets, or of what is in the Berlin air, the simultaneity scenes provide a view beyond the surface sights and movements of the streets, a special view which focuses on life behind the facades of the buildings. There, where all these odd undercurrents of life flow together in a simultaneous moment, one's sense of the city is suddenly deepened to include a fascinating cluster of minor existences which form a rarely perceived but vital part of the whole.

V. This third type of integrated simultaneity resembles the preceding two in several ways. Comparable narrative techniques (suppressed authorial voice, juxtapositioning to create alternating rhythms, and minimal use of transitions) are employed in rendering the "frozen" vertical moments which characterize all three types. In every case some participation is required of the reader, because his full comprehension of the simultaneous moments depends on his piecing together for himself images of either interior or exterior landscapes. And, just as one's knowledge of character is expanded significantly to new dimensions during moments of mind-matter and past-present simultaneity, so, too, one's knowledge of dense city spaces is enlarged substantially through the depiction of simultaneity of place.

As expansive as they are, these metropolitan scenes must be viewed as limited spatial cross-sections, in contrast with more massive spatial cross-sections which will be examined in succeeding sections. These circumscribed city settings are integrated into their respective works to serve very specific purposes: Woolf employs hers as a preparatory and echoing scene; Joyce uses his to present a minutely-detailed, yet broad and panoramic, view of Dublin; and Döblin uses his to penetrate behind walls, to reveal little private histories among the anonymous Berlin masses. While each scene is a vivid and dramatic representation of city life, none is so overwhelming or so extensive that it takes over to dominate the narration and to throw it out of joint. Even though one describes the scenes as pervaded by the time-sense simultaneity, it only seems that way, and it only seems that way for a brief period. They

are, like moments of mind-matter or past-present simultaneity, at heart sequential, although this characteristic has been well-disguised in the narration. And, because of their brevity and basic sequentiality, they only temporarily retard, and do not radically disrupt, the linear progression within a time-frame of their respective novels.

NOTES: CHAPTER V

<sup>1</sup> Virginia Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway (1925; rpt. New York: Harvest--  
Harcourt, Brace & World, 1953), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 25-26.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 29-30.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 31-37.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 37-40.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 41-42.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>15</sup> See Leonard Woolf, ed., A Writer's Diary (New York: Harcourt,  
Brace & Co., 1953), p. 50.

<sup>16</sup> Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway, pp. 283-284.

- 17 Joyce, Ulysses, p. 216.
- 18 Ibid., p. 221.
- 19 Ibid., pp. 221-222.
- 20 Ibid., p. 223.
- 21 Ibid., p. 228.
- 22 Ibid., p. 239.
- 23 Ibid., pp. 223-224.
- 24 Ibid., p. 236.
- 25 Ibid., p. 246.
- 26 Ibid., p. 224.
- 27 Ibid., p. 226.
- 28 Ibid., p. 250.
- 29 Ibid., p. 235.
- 30 Ibid., p. 237.
- 31 Ibid., p. 244.
- 32 Ibid., pp. 248-250.
- 33 Alfred Döblin, Berlin Alexanderplatz (1929; N. A. Olten: Sonderband--Walter-Verlag, 1967), pp. 45-50.
- 34 Ibid., p. 125.

35 Ibid., pp. 126-127.

36 Ibid., p. 129.

37 Ibid., pp. 129-130.

38 Ibid., p. 130.

39 Occasionally one finds a fleeting sense of simultaneity of place elsewhere in the novel. Completing the fifth book, for example (p. 224), is a flash revealing Raquil the celebrity stepping off a train in Berlin at the same time Franz is leaving Berlin in an ambulance--he has just been shoved from a speeding car by Reinhold. And the police round-up in the eighth book (pp. 432-435), just before Franz's capture, is another short simultaneity scene. But these are not part of dominant opening montages and are so brief that they are of limited interest.

40 Döblin, pp. 321-323.

41 Ibid., p. 327.

42 Ibid., p. 323.

CHAPTER VI

ORGANIZATIONAL SIMULTANEITY, I:

Manhattan Transfer by John Dos Passos

I. In France in the early years of this century a small circle of writers and painters, the Abbaye group, became disseminators of a particular vision of modern man in relation with the modern world. They deemed man's role as an independent individual relatively meaningless; his importance, they felt, derived essentially from his functioning in and relating to the various groups of his social environment; and ultimately, they conceived of him as forming part of a vast human collective with a peculiar life and soul of its own. Jules Romains, a young intellectual with attachments to the circle, had helped formulate the vision and had given it its name--Unanimisme--and in his early poetry and short fiction he had begun to explore the use of the spatial cross-section filled with simultaneous lives as a literary model for representing this vision of man. It was not until the 1930's, however, that he tried--in his gigantic roman-fleuve, Les Hommes de bonne volonté (1932-1947)--consistently to structure long works of fiction around the cross-section model.

Several years before these novels by Romains started to appear, the American novelist John Dos Passos had already experimented with massive spatial cross-sections in a full-length work. In Manhattan Transfer, published in 1925, he used them as the building blocks of his story, and through various techniques attempted to infuse them with the

time-sense simultaneity. The connection between Dos Passos and Romaine and the Unanimists is tenuous; one can only point to the fact that the concept of man as member, his existence inherently linked to groups composed of related and simultaneous lives, was intellectually and artistically "in the air" during the first several decades of the century. What concerns us here is the question of whether a novel organized entirely around the simultaneous cross-section can accommodate such unusual structuring.

II. Manhattan Transfer is about a cluster of city-dwelling Americans whose life histories--from the turn of the century through the mid-1920's--are revealed in fragmentary fashion. The work is divided into three broad sections: in the first, themes of arriving in and confronting the city are explored; the second section focuses thematically on the pursuit of careers and the establishment of long-term relationships; and in the third, disillusion and departure are the dominant themes. Each section is divided into five to eight large spatial cross-sections, each of which constitutes a phase in the development of the story. Since all are made basically the same way, an examination of the first two phases should demonstrate how Dos Passos shaped his novel of simultaneity.

Phase one of the first section, "Ferry Slip," opens with a typical mood- and scene-setting impressionistic sketch which, indented and italicized, contrasts visually with the succeeding text. Its tense is present, contributing to the sense that all that follows is happening at approximately the same moment the ferry is docking:

Three gulls wheel above the broken boxes, orangerinds, spoiled cabbage heads that heave between the splintered plank walls, the green waves spume under the round bow as the ferry, skidding on the tide, crashes, gulps the broken water, slides, settles slowly into the slip. Handwinches whirl with jingle of chains. Gates fold upwards, feet step out across the crack, men and women press through the manuresmelling wooden tunnel of the ferryhouse, crushed and jostling like apples fed down a chute into a press. 1

Then the narration of other arrivals in the cross-section begins. Ellen Thatcher, we learn, has just been born; Bud Korpenning, who sits watching the docking, has just come to the city from upstate to hide out after killing his step-father; Ed Thatcher, the proud father, enters the hospital; and an unnamed lower east-sider arrives home to surprise and shock his family--he has just Americanized himself by shaving off his beard.

There is no ostensible authorial voice to guide the reader through the cross-section. The various arrivals are depicted in quick succession without transitions from one scene to the next, and the only signals one has that shifts are occurring are the five-line typographic spaces between each segment of the phase. These narrative patterns recur consistently throughout the novel.

"Metropolis," the second phase, is a much fuller cross-section. Opening with the characteristic impressionistic sketch, it soon begins to swarm with many more fragmentary and simultaneous life-threads. Some of these are familiar threads: the Thatcher family reappears in four different scenes, and Bud Korpenning wanders in and out of the narrative in several places. Other threads--those of Congo and Emile, and of Gus McNiel--are introduced and will be dropped and picked up at various times

in the story. Still others appear only in this phase and serve to round out the cross-section, to give it variety and fullness.

Themes from "Ferryslip" are played again. There are, for instance, more arrivals: the French sailors Congo and Emile jump ship to make their fortune in America,<sup>2</sup> and the milkman Gus McNiel appears on the scene, driving his wagon and daydreaming his way into an accident on the train tracks.<sup>3</sup> And there is another scene of a family in conflict between old ways and new: an Americanized Jewish girl who has just left her husband has a bitter fight about it with her immigrant mother.<sup>4</sup>

A major new theme also comes into play here. Many of the characters are forced to confront directly the brutal harshness of life in the vast city: Ed Thatcher, for example, witnesses a tragic tenement fire on his block and has a frightening brush with the mad arsonist who caused it;<sup>5</sup> Bud Korpenning, unskilled and without references, learns that urban menial labor is as grubby and dehumanizing as the rural tedium he has run away from;<sup>6</sup> and Congo and Emile find out that the immigrant is not exactly welcome to the metropolitan labor force.<sup>7</sup>

In the various filler scenes, where characters appear for the first and last time in the novel, a money-motif seems to dominate. In two such scenes, slick real-estate operators are shown aggressively selling land and space to naive and nervous prospects.<sup>8</sup> In another, some street toughs are shooting craps when the imminent appearance of a rival gang causes the game to break up; one of the boys lingers long enough to scoop up the money and decides to tell his comrades later that the others stole the loot.<sup>9</sup> And in a rather long segment some newly-rich pluto-

crats hold a gross, expensive party for the latest theatrical sensation in a fancy restaurant; the drunken talk among the celebrants turns again and again to making and spending the almighty dollar. <sup>10</sup>

Dos Passos attempts to create and sustain a sense of simultaneity in "Metropolis" with the same techniques employed in "Ferryslip." Unifying the cross-section and uniting its characters in time and place as a vaguely related group is the interplay of themes and motifs. The illusion that while this is going on with one person, this also is going on with the others, derives from the transitionless juxtaposing of one capsule scene next to the other in rapid succession. And to sustain the time-sense throughout the long cross-section, he introduces here and there shifts in tense from narrative past to present.

There are three such shifts in "Metropolis." Two occur when the thread of Bud Korpenning is picked up momentarily, <sup>11</sup> and they serve to remind us that this minor character who drifts on the edges of the city and who is just passing through on his way to oblivion, is still around while the others are busily pursuing solid goals. The third shift, which introduces Gus McNeil's thread, comes at the very end of the cross-section, a point where the reader begins to lose the sense of simultaneity because so many different threads have already been woven in.

