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MOTION AND THE BODY IN MARCEL PROUST AND GERTRUDE STEIN

by

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Through an analysis of particular sections in Proust's A la recherche du temps perdu (Remembrance of Things Past) and several pieces by Stein, I examine how time and space, keyed as they are to the body and interior experience, are sensed and described by the modernist author. Evident in Stein is the use of a direct language that records the experiential world. Indeed, the language she chooses illustrates her sensory perception of a spatio-temporal "flux." Proust's refined, circumlocutory language questions the nature and meaning of time and memory; involuntary memory is accessible only through visceral experiences. In both authors, I argue, the search for bodily presence fosters the development of new styles of writing. Indeed, the perceptual responses of the author override the function of the narrator as Proust and Stein exhibit the act of their own writing.

My research demonstrates one way in which the body measures, and describes through written notation, the *feeling* of time and the *sensation* of space. The new styles of description that Proust and Stein developed in their writing point to -- in a subtle manner -- the complex ideological shift in perception that was occurring between 1900 and 1930. Both authors offer a literary rendition of philosophic theories of the time, in particular

phenomenology. Phenomenological philosophers Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty articulated a relationship between body and motion through their analysis of "sense impressions," an approach similar to that which Proust and Stein used in creating their own writing styles. The literary styles of Proust and Stein (as different as they are) also give a human feeling to the general theories of physics that were being promulgated during the same decades. To understand the science of Bohr, Heisenberg, and Einstein[1] from the interior of the body -- perhaps in the way that these scientists first felt it themselves -- is to gain an understanding of the observation of the world in the early twentieth century. My dissertation suggests that the equations of these physicists can be translated in emotional and literary language. Rather than seeing the literary texts as illustrative of the scientific, or vice versa, I propose that an investigation of language and style in Proust and Stein can aid scholars in uncovering the reasons behind the new weltanschauung.

In early twentieth century painting and sculpture the nature of representation is redefined; distinctions between figuration and abstraction are reconfigured. While the body in some cases disappears from painting and sculpture, in the sciences a perceptual role is assigned to the body: Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity (1905) and his General Theory of Relativity (1915) imply that the role of

the body is evaluative. For Proust and Stein time and space are sensed by an embodied narrator who is linked to the perceptual bases of the author. As is the case with the perceiving subject who is essential to the theories of Einstein, this 'narrator-author' mediates perceptual phenomena.

Husserl, working in Germany at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, devoted many of his works to analyzing the perceptual capacities of the body, including "Die Welt der lebendigen Gegenwart und die Konstitution der ausserleiblichen Umwelt" (The World of the Living Present and the Constitution of the Surrounding World External to the Organism") where he argues that the body forms a foundational basis of knowledge. One central point in the dissertation, leading from phenomenology to an analysis of literature, is the research that both Husserl and French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty provide on the body and its relation to motion. Chapters 2 and 3, based on research completed in Leuven at the Husserl Archives during 1991-92, trace how Husserl's phenomenological ideas were later taken hold of in France, particularly with the publication of Merleau-Ponty's Phénoménologie de la perception (The Phenomenology of Perception) in 1945. Husserl's ideas correspond to many of the themes in Proust's A la recherche du temps perdu, of which the first volume was published in

1913. Chapter 3 summarizes the significant contribution that Merleau-Ponty offers in his analysis of Husserl's work: for Merleau-Ponty time and space function as symbolic appendages of the body.

Many literary works at the beginning of the century focused on the narrator's relation to an interior time frame and a subjective accounting of surrounding space. Chapter 4 suggests that Proust's writing has a relationship to ideas of motion because the narrator's omniscient control of the coordinates of time and space has been partially released. For example, memory and the past consume the narrator in Du côté de chez Swann when, having dipped his madeleine in a cup of tea, he begins to taste the pastry. Proust illustrates how the bodily activities of the narrating author are stimuli for the involuntary perception of time and space. The circumlocutory sentence in Proust functions literally as a vehicle for the narrator's recording of sensations of space and time--whose coordinates exist only when summoned through the sensate body.

Stein acknowledges the modernist tendency to de-emphasize narrative, that is, the traditional story line, when she discusses Proust, her own work, and the work of James Joyce. In Lectures in America she writes, "A thing you all know is that in the three novels written in this generation . . . there is, in none of them a story. There is none in Proust in The Making of Americans or in Ulysses"

(184). Stein's experiments with language, influenced by William James' studies of perception, are renditions of how the author makes sense of her body and the world through perception. Stein's use of repetition is extracted from the spontaneous and unedited flux of time and space. Her language actually 'stands in' for the spoken voice of a narrator who records a world in motion rather then narrating a story.

The action of the body writing, of the body "making marks" on paper -- which differs from writing as the narrating of events -- is not solipsistic as it first might appear. Rather, the elements that I discuss throughout the dissertation (in particular sensation, body, and motion) are qualities of the act of writing. Yet they are attributes of writing that have been considered less important than the content of writing.

Aside from Merleau-Ponty's work on Husserl's manuscripts, ideational allegiances tend to be more apparent among the four writers than direct influences. All four authors are often criticized for their lack of clarity. Merleau-Ponty is commonly described as the "philosopher of ambiguity." They all utilize circular patterns of logic and employ repetition of words, scenes, or ideas. The presence of 'the body that is writing the text' (though slightly more veiled by the asyntactical language in Stein) can be felt in works by all of the authors. Rather than a 'self-

consciousness' in their works, there is instead a 'consciousness of' body and form, an awareness of the blurred line between body and imagination.

I begin with Husserl (1859-1938) whose work was defined by a nineteenth century weltanschauung, formed by ideas that adhere to a scientific approach (in particular because of his work in mathematics) as can also be seen in a number of nineteenth century painters and writers (particularly in Naturalism) who were committed first and foremost to capturing the world as it 'objectively' exists. Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961) found the later writings of Husserl essential to his work and in chapter 3 we will examine some of the work that Merleau-Ponty uncovered at the Husserl Archives. There has not been much research to date on how Proust (1871-1922), who was born after Husserl, yet died before him, would have had specific knowledge of Husserlian phenomenology. Seven years after Proust died Husserl delivered his Pariser Vorträge at the Sorbonne.[2] While Proust's work is linked to the philosophic work of both Bergson (concerning time, duration, and intuition) and Merleau-Ponty, the 'feeling' of phenomenology which is present in Proust's work is infrequently described or analyzed by literary and philosophic critics.

Stein (1874-1946) and Merleau-Ponty were both living in Paris at the same time, and Stein's studies with James at Radcliffe are considered to be her first introduction to a

phenomenological sensibility. What is curious is that even though Stein's work is often studied for its "phenomenology of mind," I have not found discussion of Stein's literary use of phenomenological method (aside from her use of James), or research that clarifies the influence of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. Nor have I seen research that discusses stylistic and philosophical-literary parallels in the work of Proust and Stein despite their shared thematic interests in body, language, and motion.

Chapter 2 is concerned with three different works by Husserl which help us to see how he developed methods for interpreting the activity of bodies. I introduce the problem of finding terminology for a body in motion. I show in chapter 3 how Merleau-Ponty was able to find a vocabulary for some of the problems concerning the relationship between the physical and the mental which perplexed Husserl. One particular idea that allowed Merleau-Ponty a freedom of description that was not possible in Husserl's conceptual schemata was the notion of the body as an aesthetic work of art. By developing this idea Merleau-Ponty enlisted the language of aesthetic criteria and aesthetic imagination. The use of such a language made obsolete some of the problems of 'object-form' that existed in Husserl's analysis. By thus opening the body to interpretation, rather than simply analysis, categorization, description, and 'object-mechanics', Merleau-Ponty was able to understand

the body as a gradational moment within larger constructs of spirit, art, soul, etc.

The focus on Husserl's animate body in chapter 2 leads to a wholly different idea than that of Merleau-Ponty's expressive body which is discussed in chapter 3. Motion is not divorced from awareness and sensation, as Husserl observed, but is tied for Merleau-Ponty to an aesthetically purposeful teleology. To move the body *is* expression for Merleau-Ponty. The body is already in motion rather than 'awaiting' a primum mobile; it only needs descriptive language to know and feel itself. Merleau-Ponty's discussion of the body as speech links the physical nature of speech to the literary work of art[3]: literature is a description of the physicality of art, as well as a description of the body and its scope and vision.

The body for Merleau-Ponty is completely enmeshed with descriptions of the world. As well, the body is always a gesture. It is not a symbol of itself, rather the body is always moving into both social and personal meaning. If Proust and Stein were writing narrative texts we would need a particular theory of narrative. Instead chapters 2 and 3 demonstrate a theory of perception located within a moving body. We can then see how both Proust and Stein often employ a descriptive language which is a 'story' from the inside of bodily experience.

Chapter 4, where I discuss Proust, is the longest

chapter of the dissertation and is therefore split into two parts. The idea of an interior story is not at first evident in A la recherche du temps perdu because Proust's language is so rich and appealing. Nevertheless, the world he conjures is an exoskeleton of the traditional narrative structure. Rather than the narrative being on the outside and the story that we follow being apparent and traceable, like following the demarcations that have been drawn for us on an unfolded map, instead, the "outside" story is intermittent. We have the appearance of a lengthy narrative in Du côté de chez Swann and we have intersecting narratives throughout the novel. But the coherence of the novel is within the felt experiences, the passion, and the archipelago of intuitive, confessional truths that dot the otherwise immense expanse of the novel (which like the ocean does have tidal activity, but does not really move anywhere). The novel remains intimate, in spite of its size, and the voice we hear throughout makes sense of the experiences of world and body.

The chapter is split in two parts. Part I, "The Name," shows the complex and vast labyrinth of meanings that the name holds for Proust. As we will see in Merleau-Ponty, speech is visceral, and for Proust names are physical entities. Unlike words which can be defined, names lead us to the mystery of the body to which they point. Names are also linkage points between the imaginative world and the

world of the carnate.

Part II, "The Body," describes an even more complicated subject in Proust. A la recherche du temps perdu refers to the name categorically, and in numerous instances. Proust is always describing and translating the meaning of the name. There is a porousness to its form. But the body is not a term that is commonly referred to by Proust (though when he does refer to it there is often an unusual sensibility at work). We can note the use of physicality in the novel, we can compare the imaginative and the physical, we can ask about immobility, we can note -- most importantly -- how the visceral is a key to the mnemonic. The body 'recalls' memory to us, where we then find bodily experiences -- not just images of memories, but the physical feeling of what has been and what *remains physical*.

I note how the episodes in which Proust encounters involuntary recollection are places of physical activity; some physical presence has to occur, or some physical activity must be taking place in order for memory to become present. Several literary critics have noted the largely immobile nature of A la recherche du temps perdu, the adagio quality of many episodes, the descriptions which consume the time of both author and reader, the lack of action in a conventional sense. Rather, I point to the highly mobile points of revelation and epiphany, points of internal excitement which manifest an awareness of the author's

physicality, and of physicality in general. In A la recherche du temps perdu there is little concern with the representation of action, descriptions of a promenade, or a battle, or running, for example. Instead we see the sentient coordinates that one hesitates to feel before and during action. The novel is a taxonomy of action, of the feeling of physicality as resonance.

This discussion brings us to the body of the writer, and the text as a repository of markings that encode the relationship between imagination and body. The role of the reader has been analyzed in reader-response theory, particularly in relation to imaginative misreadings of a text, yet it is curious that there has not been so little work on the body of the writer. While reader-response theory does not per se engage in detailed analysis of the role of the body in the act of reading, by giving importance to the activity of the reader its theoretical infrastructure implies a relation to the physical nature of the imagination.

Proust and Stein have both written literary work that is filled with 'bodily notation'. Yet, finally, what do we know when we clarify the inscription of the body of the writer? How is this different from traditional literary analysis? Does this assume that writing -- and reading -- are choreographic ideas, and therefore exclusively notational points for physical processes? What form does

the physicality of the imagination take -- how does it appear on the page, and in the body? In what ways do we read and write differently when we ask how the body leverages its weight or lightness -- its push -- on the page. Proust and Stein are not autobiographical writers. Rather, neither of them are interested in finishing the modeling of their characters. They want us to see the shop in which the forms are made; their bodily presence pilots us, yet walks side by side with us.

The gestures of handwriting, which we consider in the chapter on Stein, have been important as evaluative material for many centuries. But handwriting interpretation is currently at a low point, as if the typographical text has its own physicality. But 'textual physicality', as we might call it, despite a distance from the author, resonates with authorship. After all, what is the text a document *of* -- ? Did we previously have some sense that the writer, and his or her body, had a hermetic relationship to the text, or that a text is propelled away from the body rather than drawn to it? Art historical analysis has not had as problematic a relationship to the body of the artist, nor, obviously, analysis of the dancer in dance theory. But, choreographic notation has had the same writing problem of 'distance to the subject'. This is why when we see dances recreated through language notation they commonly seem to be more about dated inscription than action.

Chapter 5 begins with an extended examination of Stein's discussion of repetition. She argues that the day-to-day, the quotidian, is the real repetition, and that to repeat words and phrases over again as she does is not in any way repetition. Rather, it is emphasis and insistence. It is odd that the public seized upon Stein's use of repetition when she is clearly more interested in motion, as we will see. Repetition, in the sense that Stein defines it, is a by-product of the activity of motion, a residue of the action of having movement. We can see a parallel with the momentum of a dancer (even though Stein does not discuss dancers often, she does write a portrait that is considered to be Isadora Duncan). The dancer trains daily, repeating certain movements, forms, and shapes. These are used to propel the body through space, but they do not exist for their *repetitive content*.

Stein's discussion on repetition is from her Lectures in America which she delivered during her tour through the United States after her long absence. It is a particularly unusual format, for she is explaining herself in a language that is self-styled, yet she shows a clarity underneath the idiosyncratic language which has a logical exactitude in a more abbreviated and condensed form than her lengthier and strictly literary pieces. In short, the lectures were meant to show a wider public her methods of working. Yet she stays true to her stylistic form while she simultaneously

"translates" herself. While she likes to 'translate herself' she rarely does so with the conscious intention that we see in the lectures. Thus, the lectures are particularly rich documents for seeing what she intends, for seeing her literary theory, while staying true to both the literary and the theoretical.

Mary Ann Caws has posed the question of what is a meta-language for Stein. How do we know when we are inside or outside of Stein's logic? The seamless nature of Stein's literary logic is seductive, and is often clear in relation to itself. Yet it is often difficult to know in specific and certain terms what Stein believes. This is the case even though we may be aesthetically convinced of the breadth, detail, and complexity of her phrasing. How do we color Stein using a different color than the ones she offers? But as with any system -- and it can be argued that her work does represent a methodical organization of understanding expressed and encased in a specific language-system -- it is not clear how to be outside that system.

After considering in detail one of Stein's pedagogic, though playful, lectures I then discuss the portrait "Orta Or One Dancing." While her lectures have a mesmerizing logic, her portraits have a pristine relation to 'sculptural' language. Words are often placed proximate to each other without obvious order. Syntax is askew. The portraits, a very particular style of writing that she

developed and which contrast with her other literary styles, are 'bottled up' language. They are abstracted and condensed versions of the world. The subject is struck with random characteristics, sometimes representational and sometimes not, but always with a general feeling of either the referenced person, or of something 'near that person'. As with visual portraiture, the more accurate paint strokes are not always the true ones, and random interpretation of physiognomy can sometimes hit the mark.

The Duncan portrait is important, specifically for our study, because we can see how both women are involved in repetition of figuration (through language and iconic language) and also how they understand movement qua movement. Most importantly, for both dancer and writer, there is no need for movement to 'get anywhere', but rather for it to be present as movement. This short portrait, written between 1911 and 1912, offers us a bridge between the language of movement in Stein and the movement of language in Duncan. As well, I consider the melodic, prodigious curvaceousness of Stein's handwriting.

While analyzing Stein's lecture I focus on her general theories of movement, which are both symbolic and vast. When I discuss the Orta portrait I pose the question as to whether a true language of movement is physical or conceptual. When we watch dance we are not dancing -- except conceptually. When we read -- well is this any

different? Is reading a text different than reading a dance? How does the conceptual enliven the physical? When we are physically active are we often rather conceptualizing that activity?

For both Stein and Proust literary writing is a sign of the gestures of the body. The immediateness of the writing clarifies the intentions of the writers. While both writers often edit their work in detail, they nevertheless pay homage to the originary gesture. They are both 'performative' in that they prioritize the spontaneous gesture. As with action painting, and fresco painting (where the surface was so wet that immediate crafting was mandated), the inscribed page is a document of action.

By examining sections in A la recherche du temps perdu, and several pieces by Stein, we see literary work that is similar in its problem solving capacities to that of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. The writer must mediate what is in the world. But the world is literary, aesthetic even. What is the writer, then? The writer is not only aesthetic. The writer is a body that is aestheticized through the action of writing. Perhaps this is one reason it was so difficult for both writers to stop writing: the body was aestheticized only during the act of writing.

While I ask in what way the body appears in the sciences, art, and literature at the beginning of the century, I am only able to consider the question briefly.

Nineteenth century naturalism was based on the presupposed scientific observation of the world, and it is important to see how the art of observation directly led to subjective feeling. When this occurs we can see that in painting (specifically abstract painting, beginning with Kandinsky's work) the body as an entity to be represented ceases to be important as 'subject matter'. This parallels the literary work of Proust and Stein where it is difficult to trace a 'body' in the texts because that body no longer has a recognizable form. The body is not represented topically but is enmeshed with things other than it.

Then how do we discuss the body if we have no 'representative form' for it? The concept of motion offers one possibility. Motion would seem to be the 'form' of the body in much of the painting at the beginning of the century, whether Dadaism, Cubism, Fauvism, or Futurism, for example. The body would seem to be indicated by its path in Proust and Stein. The path is strewn with language bits only obliquely connected to their representative meaning for Stein. For Proust meaning is a scrim for the body's current and past activities.

Through these separate analyses we can see that it is difficult to determine the difference between body and motion. This is perhaps not distinct from the contemporary theorizing in physics at the time which linked wave and particle, and Heisenberg's theory of indetermination which

demonstrated that we cannot know something because the motion of the body of the observer impedes upon the observation.

I will also offer some concluding remarks, including how body, and motion, may be linked for both Proust and Stein to self-conceptions of sexuality.

Notes

1. While Einstein is not our subject of study here, we can see that there is an oscillation between two central tenets in his work. First that motion is relative in relation to things existing that are not relative, and secondly, that motion is *of the subject*. The second tenet implies perception rather than evidence, and ties Einstein to phenomenological thinking.

2. See Peter Koestenbaum's introduction to The Paris Lectures.

3. Speech and written words are linked, and both writers want to show that linkage. Stein does this through the sounds of words -- her writing is part of the oral tradition -- and Proust does this through his understanding of the relationship between the visceral and the mnemonic.