In the scene immediately preceding, narrated in the past, Ellie Thatcher has confronted a child's fears of loneliness and darkness: "Make daddy come home. The roaring shadows staggered and danced, the shadows lurched round and round. Then she was crying, her eyes were full of safe warm tears, they were running over her cheeks and into her

ears. She turned over and lay crying with her face in the pillow." 12

Then there is the five-line space, followed by this introduction of Gus:

The gaslamps tremble a while down the purplecold streets and then go out under the lurid dawn. Gus McNiel, the sleep still gumming his eyes, walks beside his wagon swinging a wire basket of milkbottles, stopping at doors, collecting the empties, climbing chilly stairs, remembering grades A and B and pints of cream and buttermilk, while the sky behind cornices, tanks, roofpeaks, chimneys becomes rosy and yellow. Hoarfrost glistens on doorsteps and curbs. The horse with dangling head lurches jerkily from door to door. There begin to be dark footprints on the frosty pavement. A heavy brewers' dray rumbles down the street. "Howdy Moike, a little chilled are ye?" shouts Gus McNiel at a cop threshing his arms on the corner of Eighth Avenue. 13

The scene continues in the present for several pages until the cross-section closes when a backing train strikes down Gus and his wagon. It is the noticeable jump from one tense to the other which signals the reader back to attentiveness. The person of Gus and his actions assume a sudden presentness, a nowness, and the effect is that one is reminded once more of simultaneity: not only is Gus making his rounds while little Ellie sleeps, but also he appears to coexist in the city dawn with all the others encountered in the long and massive cross-section. 14

Other time-senses play in counterpoint to the simultaneity permeating the cross-sections. There is, for example, an underlying sense of progressing time, an element which makes each cross-section a distinct phase in the work. Progression is generally indicated in the phases by showing the characters who appear more than once as slightly aged and changed in succeeding scenes. Ellen Thatcher, for example, is older each time her thread is picked up, and so in "Metropolis" one becomes aware of the passing of years. At the beginning of the cross-section,

Ed Thatcher is at home while baby Ellen and her mother are still at the hospital; <sup>15</sup> a few scenes later, she is walking, talking, and dancing before her proud parents; <sup>16</sup> next, her father has just taken her to see Maude Adams on stage; <sup>17</sup> and last, she is old enough to be left by herself in the evening, but not mature enough not to be scared of the dark. <sup>18</sup>

A sense "of the times" also runs through the cross-sections. Frequently Dos Passos inserts into the narrative newspaper headlines in bold print, italicized verses of popular songs, and detailed descriptions of advertising signboards. These visual devices often help fix the date of a particular scene. When "Metropolis" opens, for example, Ed Thatcher's eyes fall on a headline from the Journal: MORTON SIGNS THE GREATER NEW YORK BILL/Completes the Act Making New York World's Second Metropolis--this makes the first year of "Metropolis," the year of Ellen's birth, 1898. Not only do the devices add touches of realism to the story, they also provide it with touches of atmosphere and irony. In a barbershop, Bud Korpenning's eyes fall on this headline--RELIEVE PORT ARTHUR IN FACE OF ENEMY--and he goes on to read the sensational confession of a fourteen-year old who pushed his old crippled mother down the stairs to her death. <sup>19</sup> The news informs us first that it is now 1904, and then it gives us a feeling of the brutality and amorality of the times. At the restaurant where the crude rich are having their party, snatches of songs fill the air. One drunken celebrant begins to stagger and sing "The Animals' Fair," a current hit which comments obviously and ironically on the behavior of the gathered guests. <sup>20</sup>

The cross-sections "Ferryslip" and "Metropolis" are constructed by means of certain narrative patterns, techniques, and devices which one finds employed throughout Manhattan Transfer. We shall examine next what happens to the work as succeeding simultaneous cross-sections unfold and accumulate.

III. One of the problems with the first section of the book is that it does not focus on any especially interesting person. Rather, the emphasis is on laying out many simultaneous threads: a whole row of people spills out onto the pages, with each character representing a different class or type living within the city. Thus, young and old, bum and plutocrat, greenhorn and native, professional and worker, all have their places side by side in a sweeping depiction of New York's hurly-burly life.

This is very fascinating and colorful, but the swarming mass of people causes another problem to surface in the first section. Although their lives appear simultaneous, and although they are vaguely related in time and place, the characters still seem to lead very disparate, discrete existences, totally unaware of one another's presence. One wonders at first what the novel is about; the characters are interesting enough, but there is little that substantially links them together as "real" people.

In the second section, however, Dos Passos begins to focus on central characters. It becomes evident that one's eye should be kept on Ellen Thatcher and her circle of friends and acquaintances, and on Jimmy

Herf (who has arrived from France in phase three of the first section, "Dollars") and his. While minor threads keep entering and leaving the cross-sections to sustain the sense of diverse simultaneous lives, more and more space and attention are given to the major threads of Ellen and Jimmy. One learns that over the years Ellen has lost her mother, had some success with a stage career, married an aging homosexual actor, and begun a variety of affairs. One learns from picking up Jimmy's thread that he has also lost his mother, finished college, taken a cub reporter's job, started to date Ellen's roommate Ruth, and encountered Ellen several times briefly. One suspects that their life-threads sooner or later are bound to connect seriously, and of course they do (in the latter phases of the second section).

To solve the second problem, that of giving the disparate characters some link as human beings, in addition to their temporal and thematic connections, Dos Passos brings them together in a series of "accidental" meetings. That Ellen and Jimmy meet and merge their destinies does not strike one as having unusual import--such a conjunction obviously had to occur. But when their threads (and those of other characters) cross with diverse others, one perceives from the patterns that Dos Passos is trying to provide the narrative with some direction and form beyond the mere massing of a cluster of cross-sections. At the same time the technique allows him to carry a sense of simultaneity, over and above that created in each individual cross-section, from one phase to the next and through the whole book.

There are moments of thread-crossing in filler scenes, where a

character who appears but once touches for an instant the lives of more important characters, as for example early in the second section with the sudden appearance of Nicky Schatz, Western Union messenger boy. He is a distinct type--a petty hoodlum, street-wise but not too bright, who speaks the lingo of a New York tough: "Jeze dey'll tink it funny to see a messengerboy up here in dis suit. I better get de hell outa here. I'll go deliver my telegrams." <sup>21</sup> Living by his wits and instincts, he uses his uniform to gain entry to apartment buildings, where he rifles empty flats. In her shabby uptown room, Ellen Thatcher is entertaining the rich young playboy, Stan Emery. Nicky enters their love-nest, thinking it unoccupied. Stan and Ellen surprise him going through their things, he gives them a hasty sob-story, and they let him go without calling the police. He leaves their lives and the story as abruptly as he entered. <sup>22</sup> Not only does this "accidental" meeting remind one in another way of the temporal coexistence of lives within the context of the novel, but it gives brief, dramatic emphasis to their sometimes physical interconnections.

Similar effects are achieved when Dos Passos depicts encounters between characters who have more focus in the book. We first make contact with the threads of Congo and Emile, for instance, when they jump ship in "Metropolis." As the cross-sections accumulate we catch occasional glimpses of one or the other--they are easy to recognize because their accented English is sprinkled with French expressions--pursuing the American dream of wealth and power. Emile courts Madame Rigaud in order to marry into her thriving delicatessen business (pp. 57-60, 89-90,

and 114-115), and then his thread disappears in the first section. Congo, initially less successful than his friend, ships out again several times (pp. 107-108, 114-115) and does not reappear until the end of the second section. There, in a secluded Brooklyn night spot, he is reintroduced as a bartender and a friend of Jimmy's (pp. 223-228). How they came to know one another is never explained, but from this point on Congo's thread keeps crossing Jimmy's at odd places and times: one night, Jimmy and Ellen run across him in his very successful speakeasy (pp. 298-302); when Jimmy is doing an article on prohibition he arranges to join Congo, now the biggest bootlegger in New York, at a smugglers' rendezvous for a first-hand look at the operation (pp. 317-322); and they meet for the last time when Jimmy, depressed and aimlessly wandering the streets, looks up to find himself being offered a lift by Congo (now known as "Armand Duval" of Park Avenue) who happens to be passing by in his Rolls-Royce (pp. 382-385). <sup>23</sup>

Besides serving formally as constant reminders of simultaneity, these "accidental" crossings of Jimmy's and Congo's threads help indicate the direction of the novel in the second half. Each time they come together, Jimmy--idealistic, principled, and rather a dreamer--is shown in the process of sliding toward a crash, while the opportunistic, not-so-scrupulous, and realistic Congo has been climbing steadily and rapidly to the top. In a final conversation with Congo, Jimmy emphasizes their contrasting movements and positions:

"The difference between you and me is that you're going up in the social scale, Armand, and I'm going down. . . . When you were a messboy on a steamboat I was a horrid little chalkyfaced kid living at the Ritz. My mother and father

did all this Vermont marble blackwalnut grand Babylonian stuff. . . there's nothing more for me to do about it. . . . If I thought it'd be any good to me I swear I've got the energy to sit up and make a million dollars. But I get no organic sensation out of that stuff any more. I've got to have something new, different. . . . But here I am by Jesus Christ almost thirty years old and very anxious to live. . . . If I were sufficiently romantic I suppose I'd have killed myself long ago just to make people talk about me. I haven't even got the conviction to make a successful drunkard." 24

In fact, in the second half of the book the accumulating simultaneous cross-sections become mainly vehicles for showing Jimmy Herf's continually increasing disillusion with life in New York City. All around him, depicted in scene after scene, there are vice, immorality, corruption, and generally diminished values. Some of this he discovers directly because he is an investigative reporter; the rest is just there, in the very air of the times, affecting him and the others of this "pee-wee generation" 25 who coexist in the novel.

At the opening of the third section, we learn that he and Ellen Thatcher have married in France during the War, and that they have returned to New York with their infant son after the Armistice. Succeeding glimpses of Jimmy show his marriage falling apart, his work unsatisfying, and his friends empty and foolish. The juxtaposed simultaneous scenes continue to depict hard times, petty and grand criminality, suffering, sickness, and death. Finally, soon after the conversation with Congo, a defeated Jimmy Herf departs the City. We last see him as he takes the Manhattan ferry to New Jersey and proceeds to hitch a ride to anywhere:

At a cross-road where the warning light still winks and winks, is a gasoline station, opposite it the Lightning

Bug lunchwagon. Carefully he spends his last quarter on breakfast. That leaves him three cents for good luck, or bad for that matter. A huge furniture truck, shiny and yellow, has drawn up outside.

"Say will you give me a lift?" he asks the redhaired man at the wheel.

"How fur ye goin?"

"I dunno. . . . Pretty far." 26

IV. Manhattan Transfer remains a work of interest because of its experimental structure. A unique simultaneity sense, built into each spatial cross-section through a particular form of narration, and carried from phase to phase through a series of narrative reminders, pervades the novel. One completes the reading with a feeling of having confronted slice after slice of vertical, "frozen" time, and with a feeling of having observed the characters much as one might observe particles suspended in solution, floating up and down, touching here and there, yet really going nowhere.

Unfortunately for the experiment, the bones of the book are laid bare too often. One becomes increasingly aware of, and annoyed by, some of Dos Passos' awkward story-telling manipulations. The many meetings, for instance, appear less and less "accidental" as they continue to occur. The first several crossings of threads in the case of Jimmy and Congo are relatively believable even if one does not know how or where the two first met, but the last one, where Congo just happens to be cruising past Jimmy in a Rolls-Royce, is poorly motivated and its probability is difficult to accept as natural. The same is true for numerous scenes involving the frequent reappearance of such characters as Gus McNiel, George Baldwin, Stan Emery, Joe O'Keefe, and Joe Harland.

Visual devices like the italicized phase-opening impressionistic sketches eventually become distracting. Connections between them and their following cross-sections are often obscure, and one pauses repeatedly to wonder what purpose they really serve. Other visual devices--the headlines, songs, and advertisements--at first add important touches of realism and atmosphere to the story. Gradually, however, they too grow distracting: they can be a visual annoyance because they intrude so boldly and separately on the page, and, as they appear with increasing frequency, they give the impression of having been selected for the sake of blatant effect and of being employed rather mechanically.

Also annoying and distracting is the drone of Dos Passos' censoring voice. He constantly drives home his strong disapproval of the era, the city, and the people in the titles of phases, in the phase-opening sketches, in the repeating themes and motifs, in the drab scenes, and in the depiction of a collection of pathetic, superficial, driven, and trapped characters who parade across the pages. There is no ostensible authorial voice guiding one from scene to scene through the narrative, but one is aware nevertheless of much heavy-handed moral commentary.

In some instances Dos Passos has characters step forward for a moment to speak as his obvious surrogates. One of these, a nameless old hobo, delivers this lecture to two scruffy, unheeding kids playing "Indian" around a campfire on the Palisades:

Look at the old bitch if you'll pardon the expression.  
Earthquake insurance, gosh they need it don't they? Do  
you know how long God took to destroy the tower of Babel,  
folks? Seven minutes. Do you know how long the Lord

God took to destroy Babylon and Nineveh? Seven minutes. There's more wickedness in one block in New York City than there was in a square mile in Nineveh, and how long do you think the Lord God of Sabboath will take to destroy New York City an Brooklyn an the Bronx? Seven seconds. . . . 27

The ragged prophet's rantings epitomize a dominant burden of the book: the modern city is no fit place for human habitation; it deserves to be destroyed because all who enter and stay there, the good and the bad, are stripped of their humanity by the indifferent rending jaws of the great, evil metropolis-creature. Clearly, the City is the villain of the piece. From another perspective, Manhattan Transfer is Zola's Naturalisme updated and given a fresh look by means of a new and different form of narration.

But the book suffers from more serious flaws than its obviousness. First of all, its story-line is all but obscured by the simultaneous time-sense dominating the cross-sections. One can trace some progression in phases as focal characters age and change as a result of passing time and their experiences. Clouding one's sense of their progress, however, is the great clutter of other life-threads surrounding them simultaneously. It is difficult to keep track of what has happened or of what is happening to Jimmy and Ellen because their threads are always being dropped in the middle of actions and then picked up again after several distracting simultaneous threads have been juxtaposed with theirs.

Similarly, the development of characters is obscured by too much simultaneity. Because the narration forces one to keep jumping from thread to thread, one never really gets a full sense of why the people

of the novel are the way they are or why they act the way they do. Dos Passos does attempt sometimes to give focal characters more dimension by digging into their interiors. In this scene, for example, he tries to deepen our understanding of Ellen Thatcher, the spoiled, selfish, and detached representative of her age who cannot sustain relationships with any of the men in her life:

Ellen sits in a gown of nilegreen silk in a springy arm-chair at the end of a long room jingling with talk and twinkle of chandeliers and jewelry, dotted with the bright moving black of evening clothes and silveredged colors of women's dresses. . . . Ellen sits in the arm-chair drowsily listening, coolness of powder on her face and arms, fatness of rouge on her lips, her body just bathed fresh as a violet under the silk dress, under the silk underclothes; she sits dreamily, drowsily listening. A sudden twinge of men's voices knotting about her. She sits up cold white out of reach like a lighthouse. Men's looks blunder and flutter against it helpless as moths. But in deep pitblackness inside something clangs like a fire engine. <sup>28</sup>

Such analytical passages, however, are few, <sup>29</sup> and cannot compensate for the overall lack of substance one feels while trying to understand, empathize, or sympathize with, the people in the book.

Simultaneity takes over Manhattan Transfer and subverts its other vital novelistic elements. The result is a peculiar form of vertical and static, rather than linear and progressive, narration. It is a case of a work being unbalanced by, rather than framed by, its prevailing time-sense. Because of this, and because of Dos Passos' often clumsy technical treatment of the story, the novel is a highly unsatisfying reading experience and must be judged a failure as an experiment with narrative time.

NOTES: CHAPTER VI

- 1 John Dos Passos, Manhattan Transfer (1925; rpt. Boston: Sentry--Houghton Mifflin, 1953), p. 3.
- 2 Ibid., pp. 20-21.
- 3 Ibid., pp. 45-48.
- 4 Ibid., p. 22.
- 5 Ibid., pp. 13-15.
- 6 Ibid., pp. 42-43.
- 7 Ibid., pp. 35-40.
- 8 Ibid., p. 15, pp. 40-42.
- 9 Ibid., pp. 25-26.
- 10 Ibid., pp. 26-35.
- 11 Ibid., p.17, p. 42.
- 12 Ibid., pp. 44-45.
- 13 Ibid., p. 45.
- 14 Similar tense shifts used to create a like effect are found throughout the novel. See, for instance: pp. 83-84, 182, 202-204, 326-328, 365-366, and 402-404.
- 15 Dos Passos, pp. 12-13.

16 Ibid., pp. 17-18.

17 Ibid., pp. 22-23.

18 Ibid., pp. 43-45.

19 Ibid., p. 17.

20 Ibid., p. 33. Such insertions are found everywhere in the book. There are, for instance, more songs on: pp. 60, 113, 115-118, 236, 250-252, 271, 275, 302-304, and 385-386; more news on: pp. 50, 92, 144-145, 183, 197, 317, and 369; and advertisements on: pp. 113, 136, 293-294, and 351-352.

21 Dos Passos, p. 148.

22 Ibid., pp. 148-151.

23 In the same manner, one could trace thread-crossing patterns for these more focal characters: Gus McNiel, who on his way to power as a political boss, interconnects at different points with George Baldwin, Joe O'Keefe, Joe Harland, Jimmy, Ellen, and Stan Emery; George Baldwin, who, having made his reputation by handling Gus's case against the railroad, keeps intersecting Gus's circle and also Ellen's and Jimmy's; and Stan Emery, the scapegrace playboy, who continually wanders in and out of Jimmy's and Ellen's lives. There are many other similar patterns, but they involve minor characters who only here and there "accidentally" touch the lives of others in the story.

24 Dos Passos, pp. 383-384.

25 Ibid., p. 360.

26 Ibid., p. 404.

27 Ibid., pp. 380-381.

28 Ibid., p. 182.

29

Comparable probes of Ellen's interior are found on: pp. 54-55, 136-138, 164-168, 240-241, 259-263, 372-373, and 399-400. Scattered probes of Jimmy Herf's interior are found on: pp. 83-89, 112-113, 235-236, 330, and 351-354.

CHAPTER VII

ORGANIZATIONAL SIMULTANEITY, II:

Le Sursis by Jean-Paul Sartre

- I. And as for me, it was after reading a book by Dos Passos that I thought for the first time of weaving a novel out of various, simultaneous lives, with characters who pass each other by without ever knowing one another and who all contribute to the atmosphere of a moment or of a historical period. <sup>1</sup>

Although Jean-Paul Sartre acknowledges a certain debt to John Dos Passos, and, one assumes, to Manhattan Transfer, there is no question here of subjecting Le Sursis to an influence study. The relationship between the earlier novel and the later is basically one of refinement, not influence. As Sartre put it generally and somewhat naively, concluding his article on American writers and what they meant to a generation of French novelists:

We were weighted down, without being aware of it, by our traditions and our culture. These American novelists, without such traditions, without help, have forged, with barbaric brutality, tools of inestimable value. We collected these tools but we lack the naïveté of their creators. We thought about them, we took them apart and put them together again, we theorized about them, and we attempted to absorb them into our great traditions of the novel. We have treated consciously and intellectually what was the fruit of a talented and unconscious spontaneity. <sup>2</sup>

Le Sursis, the second work in Sartre's trilogy Les Chemins de la Liberté, not only contains refinements of some structures and techniques employed by Dos Passos in Manhattan Transfer, but also exists in its own right as a novel experiment with simultaneity.

II. There is a neat simplicity to the linear and chronological structure of Le Sursis.<sup>3</sup> It opens on "Vendredi 23 Septembre. . . . Seize heures trente à Berlin, quinze heures trente à Londres," when the Munich Agreement was beginning to be arranged; it closes during the afternoon of "Vendredi 30 Septembre," the documents of appeasement having been signed early that morning. Each day of this extraordinary week in 1938 is detailed separately, thus dividing the novel into eight time segments which serve both as simultaneous cross-sections and as phases. Within the span, Sartre depicts an agglomeration of characters moving through their daily routines while the threat of war hangs over their existences.

A non-linear structuring of time in the work derives from Sartre's use of narrative techniques which contribute to the peculiar sense of verticality in Le Sursis. What they have in common is their tendency to create the illusion that, although the characters of the novel are generally spatially separated during the week of great crisis, their beings are nevertheless intimately linked in and by time.

A minor but effective technique for creating the illusion is an abrupt shifting in narrative tense from the imparfait and passé simple to the présent.<sup>4</sup> On a few occasions, various characters illuminate the intensity of a brief moment in the narrative by suddenly starting to talk in the present from within themselves. In the first cross-section scenes showing the collapse of Czechoslovakia are juxtaposed in sharp contrast with scenes showing the rest of Europe sublimely ignorant of the implications of the event. To dramatize the fall of the

infant democracy, Sartre focuses on the Czech patriot Milan Hlinka and his family as they struggle for survival among a group of hostile and vengeful Sudeten Germans. One of these scenes is presented entirely through a present monologue in the voice of the wife, Anna, who anxiously watches Milan scan the streets and who has visions of a frightening future:

Je ne veux pas regarder dans la rue. Milan s'est mis à la fenêtre, il regarde; il est sombre. Ils ne sont pas encore là, mais ils traînent les pieds tout autour du pâté de maisons. Je les entends. Je me penche sur Marikka, je lui dis:

--Mets-toi là, . . .

Milan est à la fenêtre, il se mord les ongles d'un air vide. Je lui dis:

--Milan! viens près de nous; ne reste pas à la fenêtre.

Il grogne, il se penche par-dessus la barre d'appui, il fait exprès de se pencher. Les pieds qui traînent. Dans cinq minutes ils seront là. . . . Moi je sais que ce sont des pieds qui traînent. C'est mou, ils viendront mollement et ils le battront jusqu'à ce qu'il soit tout mou au bout de leurs bras. Il est là, costaud et dur, il regarde par la fenêtre: ils le tiendront à bout de bras, il sera flasque avec un air bête sur sa face écrasée; ils le battront, ils le jetteront par terre et demain il aura honte devant moi.

. . . 5

The drama of the scene is heightened by the sudden move into the character's being, and by the different perspective on the moment which this gives us. The monologue has an air of immediacy about it which contrasts markedly with the pastness of the preceding and succeeding scenes; structurally, this reminds us that, at the very same moment other Europeans are going about their business, these Czechs are caught emotionally and physically in the middle of life-threatening actions. <sup>6</sup>

Another technique employed in Le Sursis is the manipulation of

characters into situations where, seemingly by accident, they cross each other's paths. <sup>7</sup> The chance encounter, such as the one between Gros-Louis and Sarah and her son in Marseille, <sup>8</sup> creates a brief vertical and static moment in the narration. While the moment expands and progression slows, one's attention focuses on the implications of such meetings: first, the crossing of paths is lifelike because one knows from experience that such things do happen now and then; second, unlike life, here one is in the unique position of "knowing" both parties, while they are ignorant of each other; and last, because of the preceding, one is reminded in another fashion that, no matter how disparate lives may seem in this fiction, they are all nonetheless simultaneous existences.