Chapter 2: The Animate Body in Three Texts of Husserl

It is particularly difficult given the volume of Husserl's oeuvre to isolate a thematic and follow Husserl's thinking on a subject throughout both his longer works and his research manuscripts. While Husserl was quite adept at categorization, his subjects themselves often elude categorization. Indeed, categories are often united in special ways. Thus to attempt a consideration of a particular theme in Husserl's work suggests a number of problems. Nevertheless, a discrete project, such as that proposed for this chapter, can clarify one segment of Husserl's thinking.

I will begin by examining Husserl's discussion of the body in the chapter "The Constitution of Psychic Reality through the Body" ("Die Konstitution der seelischen Realität durch den Leib") in Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie II Zweites Buch. This chapter is located within the second section, "The Constitution of Animal Nature" ("Die Konstitution der Animalischen Natur"). It is interesting that Husserl uncovers questions of the body and its motion already within this section of Ideen II, rather than the third section "The Constitution of the Spiritual World" ("Die Konstitution der geistigen Welt"). Husserl considers in "The Constitution of Psychic Reality through the Body" that something is

existing in the world only through the physical and psychic activity of movement toward that thing, as well as the movement of that thing itself in relation to the self. I will then consider two short research manuscripts by Husserl. "The World of the Living Present and the Constitution of the Surrounding World External to the Organism" ("Die Welt der lebendigen Gegenwart und die Konstitution der ausserleiblichen Umwelt") is particularly concerned with the constitution of a world as 'external' and 'present' only through the actions of self-movement, and indeed it can be argued that for Husserl the presence of the world (the surrounding world) can only be constituted through self-moving. I then discuss "Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature" ("Grundlegende Untersuchungen zum phänonomenologischen Ursprung der Räumlichkeit der Natur") which considers that the idea of movement of the body cannot be distinguished from an understanding of the idea of space, and the perception of space has a contingent relation to a subject's body. While these two research manuscripts of Husserl have been available in English with the publication of Husserl, Shorter Works there has been relatively little commentary on them.

What is of particular interest within these three texts to be considered is the tentative quality of Husserl's thinking, and how he is often able to stylistically mime the

very activity of cognition he is investigating. What one can observe in these three works is a gradated approach to a particular idea, the act of thinking, and as well a sense of the body as it approaches thinking and the world itself. From both the standpoint of style and content I will examine in this paper Husserl's formulation of the animate nature of the body.

It is important to note that Ideen II was of special interest to Merleau-Ponty. As documented by Van Breda, Merleau-Ponty requested the opportunity to work with Husserl's manuscripts in Leuven at the Husserl Archives in 1939. During his period of study at the Archives, commencing less than two weeks after his initial request, Merleau-Ponty made use of three sources including "a series of paragraphs from the Ideen II" (Van Breda 152). We know from Van Breda's article "Merleau-Ponty and the Husserl Archives at Louvain" that Merleau-Ponty studied the manuscript "Overthrow of the Copernican System" ("Umsturz der kopernikanischen Lehre"), titled in English "Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature." What is not known is whether Merleau-Ponty was able to study "The World of the Living Present and the Constitution of the Surrounding World External to the Organism" before he wrote Phénoménologie de la perception. I have included this third manuscript, though, because Merleau-Ponty could have made reference to

it, and Husserl's particular understanding of self-moving is essential to Merleau-Ponty's theory of movement and the body. It is certainly evident that Merleau-Ponty's Phénoménologie de la perception, published in 1945, considers in several sections themes evident in Ideen II. What is particularly important is that Merleau-Ponty had access to Husserl's manuscripts before they were published. That so much of his Phénoménologie de la perception is based on ideas of the body and its relation to movement within the manuscripts of Husserl, for example, gives Merleau-Ponty's work a particularly unique position for several decades, until translations of Husserl were more readily available, and until more complete publication of Husserl's work had taken place.

Suffice to say at this point that there is a strategic difference in the position of the motile body in Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. For Husserl the body in motion does not appear as an essential component of his overall philosophical program. This is one reason, as we will see in his chapter "The Constitution of Psychic Reality Through the Body," that the movement of the body is not discussed with specific focus, and is only part of Husserl's discussion on the functioning of the body's sensory processes. Thus, tactual, visual, and auditory descriptions both complement and intrude upon his discussion of the body's movement in this chapter. These sensations are

linked with the movement of the body, suggesting an equivalence between them, rather than a dominance of the visual for example. It can be argued elsewhere that while Husserl does not discuss the movement of the body as an operative principle, the body's movement actually functions operatively within his phenomenological program. For Merleau-Ponty on the other hand, the body, and more particularly its movement, is epicentral to his theoretical infrastructure, and exists as a basic principle of his analysis of perception. Indeed, for Merleau-Ponty the movement of the body functions as a philosophical center within his work.

Throughout this paper I refer at different times to the possibilities of a terminological definition of a body in motion. I am referring often to Husserl's Leibkörper which has both a functional and ontological meaning. Part of the problem in this discussion will be to find an adequate expression in English for conveying the activity and expressivity of Leibkörper, which is both material and non-material. I will consider the terms "kinaestheses," "kinesthetic sensation," "motivity," "motility," "the animate body," "the expressive body," "the animated body," etc. While these terms are quite variegated, they serve the discussion by referring always to a situation of 'non-stasis.' Throughout the chapter there is an interchangeability between these terms in an attempt to

finalize the sense of activity that Leibkörper implies for Husserl, and that is a part of Husserl's definition of the body.

Before we look at this specific chapter, it is important to see how Ideen II has a special place in Husserl's thinking on the body, and to contextualize this work in relation to Ideen I and Ideen III. The attempts by Husserl to complete a comprehensive analysis of his phenomenological method begin with the Ideen series (1911-25), and then The Cartesian Meditations (Cartesianische Meditationen) (1928-31) and finally The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology (Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie) (1931-36). Ideen I was published in 1913 (with the first English translation in 1931), but while Ideen II was drafted in 1912, it was not published until 1952 (along with Ideen III) after extensive reworking by Marly Biemel. Biemel worked with manuscripts prepared by Husserl's assistants, Edith Stein and Ludwig Landgrebe. Because Husserl reworked the manuscripts many times, but never completed a final manuscript for Ideen II, questions of both style and content remain moot.

Alfred Schuetz explains that the projects for Ideen II and Ideen III were stated by Husserl at the end of Ideen I as "1. the problem of 'objective regions' and their transcendental constitution; 2. the problem of

intersubjectivity; 3. the relations of phenomenology to the various sciences, especially to psychology and ontology" (394-5). It was the problem of intersubjectivity that kept Husserl from completing Ideen II. We can look at Schuetz' summary of the discussion on the body in Husserl's chapter "The Constitution of Psychic Reality through the Body," "The body is, thus, a physio-aesthesiological unity, the carrier of the sense organs and localizable sensations of motion and pain" and is "animated" (402). Schuetz briefly summarizes one of Husserl's arguments through Ideen II:

> So far Husserl's analysis of the constitution of the world has dealt with the constitution of nature, first as the reality of material things, secondly as the reality of the psyche. Now we have to investigate subjectivity which is no longer nature but spirit (*Geist*). *In the naturalistic attitude* the psyche is but a layer of aesthesiological experiences of events occurring on the body. The animated body is an object of nature within the objective spatio-temporal world. Animals, human beings (our fellow men as well as ourselves) are--always in terms of the naturalistic attitude--animated bodies, each with its localized sensibility; all consciousness is founded upon the body,

> localized upon it, and co-ordinated with it in time. (403-4)

For Merleau-Ponty Ideen II is also an essential work as it represents an important change in Husserl's distinction between subject and object. As he writes in "The Philosopher and His Shadow," "From Ideen II on Husserl's reflections escape this tête-à-tête between pure subject and pure things. They look *deeper down* for the fundamental" (163).

Let us now begin our examination of "The Constitution of Psychic Reality through the Body" from Ideen II. Husserl begins by clarifying that the human being is a material body (materielles Körper), out of which are added new levels of being (neue Seinsschichten). But the body (Leib) has no presupposed materiality. The phenomenologist must "pursue what is already constituted prior to, or correlative with, material nature" (151).

Following his concern for determining the materiality of the body, Husserl then considers questions of differentiation within bodily and spirit sensation. It is important to note that stylistically Husserl switches back and forth, even at this early point in the discussion (Subsection 36) from a mode of categorization per se, to a more phenomenologically oriented series of descriptions of sensations. Before he commences a list of descriptive observations, though, he clarifies that the body is not

constituted in some reductive form of simple materiality, but is rather a nexus of the distance it subsumes between things that it experiences. The "spatially experienced body" (räumlich erfahrene Körper) is the actual "corporeal body" (Leibkörper).

Most of the sensings that Husserl then chooses to consider are those where categorization between materiality and sensation are problematized. He considers the sensation of one hand touching the other, running his hand over the table, and lifting objects. As he notes, when lifting a thing, "I experience its weight, but at the same time I have weight-sensations localized in my Body" (153).[1] Through considering these exceptional places of feeling Husserl notes that sensations are localized. They are "distinguished by means of their place on the appearing Corporeality" (153). Thus, according to Husserl, the body (Leib) is constituted doubly, having both a materiality, and also the sense and approach of things external to it: "warmth on the back of the hand, coldness in the feet, sensations of touch in the fingertips. I sense, extended over larger Bodily areas, the pressure and pull of my clothes" (153). The body thus enters into "physical relations (by striking, pressing, pushing, etc.) with other material things" (153). The approach of the body to the world occurs through these "sensings" (Empfindnisse).

Before Husserl introduces the body's relation to

movement (in subsection 37) he carefully distinguishes within the same subsection between the visual and the tactual. He considers as well the auditory. It is appropriate that he would use this preceding discussion as a way of *specializing* visual sensations, because it is also an area of Husserl's work that can be criticized precisely because of the privileged status he gives to visuality as central figuration in his overall thinking on perception. Indeed, it is often the dominance of the status of the visual that interferes with the capacity to 'see' or 'find' movement qua movement.

The visual field is differentiated from the tactual precisely because it does not have the "double apprehension" (Doppelauffassung) that the tactual realm has (155). Husserl states that the eye might seem to have a double apprehension by "casting its glance over" (155) an external object. But the difference here is that "An eye does not appear to one's own vision." Or, as he writes several sentences later, "I do not see myself, my Body, the way I touch myself" (Ich sehe mich selbst, meinen Leib, nicht, wie ich mich selbst taste).

I would like to point out that within Husserl's writing style there are periodically a number of phrases that have a separate, indeed idiosyncratic, *voice*. Before introducing his discussion of movement, Husserl considers questions of the visual appearance of things. There would appear to be a

relation here between belief and seeing (157-8). If we convince ourselves that something which is perceived does not actually exist, Husserl writes, then everything related, "everything extended in its extension is stricken out too" (so ist . . . alles in seiner Extension Extendierte weggestrichen). But he says, "the sensings do not disappear" (Aber die Empfindnisse verschwinden nicht). And here he writes "Only what is *real* vanishes from being" (Nur das Reale verschwindet aus dem Sein). It would not be accurate here to translate the German Reale for the English real; rather, concrete would be a more apt translation. Nevertheless, it is clear that there is a diminution of the postulation of the world 'as we know it.' Through the hypothetical analysis of the reduction of the world, or rather through a chosen program of believing, "if I convince myself" (überzeuge ich mich) in the non-existence of something, everything related ceases to be. But, the sensings continue. Rudolf Bernet in E. Husserl. Darstellung seines Denkens notes that kinaesthetic sensations, and he quotes Husserl, "in contrast with the sensational data . . . 'make representation possible without themselves representing' " (Bernet 147).

Precisely at this juncture between Husserl's consideration of the visual appearance of things, the idea of convincing "myself that a perceived thing does not exist," and also the vanishing of the concrete from being,

is where the idea of movement is introduced.

Ricoeur in his detailed outline of Husserl's phenomenological projects, Husserl: An Analysis of His Phenomenology, also poses the question of why Husserl's first presentation of the 'doctrine' of the body is only at this particular juncture. Ricoeur notes that Husserl commences his discussion of the body in motion at "the occasion of the movement to the last 'constitutive stratum' of the real thing" (45). We find the movement of the body introduced at a point of destabilization of thinghood, at a point where the constitution of the thing is becoming thin.

At this juncture in Husserl's manuscript it becomes clear how Husserl's epistemology is based on the theory of an animate body. In order to know whether and how something is existing, it is necessary to determine something tactile about that thing. It is possible to determine whether something is an illusion or real through touch, and also by having a motion in relation to that thing, for example, by walking around that thing. In this way, as we will see later in this paper, it is possible to determine the here and there of oneself and that thing in relation to oneself as "Nullpunkt".

It is the animate body that determines whether something is 'merely visual' or whether it is indeed tactually 'real.' In a sense it is not real if you cannot move around it. This going around something makes it

possible to see a thing from different points of view. While Husserl's goals are ultimately epistemological, it is possible to see here that his epistemology is already recalculated by being constituted only in motion. Thus to know something is to be in motion.

At another point one can consider the radical implications for philosophy that something is 'knowable' only through one's movement activity. While little has been written about this tenet of Husserl's philosophic epistemology, Husserl gradually outlines this idea in Ideen II. That so little philosophic work has been accomplished in this area is probably due to the irregularity of the notion of motion as a principle of ontology and epistemology.

To continue, Husserl attempts to constitute movement within the chapter we are discussing. He writes, "I sense kinetic sensations" (empfinde ich Bewegungsempfindungen) when the hand is moving (158). These kinetic sensations are localized because of their concomitant relation to "primarily localized sensations." Curiously though, kinetic sensations have only somewhat "indeterminate localization" (unbestimmte Lokalisation). This is important, indeed significant, for Husserl because this creates something "intimate" (innig) between the body (Leib) and "the freely moveable thing" (frei beweglichem Ding).

While material things have only an ancillary relation

to what he terms "spontaneous movement," the body is distinctive in that it is "moveable immediately and spontaneously" (unmittelbar spontan beweglich) and is the "one and only Object" that is an "organ of the will." The body's movement then is different from any other kind of movement. According to Husserl, the body belongs to the subject. It is a "field of localization of its sensations." The subject is an Ego that can "freely move this Body" (159).

After introducing the body as being within the domain of the will, Husserl then leaves the discussion of motion of the body for several paragraphs. He considers, instead, the relation of the body to intentionalized choices and goals, and notes that while the localization of sensations are intuitive, having a specific place in or on the body, intentionalized sensations have only a metaphoric relation to the body. For example, he writes, "thinking is not actually localized intuitively in the head" (161). Husserl then considers the idea of a union between material and psychic sensations.

It is not until Husserl's discussion of the body as a center of orientation that he reintroduces the discussion of a motive body along with a series of experiential observations on the body. It is not simply that things are in the world, or present themselves as such, but rather "things appear and do so from this or that side" (165). The

body always has a relation of equivalence to "a here and its basic directions" (auf ein Hier und seine Grundrichtungen). In fact, the body is a "zero point" (Nullpunkt) of all perceived orientations. For the body has "a here which has no other here outside of itself, in relation to which it would be a 'there'" (in einem Hier, das kein anderes ausser sich hat, in Beziehung auf welches es ein 'Dort' wäre).

The body has a direct relation to spatiality. It is this relation to spatiality that will later clarify how the act of the movement of the body is determined. Husserl writes, "All spatial being necessarily appears in such a way that it appears either nearer or farther, above or below, right or left" (166). There is a relation to proximity and distance. "The 'far' is far from me, from my Body, the 'to the right' refers back to the right side of my Body, e.g., to my right hand."

As the chapter finishes Husserl turns his discussion elsewhere, thus suggesting a tentative finality. He does not approach the subject of the body and its motion in such a detailed manner in any other section of Ideen II, though he does introduce pertinent questions and observations related to the discussion, albeit usually brief reflections.

Let us consider briefly some ancillary commentaries on Husserl's discussion. Richard Schmidt in the article "On Knowing One's Own Body" is able to clarify the importance for Husserl of the animate body as a perceptual center.

Schmidt refers to Husserl's discussion in Ideen II, "The constitution of a material object in perception involves kinaesthetic sensations" (154-5). Schmidt continues, "Whether a given change of size or shape is a change in the object or a change in my perception of it depends on the constancy or change of my position in relation to the object perceived. I am informed of those circumstances by my kinaesthetic sensations" (155).

Schmidt notes that the materiality of objects and the world refers "directly to questions about the constitution of the human body not only because the body is an instance of a material object but also because the constitution of any material object involves reference to my kinaesthetic perception of my body and thus the real existence of that body" (155). As well, Schmidt carries forth Husserl's definition of constitution of the body through experience into the idea of "the body as instrument of action" (157). Schmidt thus suggests that experience can be understood "not as propositional but as more like acting" (165).

Mario Presas in "Bodilyness (Leibhaftigkeit) and History in Husserl" considers Ludwig Landgrebe's reflections on Husserl. According to Landgrebe, knowledge of the self is possible because of the 'activity' of the constituting process, "the lived-body is not only constituted, but also constitutive" (39). Presas writes, quoting also from Landgrebe,

> . . . sensuousness ceases to be merely a product of passive reception; for the sensory "receptiveness" is "not only a suffering of affection, but rather at the same time consciousness of activity and a causal relation between the two, as I can establish when I say, 'because I move my head, and wander around the object, I have viewed it in this perspective, etc.'"

It is precisely because of this "consciousness of motion," as Presas and Landgrebe consider, that "sensation is always simultaneously a '*self-sensing.*'"

Van Peursen in "The Concept of the Body in Transcendental Phenomenology and in Modern Biology," cogently describes the transition within Husserl's logical thinking to a more dynamic process oriented analysis. He refers also to the problematic localization of thinking and mental processes in the head,

> Authors like Wittgenstein and Ryle mention the misleading image of the mind as a thing to be found in a box (body). . . . Husserl's phenomenology, from the beginning a logical investigation replacing any psychologistic reduction of logical laws to empirical rules of thinking, implies a similar rejection. . . . He replaces the image of object-in-a-box by a dynamic

> one, replacing thus the substantive by a verb: the objects of which we are aware are not be found in our consciousness like objects in a box, but they are being constituted by a variety of acts of intentionality. (134)

According to Van Peursen the 'subjective' and we can say 'descriptive' awareness of moving is combined with the 'objective' movement of the body in space, "The body is also the place of the kinaesthetic experiences: two aspects are here united, the objective movement in space and the kinaesthetic movement of the subjective awareness that I am moving" (136).

Stevens in James and Husserl: The Foundations of Meaning notes that for both William James and Husserl the idea of an animate body is pivotal. Stevens discusses possible parallels between James' "living body as an objective mirror *alter ego* of subjectivity" and Husserl's "animate body as the constituted incarnation of subjectivity" (86). Stevens argues, though, that there are important differences between James and Husserl, in that James' use of descriptive analysis functions to "orient his attention away from the discovery of subjectivity as giver of meaning" whereas "Husserl's methodology seems to be directed toward the discovery of the pure ego as constituting source of all objective syntheses, including that of the animate body" (89-9). Thus Stevens notes the

similar approaches to subjectivity of both philosophers, but finds Husserl to have a teleological relation toward the animate body. Thus for Husserl the body-as-thing is animate, in contrast to James' grounding of living experience within the descriptive capabilities of language.