A deeper realization of the simultaneity of Sartre's fictional people, however, is conveyed by the cumulative effect of a third narrative technique. It involves story-telling which leaps suddenly and without warning into other consciousnesses, other actions. <sup>9</sup>

Sartre wastes no time in establishing this pattern for the novel. The opening lines create an impression of Chamberlain's state just before negotiations, but interspersed with the focus on him are glimpses into different consciousnesses, indicating what others are experiencing at precisely the same time that the cool and detached British diplomat confronts the most critical situation of his career:

Seize heures trente à Berlin, quinze heures trente à Londres. L'Hôtel s'ennuyait sur sa colline, désert et solennel, avec un vieillard dedans. A Angoulême, à Marseille, à Gand, à Douvres, ils pensaient: "Que fait-il? Il est plus de trois heures, pourquoi ne descend-il

pas?" Il était assis dans le salon aux persiennes demicloses, les yeux fixes sous ses épais sourcils, la bouche légèrement ouverte, comme s'il rappelait un souvenir très ancien. Il ne lisait plus, sa vieille main tavelée, qui tenait encore les feuillets, pendait le long de ses genoux. Il se tourna vers Horace Wilson et demanda: "Quelle heure est-il?" et Horace Wilson dit: "Quatre heures et demi, à peu près." Le vieillard leva ses gros yeux, eut un petit rire aimable et dit: "Il fait chaud." . . . A quinze heures trente, Mathieu attendait encore, au bord d'un horrible avenir; au même instant, à seize heures trente, Milan n'avait plus d'avenir. Le vieillard se leva, il traversa la pièce, les genoux raides, d'un pas noble et sautillant. Il dit: "Messieurs!" et il sourit affablement. . . . 10

An extensive cataloging of similar sudden leaps and shifts throughout the narrative would be exhausting. One can, however, point to two distinct variations on the technique. One of these is the rapid piling of consciousnesses one on the other to open or close a cross-section. In each of these cases, Sartre attempts to depict the simultaneity of the human routines--sleeping, dreaming, waking, eating, relaxing, and loving--engaged in by his motley group. Toward the end of "Samedi 24 Septembre," for instance, one is treated to this torrent of images during the dreaming states of several major characters:

Charles était tout nu, les jambes en l'air, devant six infirmières-majors, la plus verte battit des ailes et remua les mandibules, ça voulait dire: "Bon pour le service"; Mathieu rapétissa et s'arrondit, Marcelle l'attendait, jambes écartées, Marcelle était un passe-boules, quant Mathieu fut tout rond, Jacques le lança, il tomba dans le trou noir labouré de fusées, il tomba dans la guerre; la guerre faisait rage, une bombe brisa les carreaux et roula au pied du lit, Ivich se redressa, la bombe s'épanouit, c'était un bouquet de roses, Offenbach en sortit: "Ne partez pas, dit Ivich, n'allez pas à la guerre, sinon qu'est-ce que je vais deviner?" Victoire, Philippe chargeait baïonnette au canon, il criait: "Victoire, victoire, à la victoire", les douze tsars déguerpirent, la tsarine était délivrée,

il défit ses liens, elle était nue, petite et grasse, elle louchait; les shrapnells et les grenades couraient sur le commandant de toute la vitesse de leurs pattes, Pierre les attrapait par le dos et les mettait dans son paquetage, c'était la consigne, mais la quatrième voulut s'envoler, il la saisit par les élytres, toute bruissante et gigotante, il éclata de rire et se mit à la plumer . . . Pierre s'enfuit à toutes jambes, il désertait, il désertait, il courait dans le désert. . . . 11

And it goes on, spreading at an accelerated pace over the page, as do similar mass renderings of simultaneity. Charles is in a tuberculosis hospital at Berck, Mathieu is on vacation at Juan-les-Pins, Philippe is hiding out in Paris, and Pierre is touring Morocco; the leaps cross vast geographical spaces, but one apprehends the different dreams and dreamers in a time-suspension where they all occur seemingly at once.

In the above variation, the technique of shifting quickly from one character to another creates a rushing narrative flow. In its other, more usual form it serves basically to disrupt narrative flow, thus generally retarding linear progression, establishing alternating rhythms, and creating verticality in the narration. Sometimes Sartre uses the technique as a split-second transitional device which stops one action and initiates the next. In this typical example Mathieu has been musing on the beach and is about to return home when, without a moment's notice, one leaves him in the middle of an action and is whisked to Morocco to catch Pierre in the middle of his: "A présent la mer. 'Comme les rats quittent le bateau qui va sombrer.' Quand viendrait le jour du départ il serait tout sec, il ne lui resterait plus rien à regretter. Il revint à pas lents vers la villa, et Pierre sauta hors du fiacre: --Viens, dit-il, tu auras ta paire de babouches." 12

At other times, Sartre will catch a character in mid-thought, only to pick up a related thought in another character's mind. In the following segment, Charles and Odette--totally unrelated and worlds apart--are both experiencing simultaneously their own forms of loneliness:

Charles ne répondit pas. Il vit deux des hommes se courber sur un malade et son coeur se serra. Jacques dormait, son nez chantait; elle ne pouvait pas dormir; tant qu'il ne serait pas rentré, elle ne s'endormirait pas. Juste devant ses pieds Charles vit une ombre énorme qui se pliait en deux, ils emmènent le copain de devant, après c'est mon tour, la nuit, les fumées, le froid, le tangage, les quais déserts, il avait peur. Il y avait un rais de lumière sous la porte, elle entendit du bruit au rez-de-chaussée, le voilà. Elle reconnut son pas dans l'escalier et la paix descendit en elle: "Il est là, sous notre toit, je l'ai." Encore une nuit. La dernière. Mathieu ouvrit la porte, il la referma, il ouvrit la fenêtre et ferma les volets, elle entendit l'eau qui coulait. Il va dormir. De l'autre côté de ce mur, sous notre toit. 13

Also, one finds both short and extended conversations interrupted by parallel conversations that are taking place somewhere else. A good example of this occurs on the "Nuit du 29 au 30 Septembre": while Masaryk, Chamberlain, Daladier, and others at Munich discuss the violation of Czechoslovakia, Ivich, at the very instant undergoing her own violation in a Paris room, mutters dark thoughts to herself and to her clumsy lover. 14 As in many comparable scenes in the novel, here the one conversation serves as an ironic counterpoint to the other.

These narrative techniques--particularly the last--dominate the unfolding of Le Sursis and give it its special time-sense. One leaves the novel without the usual feeling of having progressed from here (a beginning time) to there (an ending time) with the people in the book. Such a feeling has receded far into the background. Rather, one finish-

es the reading with a sense of having been suspended with the characters vertically and simultaneously in space and time.

III. An overall comparison with Manhattan Transfer shows Sartre's experiment with simultaneity in the novel to be a far better organized work. The spatial cross-sections in Le Sursis, because they center around the routines and experiences of a single day rather than around generalized themes and motifs developed in the course of unspecified periods of time, seem much more compact and natural. The characters, rather than seeming vaguely and mechanically connected in time through a tiresome series of "accidental" meetings, appear more intimately linked with one another through Sartre's skillful use of juxtapositioning which minimizes time-lags between scenes and life-threads.

And this novel contains less visual and aural clutter. There are no distracting introductory sketches to the phases, and there are only a few, skillfully integrated signs "of the times" running through the text to add atmosphere and realism to the story.<sup>15</sup> Most noticeable of all is the diminished authorial voice. One is aware that Sartre is narrating, but he does not, like Dos Passos, nag the reader with superfluous and obvious moral commentary.<sup>16</sup>

Another comparison with Manhattan Transfer shows Le Sursis to have an important novelistic element which the earlier book lacks: a focal character who develops into a fictional being with substantial dimensions. Mathieu, although his scenes do not take up more space in the early cross-sections than those of any other character, soon begins to

emerge as a central figure. Perhaps one pays more attention to him than to the rest because, although he is no activist, at least he confronts the prospect of war relatively directly. Almost everyone else in the novel seems stymied by the approaching and inevitable cataclysm; they go on living from day to day, but they are passive and controlled by the monstrous future looming over their existences. Mathieu, on the other hand, appears to break free from the control, appears to work his way through the situation by exercising at least his mind. And it is through perceiving his mind at work that one gets deeper into his character than into any other.

Mathieu is, indeed, a man of the mind. His friend Daniel describes him thus: "[Tu] es: un rationaliste un peu court, très assuré en apparence, au fond bien incertain, plein de bonne volonté pour tout ce qui est naturellement du ressort de ta raison, aveugle et menteur pour tout le reste; raisonneur par prudence, sentimental par goût, fort peu sensuel; bref un intellectuel mesuré, modéré, fruit délicieux de nos classes moyennes." <sup>17</sup> Constantly musing to himself, this middle-class intellectual makes his way in stages to a point where he discovers a precious possession, his freedom, which discovery provides him with power to cope with a world suddenly turned upside-down.

The first stage occurs during "Samedi 24 Septembre," while he is vacationing at the shore with Jacques and Odette. Staring out at the sea, he begins to understand that because of the impending holocaust, his past is dead and his future has been re-created for him: "Tout ce qu'un a vécu depuis vingt ans, on l'a vécu à faux. Nous étions appli-

qués et sérieux, nous essayions de comprendre et voilà: ces belles journées avaient un avenir secret et noir, elles nous trompaient, la guerre d'aujourd'hui, la nouvelle Grande Guerre nous les volait par-dessus. Nous étions cocus sans le savoir. A présent la guerre est là, ma vie est morte; c'était ça, ma vie: il fait tout reprendre du début." <sup>18</sup> Such understandings eventually lead to his perception that life in its present state is futile, <sup>19</sup> and that war, too, is futile and absurd. <sup>20</sup>

Upon being mobilized, Mathieu leaves Juan-les-Pins for Paris to settle his affairs. On the train that night of "Lundi 26 Septembre," as Hitler's speech permeates the atmosphere, Mathieu tries desperately to comprehend war and his relationship to it: "[Il] voulait s'appliquer et comprendre. Jamais rien ne lui était arrivé qu'il n'eût compris; c'était sa seule force, son unique défense, sa dernière fierté. Il regardait la mer et il pensait: 'Je ne comprends pas. . . . il m'arrive que je pars pour la guerre.'" <sup>21</sup> As the train rattles on, little lights gradually go on in his brain. To understand war, he concludes, one would have to see it; to see it, "il faudrait être partout à la fois."<sup>22</sup> Impossible! And yet--in the process of perceiving his own simultaneity, Mathieu finally catches sight of War:

Un corps énorme, une planète, dans un espace à cent millions de dimensions; les êtres à trois dimensions ne pouvaient même pas l'imaginer. Et pourtant chaque dimension était une conscience autonome. Si on essayait de regarder la planète en face, elle s'effondrait en miettes, il ne restait plus que des consciences. Cent millions de consciences libres dont chacune voyait des murs, un bout de cigare rougeoyant, des visages familiers, et construisait sa destinée sous sa propre re-

sponsabilité. Et pourtant, si l'on était une de ces consciences on s'apercevait à d'imperceptibles effleurements, à d'insensibles changements, qu'on était solidaire d'un gigantesque et invisible polypier. La guerre: chacun est libre et pourtant les jeux sont faits. Elle est là, elle est partout, c'est la totalité de toutes mes pensées, de toutes les paroles d'Hitler, de tous les actes de Gomez: mais personne n'est là pour faire le total. Elle n'existe que pour Dieu. Mais Dieu n'existe pas. Et pourtant la guerre existe. 23

Later that night, the second stage ends as Mathieu decides how he will now treat this strange entity which he has just begun to understand:

"C'est une maladie, tout juste une maladie; elle est tombée sur moi par hasard, elle ne me concerne pas, il faut la traiter par le stoïcisme comme la goutte ou les maux de dents." 24

Stage three in his progress toward freedom takes place in Paris on "Mardi 27 Septembre." After bidding farewell without regret to material objects of his dead past, Mathieu goes walking through the beautiful city. The buildings impress him with their timelessness, and he starts to perceive his own eternity. Somewhere deep inside him, a completely new way of seeing himself and the world is born: "Il ouvrit les mains et lâcha prise; cela se passait très loin au fond du lui, dans une région où les mots n'ont plus de sens. Il lâcha prise, il ne resta plus qu'un regard. Un regard tout neuf, sans passion, une simple transparence. 'J'ai perdu mon âme', pensa-t-il avec joie." 25 Then--out of the same inmost recesses of his being, a realization of freedom:

A présent c'est mon regard seul qui s'attend dans l'avenir, à perte de vue, comme ces pierres s'attendent, s'attendent pierres, demain, après-demain, toujours. Un regard et une joie énorme comme la mer; c'était une fête. Il posa ses mains sur ses genoux, il voulait être calme: qui me prouve que je ne redeviendrai pas demain ce que j'étais

hier? Mais il n'avait pas peur. L'église peut crouler, je peux choir dans un trou d'obus, retomber dans ma vie: rien ne peut m'ôter ce moment éternel. Rien: il y aurait eu, pour toujours, cet éclair sec enflammant des pierres sous le ciel noir; l'absolu, pour toujours; l'absolu, sans cause, sans raison, sans but, sans autre passé, sans autre avenir que la permanence, gratuit, fortuit, magnifique. "Je suis libre", se dit-il soudain. Et sa joie se mua sur-le-champ en une écrasante angoisse. 26

Accompanying anguish drives him to test the exhilarating discovery; walking on, he at last reaches the Pont-Neuf. Will he, newly-free, hurl himself off or not?--"Tout à coup, il décida de ne pas le faire. Il décida: 'Ce ne sera qu'une épreuve.' Il se retrouva debout, en marche, glissant sur la croûte d'un astre mort. Ce sera pour la prochaine fois." 27

Having chosen to continue life, Mathieu spends the night with Irène and the next day leaves to report for active duty. The novel ends shortly after when all the built-up tensions of the week crash down in limp anti-climax as the news of the Munich Agreement reaches everyone. Mathieu, however, is not misled. He knows there will be a war, and, strengthened by his profound sense of liberation, he will deal with it as it comes:

"Je ne veux pas, pensa-t-il en serrant les barreaux de toutes ses forces. Je ne veux pas! Cela ne sera pas!" Il se tourna brusquement, il regarda en souriant les fenêtres étincelantes de soleil. Il se sentait fort; il y avait au fond de lui une petite angoisse qu'il commençait à connaître, une petite angoisse qui lui donnait confiance. N'importe qui; n'importe où. Il ne possédait plus rien, il n'était plus rien. La nuit sombre de l'avant-veille ne serait pas perdue; cet énorme remue-ménage ne serait pas tout à fait inutile. "Qu'ils rengainent leur sabre, s'ils veulent; qu'ils fassent leur guerre, qu'ils ne la fassent pas, je me'en moque; je ne suis pas dupe." L'accordéon s'était tu. Mathieu reprit sa marche autour de la cour.

"Je resterai libre", pensa-t-il. 28

IV. Even though the book has a more substantial and interesting central figure, and in spite of the fact that it is a more technically refined and better designed experiment with novel simultaneity than its predecessor, Le Sursis is still in several ways a disappointing work.

Such a detailed and revealing character study as the preceding could not be attempted for the focal figures in Manhattan Transfer. Yet even Mathieu is not complete. He is complex, his mental processes are fascinating to observe, and his presence is central to the novel, but one feels that there are secret corners of his being left unrevealed. He is only two-dimensional: one observes him thinking and acting, and little more. It becomes increasingly apparent that one is not going to discover in Le Sursis how Mathieu really feels about things. In his case, as with the others in the book, few emotional depths are probed or revealed.

As we have seen in the case of Manhattan Transfer, the cross-section structure demands an immense cast for its simultaneous effect. In Le Sursis, as the numerous secondary characters keep flitting in and out of the narrative, their very mass tends to confuse one's reading, and their multiple presences tend to blur the focus on Mathieu. Also, the story-line of the novel is a thin one because it depends so heavily on only two basic threads: Mathieu's explicitly developed, but mainly cerebral, progression toward freedom, and the implicit progression of Europe toward war. Other threads of the story-line, such as Pierre's

wrestling with his cowardice, or Philippe's adolescent rebellion, or the odyssey of Gros-Louis, are unconvincing because incomplete. A narrative which is constructed in vertical segments does not allow for more than minimal significant development and change in the course of its unfolding.

One might overlook these flaws which seem unavoidable in the novel of simultaneity if one did not eventually become so aware of being manipulated by Sartre. For a time, the illusion of simultaneity works: the constant shifting from one action to the next and back again goes relatively unnoticed because of the irony and drama contained in many scenes, and because the evolving picture of the Europeans and French standing unprepared and impotent in the face of Hitler's ominous aggressions has a gripping realism. Before long, however, one tires of being snatched from the midst of something interesting in one place and being carried off to view something else occurring at the moment in Morocco, or Spain, or Munich, or Biarritz, or Paris, or Marseille, or Juan-les-Pins, or Berck, or Crévilley, or a number of other widely-dispersed settings. For all his skill at disguising his voice and appearing to be a detached observer who merely presents the story, Sartre cannot keep in disguise his hands at the controls as he arbitrarily leaps here and there in space to create the illusion that time has stopped and that things are all happening at once.

Finally, because of this continual manipulation, the rhythms of the novel never have a chance to fall into a cohesive pattern. Each cross-section begins and ends with a natural rhythmic flow of mass si-

multaneous activity, but whenever the individual characters come more into focus and a more unconcealed leaping and shifting becomes apparent, the rhythms of the work shatter into fragments and the reading process suffers serious distortion. With its burden of characters, its weak story-line, its too obvious and repetitive manipulations, and its broken rhythms, Le Sursis is another case of a novel being weakened by an overriding time-sense which works to throw its other important elements out of joint and thus lessen their effectiveness.

NOTES: CHAPTER VII

<sup>1</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, "American Novelists in French Eyes," Atlantic Monthly, 178, No. 2 (1946), 115.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>3</sup> In contrast, Manhattan Transfer wanders, often tortuously, through a structural complex of several decades.

<sup>4</sup> We have seen how Dos Passos uses tense-shifting to remind us of simultaneity (pp. 117-118, above) and, sometimes, to give a heightened feeling of presentness while he examines the inner life of a character (p. 127, above). Sartre, too, employs it for these purposes; the difference is that, while Dos Passos always approaches the character from without, Sartre reproduces the inner voice of the character and therefore creates both a more natural interior reflection and a more dramatic effect.

<sup>5</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, Le Sursis (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), pp. 33-34.

<sup>6</sup> Monologues dramatically and structurally comparable are found on: pp. 101-103 and 116-118 (Georges is mobilized); pp. 241-242 (an unnamed reporter attends Daladier's return); pp. 263-267 (Mathieu realizes his simultaneity); and pp. 295-297 (Mathieu realizes his freedom).

<sup>7</sup> Such situations are also evident in Manhattan Transfer where they are employed too often and rather clumsily. Sartre's approach is refined to the extent that he uses the "accidental" meeting sparingly and that he motivates it far more naturally.

<sup>8</sup> Sartre, pp. 190-192. Other chance crossings occur on: p. 20 (Brunet and Mercier); pp. 152-160 (Philippe and Maurice/Zezette); and pp. 299-300 (Mathieu and Philippe/Irene).

<sup>9</sup> This is one of Sartre's most striking technical refinements. In Manhattan Transfer one always knows, because of the five-line

spaces, that Dos Passos is shifting to another life-thread. In Le Sursis, only paragraph indentations and punctuation marks separate one thread from the next, and often threads are run together in the same sentence with only a comma between them. The result is a tighter, more compressed sense of the interconnectedness of the characters within various scenes and cross-sections.

10 Sartre, pp. 7-8.

11 Ibid., p. 154.

12 Ibid., p. 50. (My emphasis.)

13 Ibid., p. 235.

14 Ibid., pp. 349-355.

15 See, for example, how artfully Sartre weaves fragments of an actual radio speech by Hitler into the cross-section "Lundi 26 Septembre" (especially pp. 257-267).

16 The story is told in a very detached, reportorial style. Almost any descriptive passage at random will reveal Sartre transmitting information like a skilled newscaster, giving only the necessary details of a scene; almost any dramatic passage at random will reveal him letting events and people speak for themselves.

17 Sartre, p. 330.

18 Ibid., p. 74.

19 Ibid., p. 173.

20 Ibid., pp. 212-213.

21 Ibid., pp. 263-264.

22 Ibid., p. 264.

23 Ibid., pp. 266-267.

24 Ibid., p. 275.

25 Ibid., p. 286.

26 Ibid., p. 287.

27 Ibid., p. 297.

28 Ibid., pp. 361-362.

CHAPTER VIII

ORGANIZATIONAL SIMULTANEITY, III:

Tauben im Gras by Wolfgang Koeppen

I. In Manhattan Transfer John Dos Passos tries to capture the atmosphere of an American city during the first few decades of the 20th century. In Le Sursis Jean-Paul Sartre concerns himself with the mood in France during a week on the eve of World War II. In Tauben im Gras Wolfgang Koeppen creates an atmospheric novel depicting one day in a German city recovering from the effects of that war.

These works also can be grouped together as experiments with simultaneity, for they depend on that particular time-sense for much of their effect. Sartre admits to having been inspired by Dos Passos' concept of weaving together threads of simultaneous lives. There is no evidence concerning Koeppen's inspiration, but a comparison of his book with the other two shows it to be in a direct line with them.

In overall design, the three works represent attempts to "freeze" an historical moment for intense inspection. To heighten this sense of stopped time, the writers rely heavily on the illusion of simultaneity-- that is, they present a cluster of representative character types in vertical order whose lives appear coexistent. Through the illusion, one is meant to experience a wide range of thoughts, feelings, and actions which variously define and reflect the prevailing atmosphere of the "frozen" moment.

II. More specifically, Koeppen, like Dos Passos and Sartre, creates his vertical array by means of juxtaposition. Many short, often fragmentary and inconclusive scenes are set side by side to reveal different characters in different stages of action. In the first twenty pages of the novel, for instance, no fewer than fifteen disparate lives are juxtaposed in separate scenes. The pattern is repeated throughout the book, with emphasized characters continually popping in and out of view.