We can now return to Husserl's manuscripts, and to Husserl's thinking on motion, his idea, which seems important to the work as a whole, that the body is already constituted as being in motion, and that the processes and descriptions which accompany the perception of the world signify by their non-categorical nature a relation to this movement. We will also try to sense in a few select phrases how Husserl's mental apprehension, his written work, and his body itself, can be observed within states of motion.

In the second manuscript to be considered in this paper, "The World of the Living Present and the Constitution of the Surrounding World External to the Organism," written in 1931, we will examine more directly independent sections of Husserl's discussion, rather than following Husserl's narrative discourse itself. This would seem an appropriate response to the manuscript since as one of Husserl's research (Forschung) manuscripts, it is a compilation of thoughts on a number of subjects that are related tangentially to a specific theme. While some of Husserl's research manuscripts are analytic arguments per se, many of them, particularly those of the later Husserl, remain

tentative in their conclusions. Instead, they exhibit many contradictions and repetitions, and function all the more so as a record of Husserl's thinking. Thus they are also more available for interpretation. This particular manuscript was edited by Alfred Schuetz and originally appeared in Philosophy and Phenomenological Research in March 1946. The title is also from Schuetz, and refers to Husserl's lengthier inscription.

Husserl notes that rest and motion are always inextricably connected to his own resting and motion, "The style of change, in its 'rest' (in its momentary nonalteration) and 'motion,' is inseparably connected to my possible resting or moving" (239). It is important to note here that Husserl refers to rest within the gradational context of motion, that is, of 'momentary nonalteration" (momentane Nichtwandlung).

For Husserl a situation maintains unity, in spite of all of its internal change. Every "present is a situation" (Jede Gegenwart ist eine Situation). He discusses nonalteration as being "always experienced in the change of kinaesthetic activity" (stets ist in dem Wandel der Kinästhesen Unveränderung erfahren). Part of this nonalteration is shape, a shape that has form based on its sensory presentation.

> In this temporal process (immanently-temporal physical time, presented therein as the

> persistence of all things in nonalteration), each thing has not only its persistent shape, but all things have at once a persistent spatial configuration that is presented by means of the configuration of presentations in their sense-fields. (245)

The resting of kinaesthetic activity is only part of a larger continuation of activity, or "in every phase of this streaming present a determinate configuration is perceptually actualized from a momentary side" (245).

At a later point in the manuscript, Husserl applies his discussion of the concepts of kinaesthetic activity to their actual, that is, histrionic form. It is from the activity of walking that is abstracted the concept of "I am in motion in space" (248). My movement itself is a subset of a series of resting points. Additionally, within the special idea of self-movement, Husserl argues, we can now consider the special stillness "of standing, of sitting, of 'not-moving-myself-forward.'" Conversely, physical rest "is only experienced as rest through the power of those changes of appearance whereby physical movement is constituted" (249). Rest is therefore not necessarily the primary state.

Husserl defines walking:

> Walking thereby receives the sense of a modification of all coexistent subjective appearances whereby now the intentionality of the

> appearance of things first remains preserved, as a self-constituting in the oriented things and in the change of orientation, as identical things. (250)

He then poses a particularly important question. Is the objective world constituted through "self-moving and having-moved" (Selbst-gehen und Gefahrenwerden)? How are the things of the world fixed or affixed in their spatiality? Am I myself another subject within space that is "spatially moved, like other objects" (250)? It is self-moving that clarifies the fixed things of places in space.

The relation of the body to a directionality within space, the here and there in relation to the body as "Nullpunkt," is considered in a conversation between Dorion Cairns, Husserl's assistant, and Husserl on July 11, 1931, "Motion can be grasped only when space has been constituted" (4).

On July 18, 1931 Cairns records that according to Husserl, as he considers localization of the kinaesthetic field, "When I move the body, the surface is deformed but the field of kinaesthesia is not. Indeed, it has no sense to speak of the kinaesthetic field being deformed" (6). Husserl discusses in the same conversation that kinaesthesia is originary of activity, and the body is the field of activity, "As the field of kinaesthesia is the original field of potentiality and 'activity,' so the *body* as

organism is the field of immediate activity in the world of objects" (7).

The third manuscript we will consider here, "Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature" was written between May 7 and May 9, 1934. We know from Van Breda's article that Merleau-Ponty studied this manuscript in Leuven. The manuscript begins by noting a congruence between a "phenomenological theory of the origin of spatiality" and corporeality. The physical act of walking, combined with the "synthesis of actual experiential fields," and combined with what "I have not paced off and become acquainted with what lies in the horizon, but I know that others have become acquainted with a piece further on, then again others yet another piece" creates from the act of walking itself, as well as the comprehension of the walks of others, the "idea (Vorstellung) of Germany" (222). This idea of the traversing of the physical earth and its 'boundaries' leads not only to the idea of Europe, but to the idea of the earth itself.

This process of combining the physical activity of walking with the mental apprehension of what is "further on" is important for Husserl because the idea of the earth is thus not only physical, but the earth itself, as he states several paragraphs later, is a body. For "we Copernicans" (wir Kopernikaner) realize that "The earth is a globe-shaped

body" (Die Erde ist ein kugelförmiges Körper), a synthesis of my perception and that of others, a "unity of mutually connected single experiences. Yet, it is a body!" (Doch ein Körper!). The earth as a body is an "experiential basis for all bodies." Initially the basis is not "experienced at first as body but becomes a basis-body at higher levels of constitution of the world" through experience. Where is it that motion occurs for Husserl? "Motion occurs on or in the earth, away from it or off it" (223).

Husserl then considers aspects of motion as normative. He begins with hesitation, "actual or possible mobility and changeability," then considers bodies "thrown into the air" (Emporgeworfenwerden). Husserl continues, these bodies are thrown in the air "or somewhere or other in the process of moving, I know not to where--in relation to the earth as earth-basis." Even when motion ends there is the possibility of additional motion.

> Bodies moveable in earth-space have a horizon of possible motion and if motion ends, experience nevertheless indicates in advance the possibility of further motion, perhaps simultaneously with the possibility of new causes of motion by a possible push, etc. . . . Bodies are in actual and possible motion and <there is> the possibility of always open possibility in actuality, in continuation, in change of direction, etc. (223)

Husserl refers at one point to space itself, "surrounding space," as "a system of places--*i.e.*, as a system of possible terminations of motions of bodies" (225). While he refers elsewhere throughout the manuscript to ideas of movement, he never fully articulates them in the same manner that he describes processes of motion of the body.

Husserl considers that the movement of a bird on the ground has a similar relation to that of my body experiencing the earth. But once the bird is in flight, this flying can only be imagined by the human body. Husserl's description of flight is an interesting categorical combination of sensation and thinking coexistent with the activity of motion.

> But the bird flies upward--that is like locomotion under kinaesthesia whereby all courses of appearance, otherwise perceived as rest and motion of bodies, undergo variation and in ways similar to locomotion. Different only in so far as, for the bird, holding its flight still and being "borne by he wind" (which, however, does not have to signify an apprehension of something bodily) is a <possibly> experienced combination with the "I am moving" and which results in "apparent motion." The same result is obtained, but in a different way, in a "change of location in flight" and holding still once more. The latter terminates as

> "falling." As a result, the bird no longer flies but sits on the tree or on the earth and then possibly leaps up, etc. The bird leaves the earth on which it has non-flight experiences like us, flies upward and again returns. (226)

After his discussion of the movement activities of a bird, Husserl then gives several rather enigmatic examples of motion in relation to space. The following passage illustrates gradational shifts between the movement of bodily and non-bodily things (object-things).

> Let us consider leaping upon and away from a moving body. The reversal of courses of appearance yields rest and motion in the old way not only for me but for everyone. Thus I necessarily understand everyone. Indeed, I understand their leaping away as leaping away. I understand bodies entering my visual field, entering, *i.e.*, "from empty space" as falling into view, precisely as entering. "How" do I do that? Moving on the earth they are moving for me such that I vary and can possibly accompany kinaesthesias and in such a way that changes in appearance of rest are preserved--the same rest which

> would signify rest for me were I kinaesthetically still. I can do that in the case of bodies which do not move in extraterrestrial space; I could do it if I were to fly. But I can throw stones into the air and see them come back down as the same. The throwing can be more or less weak; obviously, the appearances are therefore analogous to motion based on the earth so that they become experienced as motions. Just as bodies become moved as rolling balls upon impact, so bodies thrown, etc. I would also mention the experience of the motion of falling, in the case of falling from a body above the earth, from the roof of the house or a tower. (226-7)

While the theory of an animate body does not appear consistently throughout Husserl's oeuvre, we can begin to see, and in light of a number of commentaries, that such a theory does find a place within his work. Husserl's understanding of the body in the chapter from Ideen II under discussion suggests a tentative unfolding of the idea that a body, and a body in motion, must always have a relation to space. But this is not yet a dominant theme for Husserl.

Husserl's discussion of the body in this chapter is dominated by descriptions of sensations in relation to the body, sensations of the body's motion, and sensations of motion in relation to the body. Husserl also tries to uncover distinctions between the seeing and the touching of the body. This discussion leads him to questions of the materiality of the body, and the belief system that posits the existence of a body. Husserl also briefly discusses the body in relation to will. And he continually posits the place of sensation, which is never completely reified. Husserl then reintroduces spatiality in this chapter by thinking of things nearby, and things far from the body.

In the other two manuscripts we have discussed Husserl returns to this discussion several decades later, but he suggests a number of different vantages. Husserl's manuscript "The World of the Living Present and the Constitution of the Surrounding World External to the Organism" clarifies the nature of time in relation to the body. Yet in this manuscript Husserl does not define time. He instead discusses a series of distinctions between alteration and rest, and also kinaestheses and rest. As well, he comments on the general 'flow' of things. Thus while a metaphor for time exists in the manuscript, there is not a confrontation with the idea of time itself. Rather, Husserl finishes the manuscript with an examination of principles of self-moving. But these descriptions and

principles suggest the reason that Husserl does not define time per se. For time is not separate from self-moving, and even while it is difficult for Husserl to find such a conclusion, he has provided the evidence for this. As Merleau-Ponty will write in Phénoménologie de la Perception "Je suis moi-même le temps." There is no time outside of this subjective time, which itself is bound to a self-moving. This is also the reason that the chapter seems to emphasize, as has my earlier discussion, the spatiality of the body, and the spatiality of the surrounding body, for this self-moving only moves in relation to a space that it finds.

In "Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature" Husserl continues with his analysis of the importance of space for an understanding of the body. It is not possible to understand the body and its movement according to Husserl without understanding the idea of space, and how the body is part of a larger, unreified space. While this was certainly a theme in the chapter in Ideen II, Husserl was considering space as a psychic phenomena, rather than a psycho-physical thing. In "Origin of the Spatiality of Nature" the body exists through its relation to space, and its movement is understood as a reinvention of the existence of space. Space only exists, and the body, because I have actually gone to that place, or others have, who have recounted this to me.

Yet what is surprising is the concreteness with which space as a phenomena seems to exist for Husserl, as a place in which the body begins to make itself known. It is generally understood that Husserl's critique of time has been more fully articulated than his examination of space. Space exists for Husserl by forming a relation to the body. We can begin to see that the questions related to an animate body for Husserl are inextricably related to his examination not only of the constitution of the body, but the constituting apparatus of time and space.

Notes

1. The English translation by Rojcewicz and Schuwer notes Husserl's distinction between Körper and Leib which is indicated in their text as Body (Leib) and body (Körper). I maintain their usage within the material quoted from their text, but do not continue these distinctions in the dissertation. When appropriate for clarity I parenthetically refer to the German terms. For Husserl these distinction were tied to changing attitude more than categorical differentiation; at certain times he was thinking in one way, at other times in a different manner.

Chapter 3: The Expressive Body in Merleau-Ponty

While the body for Husserl has a contiguous relationship to detailed coordinates of the physical and spiritual world, the body for Merleau-Ponty already envelops that world, contains it, and is contained within it. Thus while Husserl's sense of the body can be seen as already animate (in the same way the world is pre-given and the body pre-constituted), Merleau-Ponty's sense of the body is exponentially pre-animated, having developed a particularized relation to the world and to itself. We have seen that for Husserl the perceptualizing of the world commences with the movement of the body into the world. Because we move into the world we know it exists and that it has a relationship to us. For Merleau-Ponty the movement of the body in the world is already an originating point; there is no need to choose movement.

For all the quantitative detail of evidencing the body as animate for Husserl (coordinates of here and there, the Nullpunkt, determinations of spatiality and time, the physicality of each contiguous part of the body with itself and with the world), we find rather in Merleau-Ponty analyses of qualitative, descriptive detail. For Merleau-Ponty there is no need to *prove* the activity of the body itself, there is simply the effort to describe the qualitative, active relations of the body. While it can be

argued that Merleau-Ponty's abundant citations of psychological experiments throughout Phénoménologie de la perception suggest a type of quantitative evidencing, we seldom see such references after this book. Husserl has already provided the quantitative basis which allows Merleau-Ponty to speak speculatively and descriptively.[1]

Rudolf Bernet notes in an essay we will examine later that there has not been substantial work on Phénoménologie de la perception since research has generally focused instead on Merleau-Ponty's Le Visible et l'Invisible. While Bernet observes that a number of sections of Phénoménologie de la perception are not particularly well developed, he nevertheless shows how Merleau-Ponty's discussion of "a philosophy of bodily existence" is pivotal (5).

In his preface to Phénoménologie de la perception Merleau-Ponty outlines the active nature of phenomenology as a mode of inquiry. He notes that phenomenology is a "philosophy which puts essence back into existence." He describes the many forces existing in relation to the body early in Phénoménologie de la perception:

> It is precisely Gestalt psychology which has brought home to us the tensions which run like lines of force across the visual field and the system constituted by my own body and the world, and which breathe into it a secret and magic life by exerting here and there forces of distortion,

> contraction, and expansion. (48-9)

But as Merleau-Ponty clarifies later in the same text, the tensions do not originate an animation. Rather, the expressivity of the body is aligned with movement as a pre-formed source. Merleau-Ponty then carefully dismantles the problem of visuality. As he writes, seeing is already expressive, and already conjoined within the thing seen, and thus a part of that thing, rather than a process of standing at a distance from a thing. Thus there is no problem of static representation for Merleau-Ponty. Seeing is grasping for Merleau-Ponty, but also displaying, hiding and revealing -- all physicalized terms related to the body's role in perception.

> To see is to enter a universe of beings which *display themselves*, and they would not do this if they could not be hidden behind each other or behind me. In other words: to look at an object is to inhabit it, and from this habitation to grasp all things in terms of the aspect which they present to it. (68)

Within Merleau-Ponty's description of the activity of the body, there is the tone of teleological aspiration: "I cannot understand the function of the living body except by enacting it myself, and except in so far as I am a body which rises towards the world" (75). The relation between body and world is one of revelation, "the world cannot fail

simultaneously to reveal . . . I am conscious of my body *via* the world" (82). Merleau-Ponty amplifies Husserl's sense of the movement of the body toward objects, "I know that objects have several facets because I could make a tour of inspection of them, and in that sense I am conscious of the world through the medium of my body." [je sais que les objets ont plusieurs faces parce que je pourrais en faire le tour, et en ce sens j'ai conscience du monde par le moyen de mon corps. (97)]

The body is synchronous with itself. This congruence between myself and my body, and even the world and my body is not simply equational but is also magical. My body is found about me, and with me. It is not over there when I need it. The body does not need an animating source outside of itself. It is already originated, and in flux with the trajectory of movement:

> But my body itself I move directly, I do not find it at one point of objective space and transfer it to another, I have no need to look for it, it is already with me--I do not need to lead it towards the movement's completion, it is in contact with it from the start and propels itself towards that end. The relationships between my decision and my body are, in movement, magic ones. (94)

Merleau-Ponty notes that existence itself is a state of "perceptual incarnation" (166). Existence is presupposed at

the same moment as the body, and the body is "generalized existence."

In the chapter "The Synthesis of One's Own Body" Merleau-Ponty points to the parallel relations between the body and the work of art, "The body is to be compared, not to a physical object, but rather to a work of art" (150). The body is a complete synthesis, like a work of art, because

> A novel, poem, picture or musical work are individuals, that is, beings in which the expression is indistinguishable from the thing expressed, their meaning, accessible only through direct contact, being radiated with no change of their temporal and spatial situation. It is in this sense that our body is comparable to a work of art. (151)

The metaphoric relation of body to art work is essential for understanding how Merleau-Ponty deobjectifies the constitution of the physical apparatus of the body. As well, this metaphoric relation clarifies how the components of the body have aesthetic (rather than mechanistic) relations to themselves and to the world. But the chapter is a short one, for while it encapsulates the body as aestheticized and expressive, it does not immediately clarify the body's mobility. Part of the problem here is that Merleau-Ponty concentrates on the 'work of art' rather

than the expressive activity of art. It is not until the chapter "The Body as Expression, and Speech" that Merleau-Ponty is able to more clearly indicate the aesthetic-expressive capacity of the body that he seeks to formulate.

"The Body as Expression, and Speech" includes considerations of speech, musicality, thought, and action within questions on the nature of language. The gestural meaning of language is always part of an action which is neither symbolic nor emblematic. The function of the gesture is to provide a base for action which in the process gains signification. The gestural meaning of speech is thus always residually evident in language. That is, the conceptual meaning of language is always deduced from an earlier pre-formed, physicalized meaning:

> . . . the meaning of words must be finally induced by the words themselves, or more exactly, their conceptual meaning must be formed by a kind of deduction from a *gestural meaning*, which is immanent in speech. And as, in a foreign country, I begin to understand the meaning of words through their place in a context of action . . . (179)

Thought itself is not a singular representation, but is rather an action,

> . . . thought, in the speaking subject, is not a representation . . . The orator does not think before speaking, nor even while speaking; his

> speech is his thought. (180)

There is "a certain field of action" [un certain champ d'action (210)] which is "spread around me" [tendu autour de moi]:

> I do not need to visualize external space and my own body in order to move one within the other. It is enough that they exist for me, and that they form a certain field of action spread around me. (180)

He refers again to speech. In speech "the body converts a certain motor essence into vocal form" and projects "an intention to move into actual movement" (181).

Merleau-Ponty then describes the gesture and its relation to time. The gesture heralds the future because it links the past and the history of the body on the one hand, and on the other, the motive present. The gesture is thus meaning making meaning. But Merleau-Ponty does not provide imagery for the gesture as the vehicle of the body moving interpretively ahead of itself. Merleau-Ponty describes the gesture by its contour, "The gesture which I witness outlines an intentional object" (185).