Early in the novel Koeppen makes abrupt leaps in space from one scene to the next without transitions. When he brings a character momentarily back into focus, he often helps the reader keep track of things by providing a linking motif--for example, Odysseus Cotton, a black American in the occupation forces, has with him constantly a radio which plays pop music of the day. Later in the novel, after his characters have been established, Koeppen often uses word links between juxtaposed scenes to diminish the abruptness of the spatial leaps and to create a sense of continuity between scenes.<sup>1</sup> Variations of all the above narrative patterns, techniques, and devices can also be found in Manhattan Transfer and Le Sursis.

He uses another already-noted technique to create and sustain an illusion of the simultaneity of the many lives. Clustered together for a brief time in a relatively limited place, the characters keep crossing each other's paths as they go about the day's activities in the city. Some of the meetings occur because the people share familial or social ties. It seems natural that Carla, for instance--pregnant with the unwanted child of her black consort--might seek out her mother to dis-

cuss the problem,<sup>2</sup> or might in the company of her lover run across her musician father playing jazz in a black soldiers' nightclub.<sup>3</sup> It also seems natural for both Philipp and Emilia to encounter Messalina at different times during the day.<sup>4</sup> The impotent writer, his neglected wife, and the climbing, manipulative spouse of the famous movie star all move vaguely in the same circles and frequent the same places.

Other crossings of paths appear accidental, and thus heighten the sense of simultaneity. Some occur without consequence, the people moving on unaware that for an instant they have been contiguous. At one point, all this occurs at a busy intersection: the car chauffeuring Mr. Edwin to his hotel almost hits Dr. Behude on his bicycle; he sees his patient, Emilia, across the way but cannot signal her; and when the light changes, Washington Price, sunk deep in thought, drives on toward home.<sup>5</sup> Only the reader knows that the four of them were there together for a moment.

In contrast, certain "accidental" meetings lead to the development of significant temporary relationships. Josef the porter, attracted by the black soldier's radio, joins the wandering Odysseus, and the conjunction eventually costs the loyal bearer his life. Heinz and Ezra, two youngsters from radically different worlds, meet by chance, meet again to test each other, and end up sharing adventure and danger. Philipp, struck by Kay's green eyes, and Kay, struck by the romantic notion of meeting a "real" German writer, have a short, sterile liaison. Through these random encounters and their aftermaths, the Germans make further contact with and learn more about the people from a-

cross the ocean who helped conquer them. And through the many encounters, random and otherwise, our sense that these people coexist in a "frozen" moment gradually builds while reading the book.

Because the people in all three novels keep shifting quickly in and out of focus, the authors occasionally use another technique to deepen our sense of an individual. Both Dos Passos and Sartre provide additional perspective by revealing in monologue form the private thoughts and feelings of their focal characters. Koeppen does the same, both to add perspective and to intensify the feelings of chaotic aimlessness and tension pervading the book.

Emilia and Philipp are perhaps the two most forlorn "pigeons on the grass." Both are in analysis with Dr. Behude, so their interior monologues often take on the cast of exercises in free association. When Emilia awakens that morning to find herself once again deserted by Philipp, she seeks solace in auto-eroticism. She is terribly unhappy, not only because of him, but also because she cannot reconcile herself to the loss of material comforts which once accrued in abundance to her upper-class family. Sitting naked among objects symbolic of past wealth, she gives herself over to memory, fantasy, and masturbation:

[Sie wollte] dem Geist nun sich hingeben, dem bisher nicht geachteten, dem verkannten, er war ein neuer Retter, seine schwerelosen Kräfte, les fleurs du mal, Blumen aus dem Nichts, der Trost in Dachkammern, wie-hasse-ich-die-Poeten, die-Pumper, die-alten-Freitischschlucker, Geist Trost in verfallenen Villen, ja-wir-waren-reich, une saison en enfer: il semblait que se fut un sinistre lavoir, toujours accable de la pluie et noir, Benn Gottfried Frühe Gedichte, La Morgue ist -- dunkele-süsse -- Onanie, les paradis artificiels auf den Holzwegen, Philipp auf den Holzwegen, ratlos im Gestrüpp in den Fussangeln Heideggers, der Geruch

nie wieder geschmeckter Bonbons auf dem Ausflug mit den Freundinnen, der Lido von Venedig, die Kinder der Wohlhabenden à la recherche du temps perdu, Schrödinger What is Life? das Wesen der Mutation, das Verhalten der Atome im Organismus. . . . Ordnung aus Unordnung, die Seelenwanderung, die Vielheitshypothese, komme-als-Tier-wieder, bin-freundlich-zu-den-Tieren, das-Kalb-am-Strick-das-soschrie-vor-dem-Garmischer-Schlachthof, das Geworfensein, Kierkegaard Angst tagebuchschreibender Verführer nicht zu Cordelia ins Bett, Sartre der Ekel ich-ekel-mich-nicht, ich treibe dunkele süsse Onanie. . . . 6

Several similar probes into Philipp's interior find him, like Emilia, seeking comfort in thoughts of a simpler past and agonizing over the deterioration of their relationship. Unlike her, however, he does not try to recapture what was, nor does he find escape in alcohol and sexuality. Primarily, Philipp is obsessed with defining himself in a present which is dismayingly alien. Part of his painful tension results from the realization that there is no place in a recovering Germany for a failed writer with no other occupation. Standing among the dictating and writing machines in a typewriter shop late that morning, hoping to earn a little money by selling the owner a special glue for shipping cartons, Philipp becomes acutely aware of his worthlessness:

Mir fehlt der Sinn für die Wirklichkeit, ich bin eben kein ernster Mann, der Geschäftsmann hier ist ein ernster Mann, ich kann das was alle treiben einfach nicht ernst nehmen, ich finde es komisch, dem Mann etwas zu verkaufen, gleichzeitig bin ich zu feige dazu, soll er seine Pakete verkleben womit er will, was geht es mich an? warum klebt er Pakete? um seine Maschinen zu verschicken, warum verschickt er sie? um Geld zu verdienen, um gut zu essen, um sich gut zu kleiden, weil er gut schlafen will, Emilia hätte diesen Mann heiraten sollen, und was tun die Leute mit den Maschinen die sie bei ihm gekauft haben? sie wollen mit ihnen Geld verdienen und gut leben, sie stellen Sekretärinnen an, schauen ihnen auf die Waden und diktieren Briefe 'Sehr geehrte Herren wir bestätigen Ihr Gestriges und geben unser Heut-

iges', ich möchte ihnen ins Gesicht lachen, dabei lachen sie mich aus, sie haben recht, ich bin der Reingefallene, ein Verbrechen an Emilia, unfähig, feige, überflüssig bin ich: ein deutscher Schriftsteller. 7

Just as painful for him is the perception that, although he is not a producing writer, he still cannot help striking a classic pose of the artist: he stands back from his time and his people, ironic, bemused, and uncommitted. At a session with Dr. Behude later in the afternoon, while the analyst scribbles some notes in his file, Philipp reflects on his lack of political dedication and has to admit to himself what an equivocator he really is:

[Ich] verabscheue die Gewalt, ich verabscheue die Unterdrückung, ist das Kommunismus? ich weiss es nicht, die Gesellschaftswissenschaft: Hegel Marx die Dialektik die marxistisch-materialistische Dialektik -- nie begriffen, Gefühlskommunist: immer auf der Seite der Armen sinnlos empört, Spartakus Jesus Thomas Münzer Max Hölz, was wollten sie? gut sein, was geschah? man tötete sich, kämpfte ich in Spanien? mir schlug die Stunde nicht, ich drückte mich durch die Diktatur, ich hasste aber leise, ich hasste aber in meiner Kammer, ich flüsterte aber mit Gleichgesinnten, Burckhardt sagte mit Leuten seiner Art sei kein Staat zu machen, sympathisch, aber mit Leuten dieser Art ist auch kein Staat zu stürzen, keine Hoffnung, für mich nicht mehr. . . . 8

Most of the time the characters in this novel are in frenetic motion like pigeons--hurrying, going, doing, meeting, and then flying off somewhere else. Without some occasional glimpses into their backgrounds, their problems, their interiors, one would have even less sense than one has of what motivates them to scurry so aimlessly.

One other narrative device that Koeppen uses is similarly employed by the other two in their experiments with simultaneity. The characters, who serve as symbolic representatives for their historical moment, can-

not alone carry the burden of providing atmosphere. There also must be some sense of the times embodied within the framework which contains the various existences. To that end, Koeppen frequently injects into the midst of scenes external reminders of the moment--headlines from the German press, news reports and popular songs from the American radios, and, occasionally, advertisements and political slogans.

The fictional day is set in the early years of the Cold War. World tensions, especially between West and East, are high and a divided Germany is right in the middle. The country also is having its problems with readjustment after bitter defeat and with the constant presence of American power. Some of the headlines demonstrate how such external reminders, in a cumulative sense, help define the atmosphere of the moment: GRUPPENFÜHRER ALS RABBINER IN PALÄSTINA, BARBIER DIREKTOR DER FRAUENKLINIK; SUPER-BOMBER IN EUROPA STATIONIERT; MARSHALLPLAN AUCH FÜR DEUTSCHLAND, ERP-MITTEL GEKÜRZT, SENATOR TAFT KRITISIERT AUSGABEN; ANGRIFF BEDEUTET WELTKRIEG; and so forth.

As they accumulate, flashing momentarily on the pages in the middle of scenes or actions, all the different forms of media messages provide the reader with references to fix the time and lend atmosphere to the novel. Individually, however, they also often serve the function of providing ironic commentary on the scenes into which they are integrated. Josef the porter is a simple man, living on and dutifully serving his customers in a world he is too old to understand any more. Perhaps if he could comprehend the news broadcasts which keep crackling out of Odysseus's radio, he would be forewarned that this "new" world is cha-

otic and dangerous, a place where anything can happen to anyone at any time. In the bar where Odysseus is squandering his easy money in a dice game with dishonest men, Josef, while fiercely protecting the radio, happens to catch a world news broadcast:

Eine Männerstimme sprach Nachrichten. Josef verstand nicht, was der Mann sagte, aber manche Worte verstand er doch, die Worte Truman Stalin Tito Korea. Die Stimme in Josefs Hand redete vom Krieg, redete vom Hader, sprach von der Furcht. . . . KEIN NEUER MILITARISMUS ABER VERTEIDIGUNGSBEREITSCHAFT. Josef hob im Lärm der Blaskapelle Odysseus' Musikkasten an sein Ohr. Hatte die Stimme im Kasten eine Botschaft für Josef den Dienstmann? Die Stimme war jetzt sehr eindringlich, ein eindringliches Rauschen. Josef verstand nur hin und wieder ein Wort, Städtenamen, ferne Namen fremde Namen, fremdländisch ausgesprochene Namen Moskau, Berlin, Tokio, Paris -- 9

But Josef does not get the message; he remains an innocent, out of time and out of place. At the end of the novel there is an ugly misunderstanding between him and Odysseus, symbolic of the current misunderstandings between nations. Still not understanding, Josef dies from Odysseus's blow to the head.