What remains unclear in Merleau-Ponty's discussion of the gesture is precisely what physical form it takes. The body acts as a fulcrum for its own form as it moves toward action and the gesture.

> The communication or comprehension of gestures

> comes about through the reciprocity of my intentions and the gestures of others, of my gestures and intentions discernible in the conduct of other people. (185)

Merleau-Ponty then conjoins the gesture and the body together within activity. Gestures have in themselves the action of the body form out of which they are composed. Furthermore, that action has a rhythm,

> One can see what there is in common between the gesture and its meaning, for example in the case of emotional expression and the emotions themselves: the smile, the relaxed face, gaiety of gesture really have in them the rhythm of action . . . (186) [le rythme d'action (217)]

The gesture is a contingency of the body, "It is not only the gesture which is contingent in relation to the body's organization, it is the manner itself in which we meet the situation and live it" (189). The gesture leans out of the body, bringing the body alongside. Yet, Merleau-Ponty sees the body, and not the gesture, as enigmatic, speaking of "the enigmatic nature of our own body" (197). The body has become a shape of the gesture. For "It is the body which points out, and which speaks" (197). [C'est lui [le corps] qui montre, lui qui parle" (230)]

Merleau-Ponty shows in "The Body as Expression, and Speech" how the work of art can developmentally lead to its

own active status. For the work of art always has a relation to a public, to an assemblage of bodies. The meaning of the work of art is actively secreted through this assemblage, "A school of music or painting which is at first not understood, eventually, by its own action, creates its own public, if it really *says* something; that is, it does so by secreting its own meaning" (179).

The concept of movement is always situated within the physical rubric of an embodied form. Speech can be understood as a particular movement of the body that, as well, is not possessed of the 'representation of movement'. So that "The end of the speech or text will be the lifting of a spell. It is at this stage that thoughts on the speech or text will be able to arise" (180). The body does not hesitate, "The speaking subject does not think of the sense of what he is saying, *nor* does he visualize the words which he is using." Merleau-Ponty continues,

> What we have said earlier about the 'representation of movement' must be repeated concerning the verbal image: I do not need to visualize external space and my own body in order to move one within the other.
> [Il faut dire de l'image verbale ce que nous disions plus haut de la "représentation de mouvement": je n'ai pas besoin de me représenter l'espace extérieur et mon propre corps pour

mouvoir l'un dans l'autre. (210)]

The only possible 'representation' of the body is the *activity* of an utterance. Merleau-Ponty makes an equivalence between the activity of the work of art and the activity of speech utterances:

> I do not need to visualize the word in order to know and pronounce it. It is enough that I possess its articulatory and acoustic style as one of the modulations, one of the possible uses of my body. I reach back for the word as my hand reaches towards the part of my body which is being pricked; the word has a certain location in my linguistic world, and is part of my equipment. I have only one means of representing it, which is uttering it, just as the artist has only one means of representing the work on which he is engaged: by doing it. (180)

He then summarizes a discussion of the motor process of the function of speech, clarifying the relationship of space to time. Remembrance is always tied to the body's relation to form, in this case, vocal form.

> The body's function in remembering is that same function of projection which we have already met in starting to move: the body converts a certain motor essence into vocal form, spreads out the articulatory style of a word into audible

> phenomena, and arrays the former attitude, which is resumed, into the panorama of the past, projecting an intention to move into actual movement, because the body is a power of natural expression. (181)

Speech does not hide the body, nor does the body hide speech, "The spoken word is a gesture, and its meaning, a world" (184). [La parole est un geste et sa signification un monde. (214)] The origin of utterance and language is an action. This action must be described. We must "describe the action which breaks the silence" (184).

Speech as it emanates from the body is active; we could also say it is already a self-made fiction:

> Speech is, therefore, that paradoxical operation through which, by using words of a given sense, and already available meanings, we try to follow up an intention which necessarily outstrips, modifies, and itself, in the last analysis, stabilizes the meanings of the words which translate it. (389)

Speech replaces, regenerates, outstrips, and remodifies itself.

The past ("thought already thought") directionalizes the signifying of language.

> Language outruns us, not merely because the use of speech always presupposes a great number of

> thoughts which are not present in the mind and which are covered by each word, but also for another reason, and a more profound one: namely, that these thoughts themselves, when present, were not at any time 'pure' thoughts either, for already in them there was a surplus of the signified over the signifying, the same effort of thought already thought to equal thinking thought, the same provisional amalgam of both which gives rise to the whole mystery of expression. (390)

The gesture of anger is not an idea, a thing, a representation of anger, it is the physical activity of anger itself. I have no need to interpret its meaning, the physical meaning of the body is evident, "The gesture *does not make me think* of anger, it is anger itself" (184).

Michael Riley in his essay "The Truth of the Body: Merleau-Ponty on Perception, Language, and Literature" refers to Herbert Spiegelberg's insightful translation of Merleau-Ponty's phrase "être-au-monde," as consisting of a state of being "not merely 'in' the world but 'at' it" (480). Riley continues by noting how expressivity occurs through action: "it is precisely the intentional activity of the body and perception, the fact that both are expressions in actions, that establishes meaning as inherent in human existence" (480).

For Merleau-Ponty language is touched by the body, "It

is my body which gives significance not only to the natural object, but also to cultural objects like words" (235). [C'est lui [mon corps] qui donne un sens non seulement à l'objet naturel, mais encore à des objets culturels comme les mots. (272)] Merleau-Ponty cites a number of psychological studies that have examined the physicalized nature of words:

> If a word is shown to a subject for too short a time for him to be able to read it, the word 'warm', for example, induces a kind of experience of warmth which surrounds him with something in the nature of a meaningful halo. The word 'hard' produces a sort of stiffening of the back and neck, and only in a secondary way does it project itself into the visual or auditory field and assume the appearance of a sign or a word. (235)

How is this to be explained? Merleau-Ponty writes that initially the 'event' grips my body before it is formed as a symbol:

> Before becoming the symbol of a concept it is first of all an event which grips my body, and this grip circumscribes the area of significance to which it has reference. (235)
> [Avant d'être l'indice d'un concept il est d'abord un événement qui saisit mon corps et ses prises sur mon corps circonscrivent la zone de

signification à laquelle il se rapporte. (272)]

Merleau-Ponty continues with another detailed example by offering a passage from Untersuchung über Empfindung und Empfinden in which Werner writes:

> 'I try to grasp the word *rot* (red) in its living expression; but at first it is no more than peripheral for me, no more than a sign along with the knowledge of its meaning. It is not red itself. But suddenly I notice that the word pushes its way through my body. I have the feeling, difficult to describe, of a kind of numbed fullness which invades my body, and which at the same time imparts to my mouth cavity a spherical shape. And, precisely at that moment, I notice that the word on the paper takes on its expressive value, it comes to meet me in a dark red halo, while the letter *o* intuitively presents me with that spherical cavity which I previously felt in my mouth.' (qtd. in Phenomenology 236)

Merleau-Ponty, in a footnote, extends this discussion on the nature of words to include that of phrases. He refers to Bergson:

> We can understand a phrase or at least give it a certain meaning by going from the whole to the parts. Not, as Bergson says, because we evolve a 'hypothesis' on the strength of the first words,

> but because we have an organ of language which takes on the linguistic shape of what is set before it, as our organs of sense are given a direction by the stimulus and are synchronized with it. (236)

What precisely, then, is this relation of the body to language? According to Merleau-Ponty the relation is the same as the congruence of the body to its constituent parts:

> For the warmth which I feel when I read the word 'warm' is not an actual warmth. It is simply my body which prepares itself for heat and which, so to speak, roughs out its outline. In the same way, when a part of my body is mentioned to me, or when I represent it to myself, I experience in the corresponding part a quasi-sensation of contact which is merely the emergence of that part of my body into the total body image. (236)

Merleau-Ponty summarizes his argument here, showing the complete incorporation of body and the world. The body "is that strange object which uses its own parts as a general system of symbols for the world, and through which we can consequently 'be at home in' that world, 'understand' it and find significance in it" (237).

Thus for Merleau-Ponty perception itself implies a movement that is first of all a merging into the body, "In perception we do not think the object and we do not think

ourselves thinking it, we are given over to the object and we merge into this body which is better informed than we are about the world" (238).

What is this active status of the body? Merleau-Ponty chooses several metaphors. The body in the world is similar to the heart in the body. The body breathes life into the world, and sustains the world, thus forming a system with the world, "Our own body is in the world as the heart is in the organism: it keeps the visible spectacle constantly alive, it breathes life into it and sustains it inwardly, and with it forms a system" (203). I know what is in the world, and how it is in the world, precisely because of my knowledge and my sensings of my own body. It is the transit of this body that makes the world here, and aids me in knowing how the world is here.

This movement of the body within a space that it begins to determine is related to our discussion of Husserl. But for Husserl the body still has a functional purpose, for example, to determine whether something is an illusion. The body must move from here to there in order to know something about here and there, and that thing, that illusion there. Merleau-Ponty's idea of the body, on the other hand, knows itself already moving there, and thus there is no illusion over there in need of determination. What is over there is already known by my body moving there with it. Certainly Merleau-Ponty has no need to debunk the magical. The

magical is a principle of motion throughout Phénoménologie de la perception, and is a descriptive response to the action of the world. While the body can be magical for Merleau-Ponty, it is not transparent. Its expressive unity is precisely how we are "actively taking it up." As he writes, "the body is not a transparent object . . . it is an expressive unity which we can learn to know only by actively taking it up" (206).

The act of perception cannot be disassociated from the activity of the thing it is perceiving. The consciousness of the thing itself is impermeably joined to the "reaching" for that thing itself.

> Perception is precisely that kind of act in which there can be no question of setting the act itself apart from the end to which it is directed. Perception and the percept necessarily have the same existential modality, since perception is inseparable from the consciousness which it has, or rather is, of reaching the thing itself. (374)

We project ourselves toward the things of the world. Already, the body has an originating intentionality.

> The body's motion can play a part in the perception of the world only if it is itself an original intentionality, a manner of relating itself to the distinct object of knowledge. The world around us must be, not a system of objects

> which we synthesize, but a totality of things, open to us, towards which we project ourselves. (387)
>
> [Le mouvement du corps ne peut jouer un rôle dans la perception du monde que s'il est lui-même une intentionnalité originale, une manière de se rapporter à l'objet distincte de la connaissance. Il faut que le monde soit autour de nous, non pas comme un système d'objets dont nous faisons la synthèse, mais comme un ensemble ouvert de choses vers lesquelles nous nous projetons. (444)]

The body itself not only has a motion towards a thing and towards itself, and in itself, but also has a "project towards motion." Merleau-Ponty outlines this project as follows:

> The project towards motion is an act, which means that it traces out the spatio-temporal distance by actually covering it. (387)
>
> [Le projet de mouvement est un acte, c'est-à-dire qu'il trace la distance spatio-temporelle en la franchissant. (444)]

The covering of time and space is an activity of the body. For, conversely, there is no metaphysical or conceptual place from which the body could produce action, rather

> The 'motion which generates space' does not deploy the trajectory from some metaphysical point with

> no position in the real world, but from a certain here towards a certain yonder, which are necessarily interchangeable. (387)
>
> [Le "mouvement générateur de l'espace" ne déploie pas la trajectoire de quelque point métaphysique sans place dans le monde, mais d'un certain ici vers un certain là-bas, d'ailleurs substituables par principe. (444)]

Merleau-Ponty notes in his preface that there is no way to be outside time. It is only an "ultimate density which would place me outside time." Much later, but before the chapter "Temporality," he begins to define the relation of the body to time,

> My body takes possession of time; it brings into existence a past and a future for a present; it is not a thing, but creates time instead of submitting to it. (240).
>
> [Mon corps prend possession du temps, il fait exister un passé et un avenir pour un présent, il n'est pas une chose, il fait le temps au lieu de le subir. (277)]

The body constructs not only a relation to present time, but actively creates a series of tenses of time. He continues "I am myself time" [Je suis moi-même le temps] and "time *is* someone" (421-2) [le temps est quelqu'un (481-2)].

While Merleau-Ponty will show that time is the motion

of the body, he begins by referring to *presence*. The body is time, but as well, time conceives being, "It is through time that being is conceived" (430). [C'est par le temps qu'on pense l'être (492)] This is true because

> it is through the relations of time-subject and time-object that we are able to understand those obtaining between subject and world. (430-1)
>
> [. . . parce que c'est par les rapports du temps sujet et du temps objet que l'on peut comprendre ceux du sujet et du monde. (492)]

In this relation comes presence. Through time comes being, based on time-subject and time-object. Merleau-Ponty then discusses in detail "subjectivity as temporality" [la subjectivité comme temporalité]. Merleau-Ponty refers to his earlier La Structure du comportment to clarify

> . . . that neither scientific thematization nor objective thought can discover a single bodily function strictly independent of existential structures, or conversely a single 'spiritual' act which does not rest on a bodily infrastructure. (431)

The body is tied to the world as we know and construct it. He then, importantly, states "it is essential to me not only to have a body, but to have *this* body." [il ne m'est pas seulement essentiel d'avoir un corps, mais même d'avoir ce corps-ci.]

Time does not figure as prominently in Phénoménologie de la perception as does the discussion of space. While Merleau-Ponty has only one chapter on temporality, he has written two chapters on space. His first treatment of space occurs in "The Spatiality of One's own Body and Motility," and then much later in his chapter on "Space." He notes that "my body is a mode of objective space" (71). [mon corps [est] un mode de l'espace objectif (85)] He later observes, "the experience of our own body teaches us to realize space as rooted in existence" (148).

In the chapter "The Spatiality of One's Own Body and Motility," Merleau-Ponty observes a distinctive characteristic of the space of the body, "The outline of my body is a frontier which ordinary spatial relations do not cross. This is because its parts are inter-related in a peculiar way: they are not spread out side by side, but enveloped in each other" (98). But what makes this space unique? The body is not a *place*, but rather a *situation*: "And indeed its spatiality is not, like that of external objects or like that of 'spatial sensations', a *spatiality of position*, but a *spatiality of situation*" (100). [Et en effet sa spatialité n'est pas comme celle des objets extérieurs ou comme celle des "sensations spatiales" une *spatialité de position*, mais une *spatialité de situation* (116)] Indeed, there is a directionality of the body that Merleau-Ponty refers to, "my body appears to me as an

attitude directed towards a certain existing or possible task."

The body is space, and as we shall see, space is constituted through the action of our body, then space itself carries this same meaning of action. Thus Merleau-Ponty suggests a hermeneutics of movement in order to arrive at a clearer understanding. The body does not come into being through inactivity, it "comes to light" against a void,

> If bodily space and external space form a practical system, the first being the background against which the object as the goal of our action may stand out or the void in front of which it may *come to light*, it is clearly in action that the spatiality of our body is brought into being, and an analysis of one's own movement should enable us to arrive at a better understanding of it. (102)
> [Si l'espace corporel et l'espace extérieur forment un système pratique, le premier étant le fond sur lequel peut se détacher ou le vide devant lequel peut *apparaître* l'objet comme but de notre action, c'est évidemment dans l'action que la spatialité du corps s'accomplit et l'analyse du mouvement propre doit nous permettre de la comprendre mieux. (119)]

It is clear that we are at the center of Merleau-

Ponty's discussion of movement, and it is interesting that we find these ideas at the center of his consideration of the spatiality of one's body. Indeed, the title of the chapter shows that the spatiality of one's own body cannot be divorced from motility. We can compare this pivotal discussion to Husserl's ideas on the movement of the body in his chapter "The Constitution of Psychic Reality Through the Body."

Merleau-Ponty then considers a pedagogy of the body in motion:

> By considering the body in movement, we can see better how it inhabits space (and, moreover, time) because movement is not limited to submitting passively to space and time, it actively assumes them, it takes them up in their basic significance which is obscured in the commonplaceness of established situations. (102)
>
> [On voit mieux, en considérant le corps en mouvement, comment il habite l'espace (et d'ailleurs le temps) parce que le mouvement ne se contente pas de subir l'espace et le temps, il les assume activement, il les reprend dans leur signification originelle qui s'efface dans la banalité des situations acquises. (119)]

The body's movement does not reside within a passive reception of space and time, it impregnates them ("actively

assumes them"). The body incorporates space and time ("takes them up in their basic significance"). We do not see this precisely because of our everyday assumptions.

Merleau-Ponty reconsiders here Husserl's principle that consciousness is "not a matter of 'I think that' but of 'I can.'"

> Sight and movement are specific ways of entering into relationship with objects and if, through all these experiences, some unique function finds its expression, it is the momentum of existence, which does not cancel out the radical diversity of contents, because it links them to each other, not by placing them all under the control of an 'I think', but by guiding them towards the intersensory unity of a 'world'. (137)

He continues by fashioning the place of movement in relation to thinking, "Movement is not thought about movement, and bodily space is not space thought of or represented" (137). [Le mouvement n'est pas la pensée d'un mouvement et l'espace corporel n'est pas un espace pensé ou représenté. (160)] He then directly quotes Goldstein as follows:

> 'Each voluntary movement takes place in a setting, against a background which is determined by the movement itself. . . . We perform our movements in a space which is not "empty" or unrelated to them, but which on the contrary, bears a highly

> determinate relation to them: movement and background are, in fact, only artificially separated stages of a unique totality.' (qtd. in Phenomenology 137-8)

To illustrate this, Merleau-Ponty references the activity of a raised hand,

> In the action of the hand which is raised towards an object is contained a reference to the object, not as an object represented, but as that highly specific thing towards which we project ourselves, near which we are, in anticipation, and which we haunt. (138)

The gesture of the hand is movement outward "through the intermediary of the body." Thus we can define consciousness through that body movement, "Consciousness is being towards the thing through the intermediary of the body." [La conscience est l'être à la chose par l'intermédiaire du corps. (161)] Thus he writes,

> to move one's body is to aim at things through it; it is to allow oneself to respond to their call, which is made upon it independently of any representation. (139)
>
> [et mouvoir son corps c'est viser à travers lui les choses, c'est le laisser répondre à leur sollicitation qui s'exerce sur lui sans aucune représentation. (161)]

He clarifies again the role of consciousness in relation to the body,

> Motility, then, is not, as it were, a handmaid of consciousness, transporting the body to that point in space of which we have formed a representation beforehand.
>
> [La motricité n'est donc pas comme une servante de la conscience, qui transporte le corps au point de l'espace que nous nous sommes d'abord représenté. (161)]

It is essential to "avoid saying that our body is *in* space, or *in* time. It *inhabits* space and time" (139). [Il ne faut donc pas dire que notre corps est *dans* l'espace ni d'ailleurs qu'il est *dans* le temps. Il *habite* l'espace et le temps. (162)] Space and time are not separate from my body,

> I am not in space and time, nor do I conceive space and time; I belong to them, my body combines with them and includes them. (140)
>
> [je ne suis pas dans l'espace et dans le temps, je ne pense pas l'espace et le temps; je suis à l'espace et au temps, mon corps s'applique à eux et les embrasse. (164)]

The body's movement expressivity is a 'praktognosia':

> Our bodily experience of movement is not a particular case of knowledge; it provides us with

> a way of access to the world and the object, with a 'praktognosia', which has to be recognized as original and perhaps as primary. (140)

Near the end of the chapter Merleau-Ponty writes, "Now the body is essentially an expressive space" (146). [Or le corps est éminemment un espace expressif. (171)]

In the chapter "Space" Merleau-Ponty writes that space is "always 'already constituted'" (252). He sums up his preceding discussion by noting that the body is only directed toward that which it is directed toward, "the body is not geared to the world in all its positions." The body is directionalized,

> We must not wonder why being is orientated, why existence is spatial, why, using the expression we used a little while ago, our body is not geared to the world in all its positions, and why its coexistence with the world magnetizes experience and induces a direction in it. (252)

How can we characterize again the nature of movement?