III. While Tauben im Gras is in many ways similar to Manhattan Transfer and Le Sursis, there are some variations in it which make it distinct. For one thing, Koeppen adds a unique dimension to his atmospheric day by including a group of foreigners from another culture in the vertical array. They broaden the viewpoint on the day through their reactions as outsiders to what they perceive in the war-torn but rebuilding city.

The poet Mr. Edwin, for example, who thought he would discover some traces of the classic European spirit left in the city, sees instead signs of lingering and potential barbarianism all around him. He cannot

deal with such a bleak view, and his lecture, in which he exhorts his audience to heal wounds by maintaining contact with that classic spirit, is irrelevant and a disaster. Another visitor is the young American airman, Richard Kirsch. He had anticipated a city wasted and in ruins, but instead the place looks very much like his native Columbus, Ohio. The older people he meets on his first day--with their fears, guilts, and problems stemming from the late debacle--bore him as much as the city.

Then there is Chris Gallagher, the lawyer from California on a business trip with his son. Chris eagerly experiences the streets, the shops, a baseball game, and a crowded, noisy Brauhaus. He is quite taken with what he perceives as an easy geniality in the city and among the people, and he cannot understand why his wife, a German Jew who by luck escaped the holocaust, will not join him but prefers to remain in Paris. Finally, there are the culture-seeking tourists on a whirlwind visit, the three schoolteachers from Massachusetts. Kay, the youngest, is quickly disillusioned: she had expected to find the Germany of her college professor, a land of poets and thinkers, of music and song; instead, the people here look the same as everywhere. Mildred, the oldest, thinks the place is colorless, and she notes disdainfully that the women are badly dressed. She disapproves of the entire experience, but carries it through as an obligation to education. Katherine, the thoughtful one who is always making notes on what she sees, appears to be more sensitive and to have more insight than her companions. It is she, in fact, who has a sudden realization while walking through a

park that all the people she has experienced that day, fellow-Americans and Germans alike, have much in common with birds flitting around on the grass: "[Wir] verstehen nicht mehr als die Vögel von dem was die Westcott quatscht, die Vögel sind zufällig hier, wir sind zufällig hier, und vielleicht waren auch die Nazis zufällig hier, Hitler war ein Zufall, seine Politik war ein grausamer und dummer Zufall, vielleicht ist die Welt ein grausamer und dummer Zufall Gottes, keiner weiss warum wir hier sind, die Vögel werden wieder auffliegen und wir werden weitergehen. . . ." 10

All these travelers--curious, expectant, observant, but often disillusioned by their contacts with an alien culture--as they pass through the city and record impressions only a detached foreigner might receive, add in their way another dimension of substance and believability to the atmosphere of the novel.

The use of montage in the book also gives it some distinction. One often encounters mood-setting or scene-setting passages which read very much like the script of a documentary and which in effect are filmic. 11 Basically, they are constructed by mixing and alternating sights with sounds. Snippets of headlines, advertisements, and catchword phrases are combined with significant environmental details to provide visual effects; bits of popular songs, fragments of conversations, and fleeting thoughts in the minds of characters are combined with the ironic running commentary of the author's narrative voice to provide auditory effects.

Koeppen employs his montages in several ways. He opens the story

with one which immediately establishes the tension pervading and dominating the "frozen" moment:

Fieger waren über der Stadt, unheilkundende Vögel. Der Lärm der Motoren war Donner, war Hagel, war Sturm. Sturm, Hagel und Donner, täglich und nächtlich, Anflug und Abflug, Übungen des Todes, ein hohles Getöse, ein Beben, ein Erinnern in den Ruinen. Noch waren die Bombenschächte der Flugzeuge leer. Die Auguren lächelten. Niemand blickte zum Himmel auf. . . . Das Frühjahr war kalt. Das Neueste wärmte nicht. SPANNUNG, KONFLIKT, man lebte im Spannungsfeld, östliche Welt, westliche Welt, man lebte an der Nahtstelle, vielleicht an der Bruchstelle, die Zeit war kostbar, sie war eine Atempause auf dem Schlachtfeld, und man hatte noch nicht richtig Atem geholt, wieder wurde aufgerüstet, die Rüstung verteuerte das Leben, die Rüstung schränkte die Freude ein, hier und dort, horteten sie Pulver, den Erdball in die Luft zu sprengen, ATOMVERSUCHE IN MEXICO, ATOMFABRIKEN IM URAL, sie bohrten Sprengkammern in das notdürftig geflickte Gemäuer der Brücken, die redeten von Aufbau und bereiteten den Abbruch vor, sie liessen weiter zerbrechen, was schon angebrochen war: Deutschland war in zwei Teile gebrochen. 12

And he closes with a related montage which serves both to emphasize the strained, nervous mood of the moment and to put a frame around the representative day:

Mitternacht schlägt es vom Turm. Es endet der Tag. Ein Kalenderblatt fällt. Man schreibt ein neues Datum. Die Redakteure gähnen. Die Druckformen der Morgenblätter werden geschlossen. . . . Die Nachrichten wärmen nicht. SPANNUNG, KONFLIKT, VERSCHÄRFUNG, BEDROHUNG. Am Himmel summen die Flieger. Noch schweigen die Sirenen. Noch rostet ihr Blechmund. Die Luftschutzbunker wurden gesprengt; die Luftschutzbunker werden wieder hergerichtet. Der Tod treibt Manöverspiele. BEDROHUNG, VERSCHÄRFUNG, KONFLIKT, SPANNUNG. Komm-du-nun-sanfter-Schlummer. Doch niemand entflieht seiner Welt. Der Traum ist schwer und unruhig. Deutschland lebt im Spannungsfeld, östliche Welt, westliche Welt, zerbrochene Welt, zwei Welthälften, einander feind und fremd, Deutschland lebt an der Nahtstelle, an der Bruchstelle, die Zeit ist kostbar, sie ist eine Spanne nur, eine karge Spanne, vertan, eine Sekunde zum Atem holen, Atempause auf einem verdammten Schlachtfeld. 13

In these mood-setting montages Koeppen's voice is the predominant auditory element. In his scene-setting montages there is much more of a mixture of his voice and other auditory elements with visual ones.

Scenery in the novel of simultaneity is not emphasized because the focus is primarily on the vertical array of people. Both Dos Passos and Sartre depict settings through brief sketches which provide some sense of place, but their neighborhoods, streets, and rooms are basically only suggested. Koeppen also only suggests settings; through his montages, however, he achieves a somewhat different, a filmic sense of place.

One gets a vivid pictorial impression, for instance, of what the streets in this occupied city must be like when one reads the "automobile" montage.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, an image of the dives and tourist traps that flourish there can be derived from the striking "bar" montages.<sup>15</sup> And, when Koeppen gathers his characters together for the evening in two contrasting settings, the lecture hall<sup>16</sup> and the American nightclub,<sup>17</sup> one has a strong photographic sense of the places where the culminating actions of the book occur.

IV. Tauben im Gras is about a cluster of people thrown together by chance during a singular moment in time when their world seems on the verge once and for all of flying apart in all directions. This world--battered by too many years of hot and cold wars--has lost its traditional cultural, social, and ethical underpinnings. So have the characters, and they are shown in the novel to be running about, often frantically and without direction, in a desperate attempt to recover

some of those underpinnings for themselves.

That Koeppen chose to capture mood and scenery of that moment by experimenting with a filmic technique, the montage, has little effect on the overall configuration of the novel. But his experiment with the time-sense of the novel, trying to create in it a sense of simultaneity, is another matter. Like the related works of Dos Passos and Sartre, Tauben im Gras demonstrates that telling a story by means of spatial cross-sections, in which juxtaposed scenes, actions, and characters are piled one on the other with minimal transitions, results in the distortion or sacrifice of traditional novelistic elements.

For one, the linearity of the work is distorted. Not that a sense of linearity is completely lacking; the book does, generally, move from a beginning in the early morning to an ending in late evening, and most scenes are vaguely progressive. But the overall design is basically vertical and static. One's sense of linear progression is often sacrificed for the sake of making it seem that all the lives in the city are in existence at virtually the same time.

Another important element is sacrificed because of the work's dominating time-sense. An illusion of simultaneity can be approached only if numerous threads of lives are paralleled in the narrative. The very density of characters packed tightly in a vertical arrangement works against full development of any individual character. Because of the constant shuffling of the arrangement--the repeated abrupt jumps from one thread to the next--none of the people has a chance to acquire adequate dimensions. They remain throughout types who represent the

"frozen" moment more than they represent themselves as interesting human beings.

Then, too, one often loses the story-line of the novel. Koeppen has so many threads to manipulate that there is little room left to make things "happen." And if one were to analyze in general what "happens" during the day, little more could be said than: the characters had some interesting experiences, some survived and some did not. Specifically, it would be just as difficult to point to significant progression and change in the lives of Philipp, Emilia, Odysseus, Richard, the three schoolteachers, or any of the various less emphasized people who appear on the scene now and then.

In sum, one's expectations become dulled. Because the linear order is distorted and difficult to follow, because the characters do not achieve full realization, and because little change occurs during the fragmented development of the story, one early on begins to lose interest in what will occur next. The tension-filled moment and its frenzied atmosphere seem to be the focal points of the novel. The scenes, the actions, and the simultaneous characters all serve to reflect and define those focal points. One wonders if any single moment is interesting enough to "freeze" for such intense inspection and to devote an entire novel to. The experiment with creating a sense of simultaneity in a predominantly atmospheric novel fascinates, but also suffers by causing too many losses in one's expectations for a "good" story.

NOTES: CHAPTER VIII

1 Wolfgang Koeppen, Tauben im Gras (1951; rpt. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Bücherei--S. Fischer Verlag, 1966). Examples may be found on: pp. 52, 56, 62, 64, 86, 87, 89, 90, 92, 114, 117, 123, 147, and 172.

2 Ibid., pp. 86-87.

3 Ibid., pp. 154-155.

4 Ibid., p. 80 (Philipp) and p. 40 (Emilia).

5 Ibid., pp. 35-36.

6 Ibid., pp. 26-27.

7 Ibid., p. 44.

8 Ibid., pp. 116-117.

9 Ibid., p. 52.

10 Ibid., p. 131.

11 Compare, for example, Koeppen's initial and final montages with the beginnings and endings of scripts for "Let there be Light" by John Huston and "Night and Fog" by Jean Cayrol, Film: Book 2 (New York: Grove Press, 1962), pp. 205-233 and pp. 234-255.

12 Koeppen, p. 7.

13 Ibid., pp. 173-174.

14 Ibid., pp. 56-57.

- 15 Ibid., pp. 62-64 and pp. 152-153.
- 16 Ibid., pp. 144-147.
- 17 Ibid., pp. 148-149.

CHAPTER IX

NARRATIVE SIMULTANEITY: FROM THE READER'S POINT OF VIEW

I. Substantial portions of this essay, which provide a descriptive analysis of the psychological time-sense simultaneity as it appears in its various forms and types, focus on the work of literature. Other, normative, portions have their focus elsewhere: on the audience. The effectiveness of narrative simultaneity has been evaluated from the point of view of reader expectations. It was assumed from the beginning that almost everyone anticipates from the novel-reading experience some sense of form, based on an expected development of character and story-line. Further, it was assumed that an obtruding, rather than framing, time-sense would seriously confound these expectations by diminishing character and story-line development, thus distorting form. The last assumption has been tested and proven in some of the critical commentary contained in the essay, but there is more to be added concerning the reader and his relationship to the illusionistic time-sense simultaneity in narration.

We have seen how the illusion of simultaneity seems to work in certain instances: when it is integrated into a novel in limited proportions. It works in such cases precisely because its moment in the work is brief and controlled, and therefore the illusion does not operate to distort radically one's sense of the form of the novel. To put it another way, as long as simultaneity comes in small doses, it

cannot direct the reader's focus away from central elemental interests in the work. In fact, we have seen how artists like Joyce, Faulkner, Proust, Woolf and Döblin employ different types of integrated simultaneity to enlarge significantly, by presenting all three elements from a unique perspective, the reader's sense of place, or of action, or, especially, of character. The reader is willing to accept the simultaneity illusion and all that accompanies it--alternating narrative rhythms, temporary retardation of progression, and an apparent shift from linearity to verticality--if the period of "frozen" simultaneous time allows him to deepen his perceptions and does not grow to the point where its illusionary nature becomes too obvious and distracting.

We have seen how, when it becomes the organizing principle of time in a novel and when it is depicted at length in large segments, narrative simultaneity does not work so well. If the depiction of simultaneity is to serve as a useful artistic device for reflecting the verticality of experience, a certain fine balance must be maintained between the writer and his audience. It is important to determine, if only approximately, the point where this illusionistic time-sense ceases to frame and starts to obtrude and distract, thus upsetting that fine balance. We can begin by realizing that language as a medium for depicting senses of non-chronological time has particular limitations.

In a chapter on "The Time Problem in Fiction," A. A. Mendilow discusses basic restrictions placed by language on the writer who attempts to represent psychological time:

The medium of fiction, language, imposes the most fundamental limitations on the writer's art, and conditions the

'what' no less than the 'how' of his writing. Words are distinct and separate units, even though their semantic edges are blurred, and they fall into distinct and separate groups. They follow one another in single file according to complex but rigid laws of order and sequence. Language then is a medium consisting of consecutive units constituting a forward-moving linear form of expression that is subject to the three characteristics of time--transience, sequence, and irreversibility. How can the novelist working in such a medium convey an impression of simultaneity, of backward and forward movement, of immobility? How can he communicate immediacy, and the sense of flow of living, and duration in all its modes? 1

And later, after answering his own questions by analyzing how senses of psychological time are created in narration by means of artistic illusion, Mendilow comments specifically on the sense of simultaneity. Only with considerable artistry and skill can it be created, because of "the inevitable conflict that must arise when a consecutive 'horizontal' time-form is used to express simultaneity of impression and the 'vertical' sense of the process of living." 2

The balance is upset, and simultaneity becomes difficult to accept in narration, when the writer on his part ignores the limitations of his medium and causes the inevitable conflict to show through. From the reader's perspective, the balance is upset when he becomes acutely aware of language reaching its limits and straining for the depiction of simultaneity. This happens frequently in the case of organizational simultaneity because the structural base of the simultaneity illusion--juxtapositioning, with its abrupt and practically transitionless shifting from scene to scene, action to action, and character to character--is made distractingly obvious through excessive repetition. The linguistic machinery of the work is laid bare. One senses the language

beginning to look and sound overmanipulated and overloaded, with the result that, instead of being able to devote attention to the development of story-line and character, one becomes overly-conscious of an attempt being made to create the effect of simultaneity.

But there is more to the reader's inability to sustain belief in the time-sense simultaneity over long stretches of narration than a realization that language is being strained beyond its capacity. Extensive narrative simultaneity must inevitably reach a point where the illusion is no longer consistent with human experience, with reality. In another way, the fine balance between writer and audience gets upset.

I have experienced simultaneity, during moments of apparently "frozen" time when the process of living seemed to me vertical rather than horizontal. I might have been walking along busy streets (like Mrs. Dalloway), or I might have been alone somewhere (like Mathieu). Some combination of sight, sound, smell, memory, and thought tickled my consciousness, then intensified, and finally carried me away. For a split second, I stopped what I was doing to experience the curious sensations of the moment. For an instant, I felt transported into a unique dimension; I transcended time and was everywhere at once. I perceived--or imagined--an infinity of existences spatially parallel with mine, and I became suddenly one with all space and everyone in it. Then, in another instant, the moment was past--quite forgotten until the next one occurred. All human beings are capable of such moments, especially in this electronically-interconnected world of ours. But no human being lives continuously, or even for extended periods, in such verticality,

filled with an intense and pervading feeling of simultaneity.

Novels like those of Dos Passos, Sartre, and Koeppen, which are constructed by means of massive spatial cross-sections packed with numerous coexistent scenes, actions, and life-threads, demand of the reader that he remain far too long in a state of vertical suspension, apprehending simultaneity. We have seen that Manhattan Transfer, Le Sursis, and Tauben im Gras can sustain the simultaneity illusion for a certain time, but that they eventually lose their overall effectiveness by exposing their inner workings to view, by sacrificing novelistic elements for the sake of creating a time-sense, and by dulling reader expectations. Such novels are also considerably diminished when an annoyed and distracted reader looks up from the book and says to himself, in effect: "This constant simultaneity does not match my experience; life is not at all like that!"

There is yet another possible source of reader dissatisfaction with novels filled with a sense of simultaneous time. We have seen how, by organizing his work around spatial cross-sections and infusing them and the entire novel with this vertical time-sense, the writer sacrifices the development of traditional novelistic elements to focus instead on developing a feeling of the atmosphere prevailing during a particular moment in time. Thus the writer directs the reader away from conventional fictional perceptions and toward historical ones. In effect, in their respective works of simultaneity Dos Passos, Sartre, and Koeppen have created, not novels, but period pieces. They have presented us with pieces which can soon lose an audience for two related reasons:

such works are likely to become dated rather quickly, and contemporary readers have available to them numerous more informative sources--actual histories, film documentaries, or eye-witness narrations, among others--through which to gain perceptions of atmospheres surrounding and informing moments in history.

Writing in 1928, Edwin Muir classified certain recent works (Galsworthy's The Forsyte Saga, Wells's The New Machiavelli, and Dreiser's "records of American life") as "period novels," novels aiming at historical and rational, rather than aesthetic, representation. He described the type thus: "It does not try to show us human truth valid for all time; it is content with a society at a particular stage of transition, and characters which are only true in so far as they are representative of that society. It makes everything particular, relative, and historical. It does not see life with the universalising imagination, but with the busy, informing eye, aided by the theorising intelligence." <sup>3</sup> He could just as well have been describing works like Manhattan Transfer, Le Sursis, and Tauben im Gras, for a few pages later he points out both the tendency of this type of narrative to become dated and its inadequacies as a document of its times:

It lays importance on elements which to a later age will have but an historical interest, the atmosphere of a special period or a particular environment. For the imaginative writer can draw a picture of society; but only an historian can reconstruct a particular society or show us a society in evolution; and the period novel is really a spurious kind of history which occasionally breaks into fiction. It is never both at the same time; when it is of help to the social student it is worthless for the critic and vice versa. It is stuck together, not created. <sup>4</sup>

Ultimately, for all the reasons outlined in this summary, one comes to perceive novels of simultaneity as basically "stuck together" rather than as "created." The novels of Joyce, Woolf, and Döblin discussed previously may also have been created by "sticking together" various impressionistic and expressionistic scenes. But one is not so conscious of the seams in these works because one is continually filled with their powerful sense of human experience. Always in focus at their centers are their people, vibrant with fictional "life." A particular sense of time, not a sense of people, informs the novel of simultaneity. We have seen how difficult it is for the artist to sustain the illusion of this time-sense in narrative without exposing its arbitrary structures to view. Thus the reader is made far more conscious of the seams in these experimental, time-centered, "stuck together" works.

II. The modern novel-reading audience has to meet demands which were unknown to previous audiences. Readers today, as they attempt to comprehend what a work "is all about," often have to forego guidance and assistance from the "voice" of the author. They also are called upon, in their apprehension of fictional characters, to differentiate among multiple points of view, to differentiate among reliable and unreliable narrators, and they must be particularly sensitive to all the irony, ambiguity, and relativity that this implies. In their apprehension of storylines, they are required to have a developed sense of the static and vertical nature of, and of the importance and validity of, the inner life of the human being. And, in keeping track of fictional time, they must

be capable not only of following the intricacies of disordered chronologies, but also of appreciating various complex modes of psychological time.

In short, modern readers, if they are to grasp the meaning of many contemporary novels, are forced to involve themselves actively and deeply in the reading process; they have, in a sense, to re-create the work for themselves by making its narrators, characters, story-lines, and time-senses come together into a comprehensible whole. Leon Edel has summarized this relatively recent change in the reader's relationship to the novel:

[The] removal of the author from the scene--he remained often an intruder, but was no longer omnipresent--made necessary a significant shift in narrative: it created the need to use the memory of the characters to place the reader in a relationship with their past. There was no "story," no "plot." And above all, this kind of novel seemed to turn the reader into an author: it was he, ultimately, who put the story together, and he had to keep his wits about him to accumulate his data. 5

And Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg have placed in historical perspective the role of the reader as partial "maker" of the work:

The unreliable or semi-reliable narrator in fiction is quite uncharacteristic of primitive or ancient narrative. The author of an apologia is expected to be presenting himself in the best possible light, and thus is to be taken cum grano salis, but the idea of creating an unreliable fictional eye-witness is the sophisticated product of an empirical and ironical age. Unreliability itself requires a fairly thoroughgoing conception of reliability before it can be recognized and exploited in fiction. Its frequent use in modern fiction is also an aspect of the modern author's desire to make the reader participate in the act of creation. The Renaissance allegorist expected his readers to participate strenuously in his work, bringing all their learning and intellect to bear on his polysemous narrative. Similarly, the modern nov-

elist often expects just such intense participation, but being empirically rather than metaphysically oriented he makes the great question that of what really happened inside and outside the characters he has presented. . . .<sup>6</sup>

Given all of the above that is expected of the modern reader, it seems not too much for him to expect the following in return: that the depiction of psychological time in the modern novel add to, and not take away from by fracturing narrative form, his accumulating sense of what the work "is all about."

Multiple interrelated existences, myriad points of view, all present and immediately discernible in "frozen" time, in simultaneity--perhaps the film is the only medium which can depict at length life in a vertical mode; or, perhaps the "New Novelists" of France, through their efforts to obliterate all sense of past, present, and future in their narratives, have succeeded in overcoming linearity in order to portray essential verticality. Determining the validity of these points, however, is the subject for another study. Because of the nature of their linear and progressive form, the novels discussed and analyzed here can capture and depict successfully for only fleeting moments a sense of the verticality and simultaneity of life.

NOTES: CHAPTER IX

- 1 Mendilow, Time and the Novel, p. 32.
- 2 Ibid., p. 178.
- 3 Muir, The Structure of the Novel, pp. 117-118.
- 4 Ibid., pp. 123-124.
- 5 Edel, The Modern Psychological Novel, p. 15.
- 6 Scholes and Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative, pp. 264-265.

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