> And just as we had to trace back the origin of the positing of space to the pre-objective situation or locality of the subject fastening himself on to his environment, so we shall have to rediscover, beneath the objective idea of movement, a pre-objective experience from which it borrows its significance, and in which movement, still linked

> to the person perceiving it, is a variation of the subject's hold on his world. (267)

The original space is posited through the physicality of the subject "fastening himself on to his environment." [du sujet qui se fixe à son milieu (309)] Beneath this idea of movement is a variation of this movement. Merleau-Ponty cautions us not to place ourselves outside movement "in a critical or verifactory manner":

> When we try to think of movement, and arrive at a philosophy of movement, we immediately place ourselves in a critical or verifactory attitude, we ask ourselves what precisely is given to us in movement . . . (267)

We must be careful here.

Merleau-Ponty sums up his intricate discussion:

> If we want to take the phenomenon of movement seriously, we shall need to conceive a world which is not made up only of things, but which has in it also pure transitions. The something in transit which we have recognized as necessary to the constitution of a change is to be defined only in terms of the particular manner of its 'passing'. For example, the bird which flies across my garden is, during the time that it is moving, merely a greyish power of flight and, generally speaking we shall see that things are defined primarily in

terms of their 'behaviour' and not in terms of their static 'properties'. It is not I who recognize, in each of the points and instants passed through, the same bird defined by explicit characteristics, it is the bird in flight which constitutes the unity of its movement, which changes it place, it is this flurry of plumage still here, which is already there in a kind of ubiquity, like the comet with its tail. (275)

[Si nous voulons prendre au sérieux le phénomène du mouvement, il nous faut concevoir un monde qui ne soit pas fait de choses seulement, mais de pures transitions. Le quelque chose en transit que nous avons reconnu nécessaire à la constitution d'un changement, ne se définit que par sa manière particulière de "passer". Par exemple, l'oiseau qui franchit mon jardin n'est dans le moment même du mouvement qu'une puissance grisâtre de voler et, d'une manière générale, nous verrons que les choses se définissent premièrement par leur "comportement" et non par des "propriétés" statiques. Ce n'est pas moi qui reconnais en chacun des points et des instants traversés le même oiseau défini par des caractères explicites, c'est l'oiseau en volant qui fait l'unité de son mouvement, c'est lui qui se

> déplace, c'est ce tumulte plumeux encore ici qui est déjà là-bas dans une sorte d'ubiquité comme la comète avec sa queue. (318)]

Merleau-Ponty chooses a bird for his description of motion, which could be construed as a reference to Husserl. It is curious, though, that the discussion here of taking "the phenomenon of movement seriously" is not directed to the human body.

While Merleau-Ponty does not specify the perceiving body in the following quotation, it is implied:

> We know of movement and a moving entity without being in any way aware of objective positions, as we know of an object at a distance and of its true size without any interpretation, and as we know every moment the place of an event in the thickness of our past without any express recollection. Motion is a modulation of an already familiar setting, and once more it leads us back to our central problem, which is how this setting, which acts as a background to every act of consciousness, comes to be constituted. (275-6)
>
> [Nous savons un mouvement et un mouvant sans aucune conscience des positions objectives, comme nous savons un objet à distance et sa vraie grandeur sans aucune interprétation, et comme à

> chaque moment nous savons la place d'un événement dans l'épaisseur de notre passé sans aucune évocation expresse. Le mouvement est une modulation d'un milieu déjà familier et nous ramène, une fois de plus, à notre problème central qui est de savoir comment se constitue ce milieu qui sert de fond à tout acte de conscience. (319)]

Merleau-Ponty then refers to how movement has been "reintroduced into the object in motion." As he writes,

> Now that we have reintroduced movement into the object in motion, this is to be interpreted in one sense only; it is in the moving object that it begins, and from there spreads into the field. I cannot force myself to see the stone as motionless, and the garden and myself as in motion. Motion is not a hypothesis, the probability of which is measured as in physical theory by the number of facts which it co-ordinates. That would give only possible movement, whereas movement is a fact. The stone is not conceived, but seen, in motion. (276-7)
>
> [Maintenant que nous avons réintroduit le mouvement dans le mobile, il ne se lit que dans un sens: c'est dans le mobile qu'il commence et de là qu'il se déploie dans le champ. Je ne suis pas maître de voir la pierre immobile, le jardin et

> moi-même en mouvement. Le mouvement n'est pas une hypothèse dont la probabilité soit mesurée comme celle de la théorie physique par le nombre de faits qu'elle coordonne. Cela ne donnerait qu'un mouvement possible. Le mouvement est un fait. La pierre n'est pas pensée, mais vue en mouvement. (320)]

This, again, is a pivotal point for Merleau-Ponty. Movement is a fact: "Le mouvement est un fait." This is a principle for Merleau-Ponty rather than a description per se.

In his lectures at the Sorbonne in 1957-58 Merleau-Ponty returns in more complete detail to the problem of the constitution of the expressive body in motion. The intervening years suggest a period of great reflection on the subject. Merleau-Ponty writes, "the movements of my body are subtracted from the appearance of certain givens" (164). [les mouvements de mon corps font se défalquer de l'apparence certaines données (260)] To consider this in more detail, he writes "Thus, in walking, the gaze spontaneously re-establishes the fixed line of the horizon and it is only when one pays attention to one's perception that one sees the landscape jump." Xavier Tilliette, who has prepared the notes which comprise Merleau-Ponty's lectures at the Sorbonne, refers in a footnote to a quotation from Merleau-Ponty's Le Visible et l'Invisible that illustrates this further, "When I walk in the street

with eyes fixed on the horizon of the houses, the whole of the setting near at hand quivers with each footfall on the asphalt, then settles down in its place" (qtd. in Tilliette 184).

The movement of walking is "the power of organizing at each step certain unfoldings of perceptual appearances" (164). There is a symbiotic relation between perception, the body and movement. "Each perception is a moment in the carnal unity of my body; the thing is a type of carnal unity which fits within the total functioning of my body, bringing about certain movements and kinesthesias." The activity of my body organizes my perception, "With my body and through my body I inhabit the world. The body is the field in which perceptions are localized" (164).

In his essay "The Philosopher and His Shadow" the movement is twofold, the body outward into the world, but also "The perceived thing rests upon the body proper" (173). [La chose intuitive repose sur le corps propre. (218)] What exactly is this movement of the body? It is the state of the being of the conditional, "The body is nothing less but nothing more than the thing's condition of possibility." [Le corps n'est rien de moins, mais rien de plus que condition de possibilité de la chose. (219)] What exactly is the action between body and world?: "propagation, encroachment, or enjambment." [propagation, empiètement ou enjambement]

We can now consider in more detail Bernet's essay "The Subject in Nature: Reflections on Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology of Perception." The subject is "interwoven with the natural world, because it lives only through its body. Natural life in Merleau-Ponty's sense is indeed a life that is '*bodily*' through and through" (9). Bernet then reviews some distinctions in terminology used by Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, "It is well known that Merleau-Ponty uses the word 'corps' to translate Husserl's term 'Leib' and that this 'Leib' is the principle of animal nature (animalische Natur) in the system of regional ontologies developed in the Second Book of the Ideas" (9). As we have seen in the last chapter, and as Bernet writes, "Animal nature is situated in between material nature (materielle Natur) and the spiritual world (geistige Welt)." Bernet poses an important question for Merleau-Ponty's revaluation of Husserl's schematic diagram of the *place* of the body, "Does this mean then that for Merleau-Ponty bodily existence is the feature that distinguishes us from inanimate nature, but equally prevents us ever to appropriate entirely the spiritual world of symbolic meanings?" Bernet answers this question:

> A closer look shows that the body is at one and the same time both the effective subject of natural life and the symbolic frame in which this life inserts itself. The body perceives, but it also unfolds the 'field' in which perception can

take place. (10)

Bernet also poses the question as to whether the body initiates movement, or whether consciousness does. The proximity of the body "to the subject distinguishes the body from the things of the world: it is a particular material object used by constituting consciousness to function and make itself known in the world" (16-17).

Bernet refers to the theme of "a *bodily subjectivity of things*" (20). Again, the question is considered, how is the body animated? As he writes, "Does it then follow that this symbolic, bodily and perceptive system of things, like the system of the body, still has to be animated and permeated by life to produce its effects?" As Bernet continues, "Merleau-Ponty's answer is as follows: the life that animates things is their expressive capacity" (21). Bernet rephrases Merleau-Ponty's discussion, the body "breathes life into it [the world] and sustains it inwardly" (24).

Françoise Dastur in an article from Analecta Husserliana, "Consciousness and Body in the Phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty," continues this questioning of a presupposed bifurcation between the natural and spiritual worlds. She writes, also quoting Merleau-Ponty's Le Visible et l'Invisible, "the bond between the soul and the body is to be understood as 'the bond between the convex and the concave, between the solid vault and the hollow it forms" (123-4). But how can we speak of the activity or the

expressivity of the body in this case? Dastur continues, again quoting Merleau-Ponty's Le Visible et l'Invisible, "From his first book to his last unfinished one, Merleau-Ponty thought that the 'inside' and the 'outside' are not opposed to each other so that 'to retire into oneself is identical to leaving oneself'" (124). Thus the activity of the body we have been discussing, the body's entrance into the world, is simultaneously an inverted activity: a non-activity, a falling into oneself. The expressivity, as well, is directed both outward and inward.

For the body is not constituted vis-à-vis the world, but rather, as Dastur writes, "*on the same side*" (120). The activity of the body in the world can be found on its *same* side. The intrusion into the world is a self-intrusion. The world and others are "not to be found 'in front of' the self but *on the same side; they encounter the self laterally; they are given in an 'indirect grasp'*" (120).

Dastur gives the same critique of vision in phenomenology we have briefly considered and constructs as well a critique of both Husserl and Merleau-Ponty on this subject. Dastur writes,

> . . . as Heidegger emphasizes, the entire philosophical tradition, from the Platonic eidos, to the Husserlian *Wesenschau*, through St. Augustine's *visio* and Descartes' *intuitio mentis*, has elected the eye as the sole organ of knowledge

> and has thought that vision only gives access to being.
>
> Merleau-Ponty does not seem to be opposed to this long tradition, as he too gives an exorbitant prerogative to vision. From his first to his last book, the author of Eye and Mind tried to answer a single question: what is vision. However, it is possible to remain caught up in the tradition and simultaneously to sap, from the inside, its very foundations. Merleau-Ponty wanted to differentiate what the metaphysical tradition has always identified: the 'thought of seeing,' i.e., a sublimated vision, and the 'vision in act,' 'the vision that really takes place, squeezed into a body, of which we can have no idea except in the exercise of it. (122)

By quoting Merleau-Ponty's L'Oeil et l'esprit Dastur is able to solve some of the problems we have discussed. Specifically, vision is subordinated to the overall activity of the body.

The animate qualities of the body we have discussed are also of a passivity:

> There is a fundamental narcissism of vision and flesh and its profound sense is that activity--i.e., the actual intentionality of things--is equally passivity--i.e., the feeling of being

> oneself looked at by the things. The mirror-structure of the flesh is the ultimate explanation of our understanding of the activity of the mind: what we call reflection of the mind derives from the primordial reflection of world in self and self in world. (123)

The activity is "what Merleau-Ponty calls an embracing relationship ('une relation d'embrassement') between world and body."

John Bannan in his The Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty points to the overall importance of movement for Merleau-Ponty, and in particular shows how movement itself directly assumes the existence of a body that animates movement. In his introduction Bannan notes the importance of the body as a "vehicle" in phenomenology for both Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. He notes that in Merleau-Ponty's Phénoménologie de la perception "intentionality is conceived as the giving of meaning, an *act* of signification. The body is construed as its vehicle" (14). Through this vehicular activity, the body is then "transformed by its role in the giving of meaning and by its resulting intimacy with consciousness into a distinctly 'subjective' dimension." At the beginning of the chapter "The World as Perceived" Bannan shows that the objects of the world, that is, phenomenal objects, are a condition and result of the "action of the subject" (87).

The body is the condition for objects, then, but

> what is the nature of its conditioning and of the objects that owe their meaning to it? We would expect that the phenomenal object might differ from the objectivist thing just as the phenomenal subject does from its objectivist counterpart, and this turns out to be the case. The phenomenal object is, as we shall see, less solid and blocklike. As a result it seem easier to conceive it as owing its meaning to the action of the subject. (87)

Bannan then points to the problem Merleau-Ponty has in finding terminology to express the action of the subject.

> The attempt to characterize the action itself leads Merleau-Ponty to use several terms without, apparently, being quite satisfied with any of them. Thus in the remark quoted above[2] he speaks of *synthesis*. At other times, when the issue is the relation with other persons, he will use the term *coexistence*, which by itself is not very suggestive of action. At still other times (and in fact most often) he will use the term *constitution* to designate the originating activity of the phenomenal subject, despite the intellectualist history of that term. (87-8)

Bannan thus begins to show the problems that Merleau-Ponty will have as he constitutes action and movement as

originating in the body.

Bannan notes that Merleau-Ponty refers to the conjoining of space and the body. Merleau-Ponty refers to the "association of the spatial character of the body with its motility" which is "its very act of acceding to a world" (90). Bannan refers as well to Merleau-Ponty's idea of "attention . . . as something accomplished by the body rather than by thought" (92).

Merleau-Ponty refers to length and breadth as, according to Bannan, "the grasp of the body upon the world" (97). Bannan then introduces the question of movement. He begins:

> The most familiar analysis makes movement the passage of an object through a series of positions to which it is completely indifferent. But--as Zeno accurately saw--such analysis destroys what it is supposed to understand. The object in question is not altered, and the positions are simply positions: motion evaporates before this ensemble of static factors. And yet there is motion. Experience not only demands that we acknowledge this, but it offers us the terms for a genuine comprehension of motion if we attend to it carefully. The experience of motion does not, for example, give us an identical object and a series of positions. (97-8)

Bannan notes that some philosophers

> . . . maintain that there can be motion without anything that is moved. Merleau-Ponty rejects this, but the argument he offers seems to be simply a blunt statement of the opposite position--the one occasion that we can think of where he does this. (98)

Thus, Bannan is critical of the commitment Merleau-Ponty has to motion qua motion. Bannan then reviews Merleau-Ponty's position, and cites Merleau-Ponty as well:

> He says in various ways that movement, whether perceived or thought, is always taken as involving something moved and simply continues, then, to hold that what is moved is not necessarily an *object* in the objectivist sense. The flying bird itself unifies its motion not as an object underlying its properties but as a style or behavior whose features mutually imply each other as do the elements in the experience of the past or of objects at a distance.
>
> > We know of movement and a moving entity without being in any way aware of objective positions, as we know of an object at a distance and of its true size without any interpretations, and as we know every moment the place of an

> event in the thickness of our past without any express recollection. Movement, in short, is pre-objective and another instance where our body is motivated to take up and complete an event. As surely as movement demands something that moves, it demands a field, and our bodies are also indispensable in the constitution of this. (98)

Bannan, in his second chapter "The Body and Perception," considers several chapters from Phénoménologie de la perception. We are concerned particularly with Bannan's reference to the chapters "The Spatiality of One's own Body and Motility" and "The Body as Expression, and Speech." The body is not an object because it is a "*condition* for objects. The relation here is dialectical rather than causal" (64). Bannan describes the motion of the body in its constituting function in the world,

> *That the body is not "completely constituted" is in some way a mark of its intimacy with the constituting function, which is consciousness.* If the body becomes subject, then it is because the subject has become body, transforming the latter in the movement by which it fulfills itself. "This movement of existence is the process of generating meanings or significant groupings and is what Merleau-Ponty will ultimately call

temporality. (64)

Bannan then discusses the importance of 'deployment' in Merleau-Ponty's conception of the body. For Merleau-Ponty "needs to establish that the object's deployment in space is due to the body as subject" (69). As Bannan writes, "I am not *in* space because I am the source of space." Bannan includes within his discussion another direct quotation from Merleau-Ponty, the body

> . . . forms a system with the world. In view of this system the spatial character of the body is called a "spatiality of situation" rather than of position:
>
> > The word 'here' applied to my body does not refer to a determinate position in relation to other positions or to external co-ordinates, but the laying down of the first co-ordinates, the anchoring of the active body in an object, the situation of the body in the face of its tasks.
>
> It is by its action and ultimately by the very movement of existence that the body enters the figure-background structure or addresses any of its tasks, and hence it is in action that its peculiar spatiality is accomplished. (70)

Merleau-Ponty thus uses his study of the activity of the

body to define human spatiality. Bannan then writes, "The body is the deployment of consciousness in time and space, its stabilization as habit, generally, and its presence to a world, or *incarnation*" (74).

Bannan summarizes the discussion we have already examined on gesture and language. He discusses also the problem of reiteration in speech as an alignment of language and the body with spatiality and temporality:

> . . . our ability to verbalize about verbalizing does not indicate a self-possession of consciousness by itself but a capacity for reiteration that prepares the way for the association of speech with time and an eventual explanation of its privilege by the process of accumulation through sedimentation. Whatever the privileged position of reason may be, he [Merleau-Ponty] insists that understanding it begins with placing it among the phenomena of expression with their demand for time and space incarnation. (85)

Bannan then briefly considers Merleau-Ponty's discussion of temporality. He writes, "there seems to be a convertibility between *time* and *subject*" *(126)*.

Remy Kwant, in <u>From Phenomenology to Metaphysics</u> is concerned more so with Merleau-Ponty's later work, particularly <u>Le Visible et l'Invisible</u>. He notes in his discussion on the body and the world that the body "leads us

to the things themselves" (55). The activity of the body for Kwant in his reading of Merleau-Ponty is metaphysical, "The perceiving body is the actualization of a potentiality, of a promise, which is there in things themselves" (56). The body has, even perhaps, a gravitational center, vis-à-vis the things of the world, "It [the body] is in the world as a center which concentrates things around itself" (58). What is the activity of this body-center? According to Kwant, "It transforms them into a field, into a world." Finally, "The body and things compenetrate one another."

Let us look at Kwant's discussion of the speaking body in Merleau-Ponty.

> Some of my movements . . . are not directed toward any material being. . . . Merleau-Ponty means the movements of the face and many gestures, especially the strange movements of the throat and of the mouth in the production of sound. I am a being which produces sounds . . . But I hear my sounds from within. Merleau-Ponty quotes Malraux, who says that we hear ourselves with our throat. (71)

There is an intrinsic linkage between the activity of perception and the body,

> Our perceptive life is spread all over our body, and yet it belongs together and has its own interior unity . . . Our perceptive life,

> therefore, is already a kind of awareness, a beginning thought. I am confronted with other "perceiving perceptibles," and here is the beginning of the phenomenon of expression. Expression transforms our awareness into reflective consciousness. (77)

Thinking is a direct result of the body's functioning, for

> our actual thought is the development of potential thought implicit in seeing, in touching, in the intrinsic coherence of our perceptive life . . . When we describe seeing and touching, we are in contact with a realm of being in which there is already some kind of reflection, for the perceptible is perceiving and is, therefore, aware of itself. This means that we are already within the realm of thought. (74)

Merleau-Ponty introduces a distinction in Le Visible et l'Invisible, as Kwant writes, between "'il y a . . .' ('there is . . .')" and "il m'apparaît que . . .' ('it seems to me that . . .')." While Kwant is at first critical of this distinction, he quickly acknowledges that the difficulty Merleau-Ponty feels for expressing these ideas is implicit both in the terminology and the awareness that Merleau-Ponty attempts to clarify:

> As a matter of fact, what is the thought indicated by the words "there is . . ."? The bare fact that

> being exists does not yet in itself constitute thought. The buildings on the other side of the street are there, but their being there does not imply thought. There is no thought without some kind of awareness. If, then, there is an awareness, then there also seems to be the "it seems to me that . . ." (74-5)

As Kwant writes, "Although we criticized Merleau-Ponty for insufficiently expressing himself, it now appears that what he tried to say can hardly be said" (76).

We have seen that the body has a qualitative relation to motion, a particular expressivity. It is thus possible to consider not only the animate qualities of the body, as we did with Husserl, but as well the expressive relation the body has to itself and the things of the world. I began the chapter by uncovering a distinction between the quantitative schematization of the body in Husserl and the qualitative description of the body in Merleau-Ponty.

Merleau-Ponty equates the body with a work of art, and is then particularly concerned with the relation of gesture to language, that is, the *physicalizing* of language. He analyzes the existence of a physical language, that is, the gestural language that is always a component of verbal language. Gesture for Merleau-Ponty is the expressive language of the body as it is in motion. We can see that language is one of the expressive capabilities of the body,

in spite of its limiting capacities. Precisely because we see language as expressive and interpretive, we can rephysicalize it through gesture and activity.

It is not possible to speak of the body and its movement and expressivity without speaking of time and space. For time and space have no existence outside of our sensed awareness of them. In a turn of thought, Merleau-Ponty then states that the body itself is time, and is space, and thus in this sense is again at the seat of movement per se. In his lectures at the Sorbonne we have the antithetical idea that the body's motion is then a concave outline of the world. In "The Philosopher and His Shadow" we see an interdependent movement of body and world. Thus, in Merleau-Ponty's later period we find a metaphysical conception of the body. Bernet argues that there is a passing away of distinction between the body and the spiritual world in Phénoménologie de la perception. Dastur argues for a reconciliation of opposites by observing inverted movements of the body, a 'retiring' into self.

Bannan summarizes many of the points throughout, but pays special attention as well to the fact that movement *implies* a body, and that movement is a principle for Merleau-Ponty, not simply a metaphor. We finish the chapter with Kwant's treatment of the metaphysics of phenomenology, and his sense that Merleau-Ponty is concerned with the compenetration of body and world, the "it seems to me

that . . ." of the world's potentialities through the body.

Notes

1. In chapter 2 I examined two works by Husserl which Merleau-Ponty studied at the Husserl Archives, Ideen II and "Grundlegende Untersuchungen zum Phänomenologischen Ursprung der Räumlichkeit der Natur." I have not considered Husserl's Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie, even though Merleau-Ponty studied this work at the Husserl Archives, because it is not specifically concerned with Husserl's idea of the body.

2. The note above that Merleau-Ponty refers to is as follows: "Merleau-Ponty's expression is *la présence charnelle*, which recalls Husserl's references to the 'flesh and blood presence' of the thing."

Chapter 4: The Name of the Body in Proust

Part I: The Name

In the second chapter we considered how Husserl used analytic models of sensate awareness to uncover the body as basis of perception and movement. At the same time that Husserl was theorizing principles of motion and the constitution of the body, he was testing the constituent activities of motion, and the parameters of shape, form, and time as they are collected around the idea of a body. In short, Husserl combined an analytic, theoretical investigation with empirical, spontaneous, observed research concerning the actions of his body as he engaged in the activity of writing. While correlations between Husserl and Proust do occasionally appear in the secondary literature in a number of Western and Eastern European languages, for the most part the discussion remains abbreviated.[1]

Vincent Descombes is one of the few literary critics to introduce a discussion of both Husserl and Merleau-Ponty within an analysis of the philosophical program of Proust. He refers in Proust: Philosophy of the Novel to the possibility of a "pure language of experience."

> A pure language of experience would consist in an idiom whose vocabulary and syntax would make it possible to express, without omissions or additions, the incontestable data of

> consciousness. (222)

Descombes is referring to the primary data of the world, which is separate from "natural language."

> In order to describe consciousness we need a language different from that of the "natural attitude" from which we address ourselves to the things of natural reality and not to the primary data out of which we have constructed them. (222)

He critiques the representational stance that comes to the forefront in the writing of a book as a "*translation* of the impressions made by life."

Descombes offers a recounting of the aims of phenomenology, particularly the work of Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, and Proust as it concerns the relationship between immediate experience and text:

> . . . Proust anticipates the whole course of phenomenology. Phenomenologists begin with the project of a pure description of what is given, directly ("in person"), to a single consciousness. In his quest for "the lineaments of what one felt" (TR, III, 933), Proust seems to be anticipating the Husserlian program cited many times (as in *The Phenomenology of Perception*, XV) by Merleau-Ponty: "'It is that as yet dumb experience...which we are concerned to lead to the pure expression of its own meaning.'" The

experience itself must acquire the power of speech and declare the "meaning" it had before being changed into expression. The experience must express itself, which means that it must in no instance find its form of expression anywhere other than in itself. But, having begun with Husserl, one soon stumbles over a problem that Merleau-Ponty, in a commentary on Proust, articulates in this way:

> What has been called Proust's Platonism is an attempt at an integral expression of the perceived or lived world. For this reason, the writer's work is a work of language, rather than of "thought." His task is to produce a system of signs whose internal articulation reproduces the contours of experience; the reliefs and sweeping lines of these contours in turn generate a syntax in depth, a mode of composition and recital which breaks the mold of the world and everyday language and refashions it. ("Themes," 93)

In terms borrowed from the doctrines of Proust the literary critic, Merleau-Ponty here formulates the problem of speech facing every writer. He then

acknowledges that these doctrines lead to a paradox:

> However, no one has better expressed the vicious circle or prodigy of speech, that to speak or to write is truly to *translate* an experience which, without the word that it elicits, would not become a text. (Ibid., 94)

If the book is to translate experience, then experience itself must already be a text. The experience is a text that remains to be written. It is a text in principle, a "condition of possibility" or a "transcendental presupposition." (223)

Thus, Descombes writes, the 'experience' is already fundamentally based in a written form. Contrary to Descombes though, and contrary to his argument which credits Blanchot and Derrida with the further development of the idea that "The text comes first; experience second," I ask in this chapter whether experience is neither textual nor literary, but of the body and its gestures. These gestures of the body are what some literary critics and philosophers refer to as the "signs" that are so important for interpreting Proust's work.

We will first examine how Proust uses the name in <u>A la recherche du temps perdu</u> and how the name is always the

portion of language leaning toward movement. We will also see that, as Merleau-Ponty understood, the body remains unnameable. (We will not particularly consider how Proust himself as author and narrator remains primarily unnamed; this is the subject of a longer study.)

Proust finishes Du côté de chez Swann with a particularly ideational section "Noms de pays: le nom." While many sections in A la recherche du temps perdu consider characteristics of the name[2] we will principally review only the final section of Du côté de chez Swann. The narrator first considers countries and place-names. He begins with reflections on the difference between the towns of Florence and Venice[3], and our *ideas* of these towns which form a wholly separate construct. Seldom is there a relation between what we imagine a country or place-name to be and what it is. The distinction between the actual town in Normandy and our *conception* of that town is of concern to the narrator. There was a "disenchantment that was in store for me when I set out upon my travels" (I:420).

Proust then distinguishes between words and names.

> Words present to us a little picture of things, clear and familiar, like the pictures hung on the walls of schoolrooms to give children an illustration of what is meant by a carpenter's bench, a bird, an anthill, things chosen as typical of everything else of the same sort.

(I:421)

[Les mots nous présentent des choses une petite image claire et usuelle comme celles que l'on suspend aux murs des écoles pour donner aux enfants l'exemple de ce qu'est un établi, un oiseau, une fourmilière, choses conçues comme pareilles à toutes celles de même sorte. (I:387)]

Names instead present us with a confused picture,

But names present to us--of persons, and of towns which they accustom us to regard as individual, as unique, like persons--a confused picture, which draws from them, from the brightness or darkness of their tone, the colour in which it is uniformly painted, like one of those posters, entirely blue or entirely red, in which, on account of the limitations imposed by the process used in their reproduction or by a whim on the designer's part, not only the sky and the sea are blue or red, but the ships and the church and the people in the streets. (I:421)

[Mais les noms présentent des personnes -- et des villes qu'ils nous habituent à croire individuelles, uniques comme des personnes -- une image confuse qui tire d'eux, de leur sonorité éclatante ou sombre, la couleur dont elle est peinte uniformément, comme une de ces affiches,

> entièrement bleues ou entièrement rouges, dans lesquelles, à cause des limites du procédé employé ou par un caprice du décorateur, sont bleus ou rouges, non seulement le ciel et la mer, mais les barques, l'église, les passants. (I:387-8)]

Words are clear things that are chosen to illustrate things they are like. Contrastingly, names are clouded, mysterious, and confused. Names remain ideational whereas words can be 'located' by using a dictionary. For Proust the name is a process that always undergoes the activity of naming and being named. Conversely, while a word can have its meanings changed over time, and in different settings with different usages, the *name changes itself*. In the activity of naming the meaning and essence of some *thing* becomes the *idiomatic nature* -- rather than the defined nature -- of that *thing*.

The narrator inquires as to what it would be like to take the "1:22 train" to Southern Europe in order to begin a voyage where he could find the towns which have existed for him only as images in his mind from particular words. As the train passes through many towns it "progressed magnificently overloaded with proffered names among which I do not know the one to choose, so impossible was it to sacrifice any" (I:419). [s'avançait magnifiquement surchargé de noms qu'il m'offrait et entre lesquels je ne savais lequel j'aurais préféré, par impossibilité d'en

sacrifier aucun (I:386)] As the narrator considers this voyage he ceases to differentiate between personal names and place-names. He often conjoins them. Cities remind the narrator of something so personal that he develops a love for them similar to the love he has of a person.

> During this month--in which I turned over and over in my mind, like a tune of which one never tires, these visions of Florence, Venice, Pisa, of which the desire that they excited in me retained something as profoundly personal as if it had been love, love for a person . . . (I:424)
>
> [Pendant ce mois -- où je ressassai comme une mélodie, sans pouvoir m'en rassasier, ces images de Florence, de Venise et de Pise, desquelles le désir qu'elles excitaient en moi gardait quelque chose d'aussi profondément individuel que si ç'avait été un amour, un amour pour une personne . . . (I:391)]

The narrator then suggests a physical contiguity to names, "since I thought of names not as an inaccessible ideal but as a real and enveloping atmosphere into which I was about to plunge, the life not yet lived, the life, intact and pure" (I:423). [ne pensant pas aux noms comme à un idéal inaccessible, mais comme à une ambiance réelle dans laquelle j'irais me plonger, la vie non vécue encore, la vie intacte et pure (I:390)] These scrim-like panels in Proust, where

names on the one hand are imaginative, ethereal, and mysterious, and at the next moment physical, existent phenomena that function as "life, intact and pure," suggest that names play a similar role to that of the body for Proust: they are a temporal gateway between the future imagined and the persistence of the mnemonic.

Contemplating these place-names, the unvisited towns, taxes and tires the narrator's physical body. He undergoes a "miraculous disincarnation" (I:427) [miraculeuse désincarnation (I:393)] and has to be put to bed because of a fever, thus missing a trip in which he might actually have viewed these towns. The tension between the meaning of a name -- conceptual motion -- and the difficulty of physical motion for the narrator is clearly outlined in this episode.

While playing one day in the park a young girl calls out the name of his friend Gilberte. Proust writes:

> The name Gilberte passed close by me, evoking all the more forcefully the girl whom it labelled in that it did not merely refer to her, as one speaks of someone in his absence, but was directly addressed to her; it passed thus close by me, in action so to speak, with a force that increased with the curve of its trajectory and the proximity of its target . . . (I:428)
>
> [Ce nom de Gilberte passa près de moi, évoquant d'autant plus l'existence de celle qu'il désignait

> qu'il ne la nommait pas seulement comme un absent dont on parle, mais l'interpellait; il passa ainsi près de moi, en action pour ainsi dire, avec une puissance qu'accroissait la courbe de son jet et l'approche de son but . . . (I:394)]

The narrator is jealous of the friendship of Gilberte's friend. Proust uses this encounter to define a theory of the physical force that can be produced from the trajectory of names.

One scene in Du côté de chez Swann particularly exhibits the interlacing of name and body. Gilberte initiates a discussion with the narrator on what they may call and name each other. Gilberte says:

> "You know, you may call me 'Gilberte.' In any case, I'm going to call you by your first name. It's too silly not to." Yet she continued for a while to address me by the more formal '*vous*,' and when I drew her attention to this, she smiled and, composing, constructing a phrase like those that are put into the grammar-books of foreign languages with no other object than to teach us to make use of a new word, ended it with my Christian name. (I:437)
>
> ["Vous savez, vous pouvez m'appeler Gilberte, en tous cas moi, je vous appellerai par votre nom de baptême. C'est trop gênant." Pourtant elle

> continua encore un moment à se contenter de me dire "vous" et, comme je le lui faisais remarquer, elle sourit et, composant, construisant une phrase comme celles qui dans les grammaires étrangères n'ont d'autre but que de nous faire employer un mot nouveau, elle la termina par mon petit nom. (I:403)]

Proust then begins an analysis, which has a particularly strong physical component to it, of the narrator's response to having been named by Gilberte. During the naming exchange, "I distinguished the impression of having been held for a moment in her mouth, myself, naked." [j'y ai démêlé l'impression d'avoir été tenu un instant dans sa bouche, moi-même, nu] The pronouncing of the personal name for the narrator is felt to be carnal; he feels he is held in Gilberte's mouth. This articulation of the "words to which she wished to give a special emphasis--had the air of stripping, of divesting me, like the skin from a fruit of which one can swallow only the pulp" (I:437-8). [les mots qu'elle voulait mettre en valeur -- eurent l'air de me dépouiller, de me dévêtir, comme de sa peau un fruit dont on ne peut avaler que la pulpe (I:404)]

There are two ways to 'retrieve' the past for Proust, through the bodily, or through a particular name. Often, the bodily and the name appear in tandem, in the acts of pronouncing, for example, "I need only, to make them

reappear, pronounce the names Balbec, Venice, Florence, within whose syllables had gradually accumulated the longing inspired in me by the places for which they stood" (I:420). [Je n'eus besoin pour les faire renaître que de prononcer ces noms: Balbec, Venise, Florence, dans l'intérieur desquels avait fini par s'accumuler le désir que m'avaient inspiré les lieux qu'ils désignaient. (I:387)]

Frances Fardwell in Landscape in the Works of Marcel Proust, considers the auditory nature of place-names. The narrator's 'disincarnation', the need to be put to bed for his illness, comes precisely from the nature of his father's pronunciation, "all this was caused by the auditive elements pronounced by Marcel's father: Venice--Canale Grande" (Fardwell 181).

As Fardwell continues,

> Names constantly lent mystery to the projection of his already enchanted reveries. He confesses that at an age when a name offers an image of the unknowable, while at the same moment it suggests also a real place, it forces us to identify one with the other to such a point that we set out to seek in a city a soul which it does not embody but which we have no longer the power to eliminate from the sound of its name. But direct geographical knowledge of places had an even more deceiving effect. For instance, as soon

> as he arrived in Balbec it was as if he had opened a name which ought to have been kept hermetically closed and where, as he expelled all the images that had been living in it until then, a tramway, a café, people walking in the square, etc., came crowding into the interior of those two syllables which, closing over them, let them now frame the porch of the Persian church and would never cease to contain them. (Fardwell 181)

Proust then introduces a distinction between the Gilberte whom he knows, and the Gilberte of his imagination:

> . . . as soon as I was in the presence of that Gilberte Swann on the sight of whom I had counted to revive the images that my tired memory could no longer recapture, of that Gilberte Swann with whom I had played the day before . . . then at once it became as though she and the little girl who was the object of my dreams had been two different people. (I:435)
>
> [. . . dès que j'étais en présence de cette Gilberte Swann sur la vue de laquelle j'avais compté pour rafraîchir les images que ma mémoire fatiguée ne retrouvait plus, de cette Gilberte Swann avec qui j'avais joué hier . . . aussitôt tout se passait comme si elle et la fillette qui était l'objet de mes rêves avaient été deux êtres

différents. (I:401)]

The bifurcation between the imagined world of a name, and the name of something within the world, such as a person or a town, splits the narrator's consciousness of his own activities. While contemplating a letter from his beloved Gilberte, a Gilberte he envisions in two forms, the Gilberte who loves him, and the girl who "has assumed the form of the other Gilberte who is simply a playmate," (I:443) [elle a pris l'apparence de la Gilberte simple camarade (I:409)] the narrator suddenly realizes that it is impossible for him to receive the very love letter he has imagined:

> Every evening I would beguile myself by imagining this letter, believing that I was actually reading it, reciting each of its sentences in turn. Suddenly I would stop in alarm. I had realized that if I was to receive a letter from Gilberte, it could not, in any case, be this letter, since it was I myself who had just composed it. (I:443)
>
> [Tous les soirs je me plaisais à imaginer cette lettre, je croyais la lire, je m'en récitais chaque phrase. Tout d'un coup, je m'arrêtais effrayé. Je comprenais que si je devais recevoir une lettre de Gilberte, ce ne pourrait pas en tous cas être celle-là, puisque c'était moi qui venais de la composer. (I:409)]

The narrator becomes afraid to think of the very words he wishes to hear from Gilberte "for fear that, by voicing them, I should be excluding just those words, -- the dearest, the most desired -- from the field of possibilities" (I: 443). [par peur, en les énonçant, d'exclure justement ceux-là, -- les plus chers, les plus désirés -- du champ des réalisations possibles (I:409)] Once a word has been vocalized, once it is pronounced and uttered, then it no longer exists within a field of potentialities. It has become a carnate thing, becoming physically real by being spoken.[4]

The narrator looks for occasions to pronounce the name of Gilberte's father, Swann. We will also see in this passage how the name has a physical basis, a *bodily component*.

> I went out of my way to find occasions for my parents to pronounce Swann's name. In my own mind, of course, I never ceased to murmur it; but I needed also to hear its exquisite sound, to have others play to me that music the voiceless rendering of which did not suffice me. Moreover, the name Swann, with which I had for so long been familiar, had now become for me (as happens with certain aphasiacs in the case of the most ordinary words) a new name. It was for ever present in my mind, which could not, however, grow accustomed to

it. I analyzed it, I spelt it; its orthography came to me as a surprise. And together with its familiarity it had simultaneously lost its innocence. The pleasure that I derived from the sound of it I felt to be so sinful that it seemed to me as though the others read my thoughts and changed the conversation if I tried to guide it in that direction. I fell back on subjects which still concerned Gilberte, I repeated over and over again the same words, and although I knew that they were only words--words uttered in her absence, which she could not hear, words without virtue in themselves, repeating what were facts but powerless to modify them--it seemed to me none the less that by dint of thus manipulating, stirring up everything that had reference to Gilberte, I might perhaps elicit from it something that would bring me happiness. I told my parents again that Gilberte was fond of her governess, as if that proposition, voiced for the hundredth time, would at last have the effect of making Gilberte suddenly burst into the room, come to live with us for ever.

(I:447-8)

[Je m'arrangeais à tout propos à faire prononcer à mes parents le nom de Swann; certes je

me le répétais mentalement sans cesse; mais j'avais besoin aussi d'entendre sa sonorité délicieuse et de me faire jouer cette musique dont la lecture muette ne me suffisait pas. Ce nom de Swann d'ailleurs, que je connaissais depuis si longtemps, était maintenant pour moi, ainsi qu'il arrive à certains aphasiques à l'égard des mots les plus usuels, un nom nouveau. Il était toujours présent à ma pensée et pourtant elle ne pouvait pas s'habituer à lui. Je le décomposais, je l'épelais, son orthographe était pour moi une surprise. Et en même temps que d'être familier, il avait cessé de me paraître innocent. Les joies que je prenais à l'entendre, je les croyais si coupables qu'il me semblait qu'on devinait ma pensée et qu'on changeait la conversation si je cherchais à l'y amener. Je me rabattais sur les sujets qui touchaient encore à Gilberte, je rabâchais sans fin les mêmes paroles, et j'avais beau savoir que ce n'était que des paroles -- des paroles prononcées loin d'elle, qu'elle n'entendait pas, des paroles sans vertu qui répétaient ce qui était, mais ne le pouvaient modifier -- pourtant il me semblait qu'à force de manier, de brasser ainsi tout ce qui avoisinait Gilberte, j'en ferais peut-être sortir quelque

> chose d'heureux. Je redisais à mes parents que Gilberte aimait bien son institutrice, comme si cette proposition énoncée pour la centième fois allait avoir enfin pour effet de faire brusquement entrer Gilberte, venant à tout jamais vivre avec nous. (I:413)]

For Proust the division between utterance of words and names, and the appearance of the things they represent is insurmountable. Gilberte does not appear. Names and words continue to be incantational for Proust, and without immediate physical applicability. Still, he continues to seek names because of their physical basis.

Proust's narrator writes out Gilberte's name and her address repeatedly, as if she will appear. But he finds only himself within this repetition. In the composing and arranging of meaning within his exercise and composition book her personal name coincides with her place-name, that is, her address. Yet the exercise does not produce a meaning outside of the narrator's consciousness.

> True, on every page of my exercise-books I wrote out, in endless repetition, her name and address, but at the sight of those vague lines which I traced without her thinking of me any the more on that account, which made her take up so much apparent space around me without her being any the more involved in my life, I felt discouraged,

> because they spoke to me, not of Gilberte, who would never so much as see them, but of my own desire, which they seemed to show me in its true colours, as something purely personal, unreal, tedious and ineffectual. (I:434)
> [Certes, à toutes les pages de mes cahiers, j'écrivais indéfiniment son nom et son adresse, mais à la vue de ces vagues lignes que je traçais sans qu'elle pensât pour cela à moi, qui lui faisaient prendre autour de moi tant de place apparente sans qu'elle fût mêlée davantage à ma vie, je me sentais découragé parce qu'elles ne me parlaient pas de Gilberte qui ne les verrait même pas, mais de mon propre désir qu'elles semblaient me montrer comme quelque chose de purement personnel, d'irréel, de fastidieux et d'impuissant.
> (I:400)]

On the days he knows he will not see Gilberte he often takes a walk to the Bois du Boulogne with Francoise, the housekeeper. Proust uses this scene, which reminds him of the zoological gardens, which itself is a temple of named phenomena of animals and plants, for a reflection on naming. The narrator smells some flowers from a distance, and comes closer and closer to them. Finally as he has approached the flowers, he finds their names, which makes his heart beat.

. . . long before I reached the acacia-alley, their fragrance which, radiating all around, made one aware of the approach and the singularity of a vegetable personality at once powerful and soft, then, as I drew near, the glimpsed summit of their lightly tossing foliage, in its easy grace, its coquettish outline, its delicate fabric, on which hundreds of flowers had swooped, like winged and throbbing colonies of precious insects, and finally their name itself, feminine, indolent, dulcet, made my heart beat, but with a social longing, like those waltzes which remind us only of the names of the fair dancers, called aloud as they enter the ballroom. (I:452)

[. . . bien avant d'arriver à l'allée des Acacias leur parfum qui, irradiant alentour, faisait sentir de loin l'approche et la singularité d'une puissante et molle individualité végétale, puis, quand je me rapprochais, le faîte aperçu de leur frondaison légère et mièvre, d'une élégance facile, d'une coupe coquette et d'un mince tissu, sur laquelle des centaines de fleurs s'étaient abattues comme des colonies ailées et vibratiles de parasites précieux, enfin jusqu'à leur nom féminin, désoeuvré et doux, me faisaient battre le coeur, mais d'un désir mondain, comme ces valses

> qui ne nous évoquent plus que le nom des belles invitées que l'huissier annonce à l'entrée d'un bal. (I:418)]

Let us now consider Roland Barthes' essay "Proust and Names." We might at first assume that Barthes would want to describe how Proust's sentences are so essential to the Proustian structure. Why would Barthes choose instead to consider the grammatical function of the sentence in Flaubert, rather than in Proust? The real stylistic strength of Proust, and Proust's central examination, according to Barthes, is an understanding of names. He considers Proust's transformation of sensation into notation: the turning of the sensate into that which can be named and written.

Barthes argues that while Proust had possessed certain names when writing Contre Sainte-Beuve, "it was only between 1907 and 1909, it appears, that he constituted in its entirety the onomastic system of *Remembrance*" (58-9). Barthes states that "once this system was found, the work was written immediately" (59). Barthes also argues that "the proper name is in a sense the linguistic form of reminiscence." When the name conjoins with the sensate, involuntary memory is called into being. As Barthes cogently defines:

> The proper name possesses the three properties which the narrator concedes to reminiscence: the

> power of essentialization (since one 'unfolds' a proper name exactly as one does a memory): the proper name is in a sense the linguistic form of reminiscence. (58)

Barthes then writes that the proper name is both "a 'milieu' . . . into which one must plunge . . . and a precious object, compressed, embalmed, which must be opened like a flower" (59). Barthes understands Proust's name as a "voluminous sign, a sign always pregnant with a dense texture of meaning, which no amount of wear can reduce, can flatten, contrary to the common noun" (59). Finally, according to Barthes, for Proust "'the virtue of names is to teach': there is a propaedeutics of names which leads, by paths often long, various, and indirect, to the essence of things" (67).

Both Proust and Barthes understand that names can lead to the physical nature of things themselves. For Proust there are three methods for discerning what is not solipsistic in the world: language through the operation of naming, nature, and art. In "Noms de pays: le nom" Proust's narrator states "I was curious and eager to know only what I believed to be more real than myself" (I:417). [Je n'étais curieux, je n'étais avide de connaître que ce que je croyais plus vrai que moi-même (I:384)] The narrator is specifically discussing the possibility of comprehending either nature or art, but also the possibility of knowing a

name that can be more real than himself -- a name that can lead to internal knowledge of things.

Art historian Maurice Chernowitz in his study Proust and Painting claims that the impression for Proust is the basis of the valuation of truth. Chernowitz notes in many specific instances the direct influence of Monet on Proust. He also argues for the motive qualities of Impressionism, which is

> . . . an art of movement, first in point of the subject matter itself which is caught in the act of moving, and further with regard to the movement of light and atmosphere arrested on a canvas as perceived at a given instant, that is, altogether different in aspect from its appearance at the following moment. (Chernowitz 145)

Chernowitz clarifies the "subject" of Impressionism:

> Proust describes how he had long sought a profound philosophic subject, until he finally realized that the smallest, the least significant thing could constitute great subject matter, since his entire past could miraculously arise from a "cup of tea." As in Impressionist art, so in Proust's work there is no formal subject to be treated in the grand manner, there are only thousands of impressions, produced by the humblest things, a few trees, some spires, a piece of cake, a napkin,

> a paving stone, all of which may, however, be pregnant with meaning and may link the outer environment with the magic portals of inner sensibility. (Chernowitz 154)

The world exists in a sketchy state:

> Impressionist art is characterized by a general sketchiness: replacing the former mode of detailed external description so finished, so *léché*, we find a few bold strokes--they are enough and say more. What counts is the presentation of sensations and impressions, in comparison with which the rest does not matter. (Chernowitz 171-2)

When Proust appears to be naming, particularly in "Noms de pays: le nom" and "Noms de pays: le pays," he infuses names with the same atmospheric and analogic relations existing outside the name, thus creating an environment of mood and color without sharp contrast.

Proust considers the paintings of Elstir (the fictionalized Impressionist painter generally considered to be Monet) and extends the metaphor of naming. He is discussing the atmospheric paintings that covered the walls of Elstir's studio.

> But I was able to discern from these that the charm of each of them lay in a sort of metamorphosis of the objects represented,

> analogous to what in poetry we call metaphor, and that, if God the Father had created things by naming them, it was by taking away their names or giving them other names that Elstir created them anew. (I:893)
>
> [Mais j'y pouvais discerner que le charme de chacune consistait en une sorte de métamorphose des choses représentées, analogue à celle qu'en poésie on nomme métaphore, et que, si Dieu le Père avait créé les choses en les nommant, c'est en leur ôtant leur nom, ou en leur en donnant un autre, qu'Elstir les recréait. (I:835)]

We see that the work of the painter -- Monet particularly -- was not simply visual, but was linguistic. The activity of Impressionist painting is one of removing names and then renaming.

Chernowitz discusses the way in which Proust creates his literary impressions:

> Proust's most frequent device for thus reconstructing his impressions is the comparison and its stylistic forms, simile and metaphor. Nothing therefore is so typical of Proustian syntax as his amazing variety of conjunctions serving to link his comparisons: *ainsi que, comme, tels, pareil à, même . . . que, aussi bien que, si, comme si, sans plus de . . . que si,*

> *aussi différents de toute autre que . . .* There will be found even subtler links, verbs like *paraître, sembler, avoir l'air,* or simply *avoir;* also tenses, present and past conditionals, such as *on aurait dit* and *eût fait croire;* at times, prepositions such as *avec,* demonstratives like *cette . . . que,* and even adjectives such as *digne de.* (173-4)

Through a linkage of comparisons words turn into motion. We can see how it was difficult for Proust to finish the writing of A la recherche du temps perdu: the fluidity was immense. Chernowitz discusses the flux of the impressionistic milieu,

> As the painter records the flux of appearances that strike his eye, no one part stands out more sharply than another: through this soft focus the details are submerged in the whole. Since the brush stroke here serves no longer to designate form but merely optic value, it naturally makes forms appear indefinite and easily interchangeable. (106-7)

In Monet we see the transformation from form to atmosphere, from 'external' objects in the landscape to a preoccupation with 'internal' objects and concerns of the self.

Literary critic Gérard Genette in Narrative Discourse notes that Proust does not give an accounting of Elstir's

painting, but rather discusses the "'optical illusions' that it 'recreates'." Genette is particularly interested in the existential possibility that surrounds Proust's words, words that build doubt for the narrator and erode the possibility of the world and its image.

> Suppose we reread, for example, the few pages devoted to Elstir's seascapes at Balbec. We will see how jammed they are with terms designating not what the painting of Elstir *is*, but the "optical illusions" that it "recreates," and the false impressions it arouses and dissipates in turn: *seem, appear, give the impression, as if, you felt, you would have said, you thought, you understood, you saw reappear, they went racing over sunlit fields*, etc. Aesthetic activity here is not repose at all . . . (102)

Genette sees the Proustian narrative as one of unmitigated activity, "Proustian narrative never comes to a standstill at an object or a sight unless that halt corresponds to a contemplative pause by the hero himself" (100). Contemplation is an active moment of reflection, a period of tumultuousness for the narrator; "So we see that in Proust contemplation is neither an instantaneous flash (like a recollection) nor a moment of passive and restful ecstasy; it is an activity--intense, intellectual, and often physical--" (105). Genette describes the conceptual

activity of Proust's narrator as that of "impressions, progressive discoveries, shifts in distance and perspective, errors and corrections, enthusiasms or disappointments" (102). He shows how contemplation for Proust's narrator is a moment of self-analysis, "Proustian 'description' is less a description of the object contemplated than it is a narrative and analysis of the perceptual activity of the character contemplating" (102).

Genette, using a method similar to that employed in Chernowitz' analysis, notes the terms that construct Proust's world as visually in flux: *"seem, appear, give the impression, as if, you felt, you would have said, you thought, you understood, you saw reappear, they went racing over sunlit fields*, etc." (102). The world is constructed out of italicized terminology, that is, a world of discontinuous impressions. There is a fluttering or fluctuation in what we can see and feel at the same time that we come closer to the essence of things themselves. Proust's task is to name the world through the very italics that he introduces. For Proust the pause that exists within the act of contemplation, within the action of seeing and then finding names for things, is an active, conceptual twisting of existential self-analysis[5]. The pause, then, the finding of a moment to name[6] the world, is a state of interior commotion that solidifies the physical and existential state of the body.

Notes

1. James C. Morrison and George J. Stack in "Proust and Phenomenology" consider at the beginning of their article the difficulty of clarifying direct ties between the two.

> Although it has often been said that Marcel Proust has been influenced by the philosophy of Henri Bergson, it has not been shown that there is an intimate relationship between specific aspects of Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* and existential and Husserlian phenomenology. Recently it has been said that Proust did as much as any philosopher to provide the 'climate' for the development of French existential phenomenology. While this may or may not be the case, it will be clear that there are significant parallels between the philosophical insights of Proust and those of Husserl and other phenomenologists. Since there can be no question of direct influence here, we will be primarily concerned with an attempt to represent a number of analogies between Proust's literary-aesthetic phenomenology (if we may call it such) and philosophical phenomenology. (604)

2. A lengthy study could also consider Proust's short piece, "Noms de personnes," published in Contre Sainte-Beuve. While the essay can be seen primarily as an early sketch for Le côté de Guermantes, and a particular inquiry on questions of the phylogeny of the Guermantes name, and the Guermantes identity, the essay also helps to clarify the unyielding thematic work Proust continues to build throughout his life. The essay is richer in ideas than literary style, but for our purposes that only helps us to understand more broadly some of the associational ideas which Proust ascribes to the name, and assists in widening our understanding of the conceptual importance of the name in A la recherche du temps perdu as a whole. For example, when Proust begins "Noms de personnes" in Contre Sainte-Beuve the public and private, place and body, are already indistinguishable, "La Rochefoucauld, La Trémoille, celebrated names of the nobility which have become names of streets, names of books, seemed to me too public, too nearly household words to enter her company" (230). [La Rochefoucauld, La Trémoille, ceux qui sont devenus des noms de rues, des noms d'oeuvres me semblaient trop publics, devenus trop des noms communs pour cela. (268)]

3. Fred Nichols has pointed out that we could further ponder how some names in Proust are fictional (Balbec) and some are "real" (e.g., Venice).

4. As Fred Nichols has noted, it is interesting that a name cannot summon up a physical presence, but it becomes one itself. There seems to be a curious substitution at work.

5. We can consider a scene in Du côté de chez Swann where inner activity is evidenced during the act of contemplation. The narrator ponders his potential literary career. He wonders if such a career is possible and is then immersed immediately in an active contemplation (of both world and self) of the sort Genette describes:

> Then, quite independently of all these literary preoccupations and in no way connected with them, suddenly a roof, a gleam of sunlight on a stone, the smell of a path would make me stop still, to enjoy the special pleasure that each of them gave me, and also because they appeared to be concealing, beyond what my eyes could see, something which they invited me to come and take but which despite all my efforts I never managed to discover. Since I felt that this something was to be found in them, I would stand there motionless, looking, breathing, endeavoring to penetrate with my mind beyond the thing seen or smelt. And if I then had to hasten after my grandfather, to continue my walk, I would try to recapture them by closing my eyes; I would concentrate on recalling exactly the line of the roof, the colour of the stone, which, without my being able to understand why, had seemed to me to be bursting, ready to open, to yield up to me the secret treasure of which they were themselves no more than the lids. It was certainly not impressions of this kind that could restore the hope I had lost of succeeding one day in becoming an author and poet . . . (I:194-5)
>
> [Alors, bien en dehors de toutes ces préoccupations littéraires et ne s'y rattachant en rien, tout d'un coup un toit, un reflet de soleil sur une pierre, l'odeur d'un chemin me faisaient arrêter par un plaisir particulier qu'ils me donnaient, et aussi parce qu'ils avaient l'air de cacher, au delà de ce que je voyais, quelque chose qu'ils invitaient à venir prendre et que malgré mes efforts je n'arrivais pas à découvrir. Comme je sentais que cela se trouvait en eux, je restais là, immobile, à regarder, à respirer, à tâcher d'aller avec ma pensée au delà de l'image ou de l'odeur. Et s'il me fallait rattraper mon grand-père, poursuivre ma route, je cherchais à les retrouver en fermant les yeux; je m'attachais à me rappeler exactement la ligne du toit, la nuance de la pierre, qui, sans que je pusse comprendre pourquoi, m'avaient semblé pleines, prêtes à s'entr'ouvrir, à me livrer ce dont elles n'étaient qu'un couvercle. Certes ce n'était pas des impressions de ce genre qui pouvaient me rendre l'espérance que j'avais perdue de pouvoir être un jour écrivain et poète . . . (I:178-9)]

6. Recently several studies have considered in detail the importance of the name throughout A la recherche du temps perdu. See Christian Moraru's "Exploring Names: Notes on Onomastics and Fictionality in Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*" for a discussion of, among other subjects, the difference between the dictionary and the book, "lexical pictures," and names "treated as 'surnames'" (123).

For our purposes Conley's "The Improper Name" is particularly clear in the initial paragraphs. As he writes:

> A hinge connecting the formal tradition of poetry with the looser mode of prose, a pivot on which hang both traditions in common graphic force, may well be the proper name. The novelist seeks a name embodying, summarizing, "overdetermining" -- but also scattering -- the virtues of its character. If not a rebus, the proper name is a cypher, what Proust calls a *langage chiffré*. The structure of the proper name locks aural and graphic elements into orders of allegory. In the context of the sentence, the proper name forces surrounding words to lose their usually semantic state of invisibility. In this respect, since Sartre's *Qu'est-ce que la littérature*, many theoreticians of narrative have taken the *classic* mode to denote transparence: words are cast in configurations that allow passage to take place and plot to develop -- but only when the eyes are led to see *through* words.
>
> The proper name brings the text back to visibility; its shape arrests the process or passage of meaning. Although part of the semantic configuration of the sentence, the proper name still has a contour which can draw imaginary forms into the order of the sentence. The proper name appears to be a node both within and independent of the narrative; it conveys the latter as it also forms a network of hidden and every-expansive suggestions that do not yield to the control of prosody. (121-2)

Eugène Nicole in "Searching the Names" writes "This interest in the proper name, which is a corollary of the semiotics of character, reaches beyond the traditional scope of literary onomastics by presenting, on a broader scale, a theory of its narrative functioning which has been equated to the very theory of the narrative" (79). Nicole has intricately studied the problems of naming-systems in Proust and also has a critique of Barthes' understanding of the importance of naming to Proust.

Chapter 4: The Name of the Body in Proust

Part II: The Body

Merleau-Ponty equates the activity of remembering with the activity of "starting to move." In his schemata both are the same for the body. For emphasis, I will cite again the passage which we have seen in chapter 3:

> The body's function in remembering is that same function of projection which we have already met in starting to move: the body converts a certain motor essence into vocal form, spreads out the articulatory style of a word into audible phenomena, and arrays the former attitude, which is resumed, into the panorama of the past, projecting an intention to move into actual movement . . . (Phenomenology 181)

The preceding sentence by Merleau-Ponty articulates the contingent relationship between body and memory:

> The part played by the body in memory is comprehensible only if memory is, not only the constituting consciousness of the past, but an effort to reopen time on the basis of the implications contained in the present, and if the body, as our permanent means of 'taking up attitudes' and thus constructing pseudo-presents, is the medium of our communication with time as

well as with space. (Phenomenology 181)

The body, as a vehicle for "taking up attitudes," can "reopen" time and memory.

In order to explain his ideas more fully, Merleau-Ponty offers a footnote which consists solely of a passage from Proust's Du côté de chez Swann. Here is the passage he cites:

> . . . when I awoke like this, and my mind struggled in an unsuccessful attempt to discover where I was, everything revolved around me through the darkness: things, places, years. My body, still too heavy with sleep to move, would endeavour to construe from the pattern of its tiredness the position of its various limbs, in order to deduce therefrom the direction of the wall, the location of the furniture, to piece together and give a name to the house in which it lay. Its memory, the composite memory of its ribs, its knees, its shoulder-blades, offered it a whole series of rooms in which it had at one time or another slept, while the unseen walls, shifting and adapting themselves to the shape of each successive room that it remembered, whirled round it in the dark. . . . and my body, the side upon which I was lying, faithful guardians of a past which my mind should never have forgotten, brought

back before my eyes the glimmering flame of the night-light in its urn-shaped bowl of Bohemian glass that hung by chains from the ceiling, and the chimney-piece of Siena marble in my bedroom at Combray, in my grandparents' house, in those far distant days which at this moment I imagined to be in the present without being able to picture them exactly, and which would become plainer in a little while when I was properly awake. (I:6-7)

[. . . quand je me réveillais ainsi, mon esprit s'agitant pour chercher, sans y réussir, à savoir où j'étais, tout tournait autour de moi dans l'obscurité, les choses, les pays, les années. Mon corps, trop engourdi pour remuer, cherchait, d'après la forme de sa fatigue, à repérer la position de ses membres pour en induire la direction du mur, la place des meubles, pour reconstruire et pour nommer la demeure où il se trouvait. Sa mémoire, la mémoire de ses côtes, de ses genoux, de ses épaules, lui présentait successivement plusieurs des chambres où il avait dormi, tandis qu'autour de lui les murs invisibles, changeant de place selon la forme de la pièce imaginée, tourbillonnaient dans les ténèbres. . . . et mon corps, le côté sur lequel je reposais, gardiens fidèles d'un passé que mon

> esprit n'aurait jamais dû oublier, me rappelaient la flamme de la veilleuse de verre de Bohême, en forme d'urne, suspendue au plafond par des chaînettes, la cheminée en marbre de Sienne, dans ma chambre à coucher de Combray, chez mes grands-parents, en des jours lointains qu'en ce moment je me figurais actuels sans me les représenter exactement, et que je reverrais mieux tout à l'heure quand je serais tout à fait éveillé. (I:6)]

Rudolf Bernet, in "Framing the Past: Memory in Husserl, Proust and Barthes," refers also to the latter passage from Merleau-Ponty when he considers how memory originates in bodiliness. Bernet's reference to Merleau-Ponty is a response to the episode in A la recherche du temps perdu when the narrator's body discovers the knowledge of physical memory,

> Actually, Proust regains this memory of Venice only through his body, repeating the same step several times, "with one foot on the higher paving stone, and the other on the lower". For Proust, regaining the past does not mean merely re-presenting it, but, as it were, immersing himself physically in it, in order to enjoy the harmony among sensations, some of which refer to the present and others to the past. (12)

Bernet shows how involuntary memory "is rooted in a movement of bodily imitation" that leads to writing. He also refers to Merleau-Ponty's notion of "the Proustian corporeity as guardian of the past" (Visible 243).

Anthony R. Pugh in a short but detailed study, The Birth of *A la recherche du temps perdu*, examines the difficult transitionary period (1908-09) when Proust began a number of written activities and sketches that Pugh links to the origination of the novel. Pugh asks whether there was "in fact in Proust's own life a direct link between experiences of involuntary memory and the conception of A la recherche du temps perdu?" (13) Pugh references three incidents that spark Proust's relation to the past.

> He stumbles over an uneven paving stone, in the ante-chamber he hears the chink of a spoon against a cup, and he then wipes his mouth with a napkin. Each sensation seems to invite him to ponder, and as a result of that reflection he finds himself in contact once more with a forgotten part of his past. (11)

Mary Ann Caws refers to these moments in which there is a "thickening of experience" in her study, Reading Frames in Modern Fiction, in a section on inscription:

> The three incidents of the uneven paving stone, the crisp napkin, and the sound of the spoon against the plate strike him like a vision,

> inserted and dramatized; here the secret of the recognition, the re-creation, and the recapturing is found, this happiness that was lacking in the simple and one-layered perception. (229)

She refers to these epiphanic moments as "double experiences" in which he "inserts all the others, restoring the depth that was momentarily lacking."

Such double experiences are rare and are set against the lengthy backdrop of the novel which moves at a different pace. Paul Ricoeur's discussion of A la recherche du temps perdu in his chapter "The Fictive Experience of Time"[1] in Time and Narrative (Temps et Récit) is concerned with Genette's analysis of *pacing* in A la recherche du temps perdu. Ricoeur cites Genette's critique of the reading time of the text (for the reader) which contrasts with the time of the events that take place in the novel. He notes the "temporal immobility" that is the result of Proust's work: it is through the *continuation* of narrative, that is, the lack of "descriptive pauses" -- as Genette writes, "contemplative halts" (102) -- that a temporal immobility is created. According to Ricoeur:

> Likewise, the absence of a summary narrative, the absence of descriptive pauses, the tendency of the narrative to constitute itself as a scene in the narrative sense of this term, the inaugural character of the five major scenes--morning,

> dinner, evening--which by themselves take up some six hundred pages, the repetition that transforms them into typical scenes; all these structural features of *Remembrance of Things Past* that leave intact none of the traditional narrative movements (p. 112), features that can be discerned, analyzed, and classified by an exact narratological science--receive their meaning from the sort of temporal immobility created by the narrative on the level of fiction. (84-5)

Ricoeur then writes, the "tendency of instants in Proust to merge together and become confused with one another" (85) is, according to Genette, "the very condition for experiencing 'involuntary memory'" (qtd. in Ricoeur 85). These cumulative instants annul conventional notions of temporality and thus create a space for bodily action and memory.

But why is Ricoeur's notion of "temporal immobility" necessary as a surface for the animate? Proust considers immobility when he contemplates the essence of things,

> To this contemplation of the essence of things I had decided therefore that in [the] future I must attach myself, so as somehow to immobilise it. But how, by what means, was I to do this? (III:909)
>
> [Aussi, cette contemplation de l'essence des

> choses, j'étais maintenant décidé à m'attacher à elle, à la fixer, mais comment? par quel moyen? (IV:454)]

Proust, the writer, must write as an act *against* immobilization. Ricoeur analyzes Genette's discussion of utterance and voice. The temporal nature of the "relationship between statement and utterance" can be "described in terms of the grammatical category of 'voice'" (85). Utterance creates a time for the presence of the body through its speaking voice[2]. Ricoeur, in a note, refers to Genette's citing of E. Vendryes' definition of voice as "a mode of action of the verb in its relation with the subject" (182). Ricoeur notes the importance of Genette's question as to who is speaking. But that is particularly clear: the body is speaking. Or, as Ricoeur quotes Genette, it is "the temporality of the narrating itself" that is speaking.

At the beginning of Le côté de Guermantes in his discussion of names of people, Proust pinpoints the essence of the movement that presents the name. As we have seen in the later manuscripts of Husserl, there is a confusion at the epicenter of motion as to the possibility of motion. How is an animated thing immobilized -- how is the center of motion made immobile?[3]

Proust attempts to define this force and he begins by sensing the movement of syllables:

> But even apart from rare moments such as these, in

which suddenly we feel the original entity quiver and resume its form, carve itself out of syllables now dead, if in the dizzy whirl of daily life, in which they serve only the most practical purpose, names have lost all their colour, like a prismatic top that spins too quickly and seems only grey, when, on the other hand, we reflect upon the past in our day-dreams and seek, in order to recapture it, to slacken, to suspend the perpetual motion by which we are borne along, gradually we see once more appear, side by side but entirely distinct from one another, the tints which in the course of our existence have been successively presented to us by a single name. (II:6)

[Mais même en dehors des rares minutes comme celles-là, où brusquement nous sentons l'entité originale tressaillir et reprendre sa forme et sa ciselure au sein des syllabes mortes aujourd'hui, si dans le tourbillon vertigineux de la vie courante, où ils n'ont plus qu'un usage entièrement pratique, les noms ont perdu toute couleur comme une toupie prismatique qui tourne trop vite et qui semble grise, en revanche quand, dans la rêverie, nous réfléchissons, nous cherchons, pour revenir sur le passé, à ralentir, à suspendre le mouvement perpétuel où nous sommes

> entraînés, peu à peu nous revoyons apparaître, juxtaposées, mais entièrement distinctes les unes des autres, les teintes qu'au cours de notre existence nous présenta successivement un même nom. (II:312)]

As Proust also writes, what is the shape, the course, the pattern of the name, "What shape was projected in my mind's eye by this name Guermantes . . ." (II:6) [Sans doute, quelle forme se découpait à mes yeux en ce nom de Guermantes . . . (II:312)]

The name, and the bodily form to which it refers, has a relationship to the impressionistic,

> And yet scarcely had I left her presence than those glittering fragments had reassembled like the green and roseate reflexions of the sunset behind the oar that has broken them, and in the solitude of my thoughts the name had quickly appropriated to itself my impression of the face. (II:24)
>
> [Pourtant ces reflets évanouis, à peine l'avais-je eu quittée qu'ils s'étaient reformés comme les reflets roses et verts du soleil couché, derrière la rame qui les a brisés, et dans la solitude de ma pensée le nom avait eu vite fait de s'approprier le souvenir du visage. (II:329)]

Proust differentiates between the emotional world, and

the world where thinking and naming cohabit, "We feel in one world, we think, we give names to things in another; between the two we can establish a certain correspondence, but not bridge the gap" (II:46). [Nous sentons dans un monde, nous pensons, nous nommons dans un autre, nous pouvons entre les deux établir une concordance mais non combler l'intervalle. (II:349)] Eighty pages later Proust points out the contradiction one has in *thinking* of the parts of one's body, ". . . what a contradiction in terms to be obliged to *think* a part of one's body" (II:119). [. . . quelle ambiguïté d'être obligé de *penser* une partie de son corps! (II:418)]

Our interactions with the social world can be observed in degrees of motion. Our own "perpetual motion . . . seizes" those who are close to us:

> We never see the people who are dear to us save in the animated system, the perpetual motion of our incessant love for them, which, before allowing the images that their faces present to reach us, seizes them in its vortex and flings them back upon the idea that we have always had of them, makes them adhere to it, coincide with it. (II:142)
>
> [Nous ne voyons jamais les êtres chéris que dans le système animé, le mouvement perpétuel de notre incessante tendresse, laquelle, avant de laisser

> les images que nous présente leur visage arriver jusqu'à nous, les prend dans son tourbillon, les rejette sur l'idée que nous nous faisons d'eux depuis toujours, les fait adhérer à elle, coïncider avec elle. (II:438-9)]

In Le côté de Guermantes Proust describes how, even when we know someone is simply an *avenue*, we forget that originally her name came from the *avenues* of a place.

> Then, in the woman who is now no more to us than a means of approach, an avenue towards others, we are just as astonished and amused to learn from our memory what her name meant originally to that other person we formerly were as if, after giving a cabman an address in the Boulevard des Capucines or the Rue du Bac, thinking only of the person we are going to see there, we remind ourselves that these names were once those of the Capuchin nuns whose convent stood on the site and of the ferry across the Seine. (II:402)
>
> [Alors, dans celle qui n'est plus pour nous qu'un moyen, et un chemin vers d'autres, nous sommes tout aussi étonnés et amusés d'apprendre de notre mémoire ce que son nom signifia d'original pour l'autre être que nous avons été autrefois, que si, après avoir jeté à un cocher une adresse, boulevard des Capucines ou rue du Bac, en pensant

> seulement à la personne que nous allons y voir, nous nous avisons que ces noms furent jadis celui des religieuses capucines dont le couvent se trouvait là et celui du bac qui traversait la Seine. (II:681-2)]

A name *qualifies* the animate world from which it has emanated. Yet, the world wants to separate itself continually from the names we ascribe to it. Surfaces and volumes are part of an impressionistic medley and are perceived in advance of their names:

> This being the case, it is surely logical, not from any artifice of symbolism but from a sincere desire to return to the very root of the impression, to represent one thing by that other for which, in the flash of a first illusion, we mistook it. Surfaces and volumes are in reality independent of the names of objects which our memory imposes on them after we have recognised them. (II:435)
>
> [Dès lors n'est-il pas logique, non par artifice de symbolisme mais par retour sincère à la racine même de l'impression, de représenter une chose par cette autre que dans l'éclair d'une illusion première nous avons prise pour elle? Les surfaces et les volumes sont en réalité indépendants des noms d'objets que notre mémoire leur impose quand

nous les avons reconnus. (II:712-3)]

In Sodom and Gomorrah Proust recounts an episode in which his narrator cannot remember the name of a lady who has greeted him by his name. (His name, as is generally the case in A la recherche du temps perdu is not mentioned.) He tries to find the name,

> --nor do I think that all these memories, hovering between me and her name, served in any way to bring it to light. That great game of hide and seek which is played in our memory when we seek to recapture a name does not entail a series of gradual approximations. We see nothing, then suddenly the correct name appears and is very different from what we were trying to guess. It is not the name that has come to us. No, I believe rather that, as we go on living, we move further and further away from the zone in which a name is distinct, and it was by an exercise of my will and attention, which heightened the acuteness of my inward vision, that all of a sudden I had pierced the semi-darkness and seen daylight. (II:674-5)
>
> [. . . je ne crois pas que tous ces souvenirs, voletant entre moi et son nom, aient servi en quoi que ce soit à le renflouer. Dans ce grand "cache-cache" qui se joue dans la mémoire quand on veut

> retrouver un nom, il n'y a pas une série d'approximations graduées. On ne voit rien, puis tout d'un coup apparaît le nom exact et fort différent de ce qu'on croyait deviner. Ce n'est pas lui qui est venu à nous. Non, je crois plutôt qu'au fur et à mesure que nous vivons, nous passons notre temps à nous éloigner de la zone où un nom est distinct, et c'est par un exercice de ma volonté et de mon attention, qui augmentait l'acuité de mon regard intérieur, que tout d'un coup j'avais percé la demi-obscurité et vu clair. (III:50-51)]

During this process of remembering a name the body moves through language (specifically consonants, according to Proust) toward something indistinct:

> For the intermediate names through which we pass before finding the real name are themselves false, and bring us nowhere nearer to it. They are not even, strictly speaking, names at all, but often mere consonants which are not to be found in the recaptured name. (II:675)
>
> [Car les noms d'étape par lesquels nous passons, avant de trouver le nom vrai, sont, eux, faux, et ne nous rapprochent en rien de lui. Ce ne sont même pas à proprement parler des noms, mais souvent de simples consonnes et qui ne se

retrouvent pas dans le nom retrouvé. (III:51)]

But these consonants, as "lifelines," help us to grasp the name:

> And yet this labour of the mind struggling from blankness to reality is so mysterious that it is possible after all that these false consonants are really lifelines clumsily thrown out to enable us to seize hold of the correct name. (II:675)
>
> [D'ailleurs ce travail de l'esprit passant du néant à la réalité est si mystérieux, qu'il est possible après tout que ces consonnes fausses soient des perches préalables, maladroitement tendues pour nous aider à nous accrocher au nom exact. (III:51)]

In another Proustian scene the word "liff" is retained by an elevator operator even though the social world continues to call for the "lift." These two worlds -- the private and public -- do not intersect.

> As for the lift-boy's vocabulary, it is curious that someone who heard people, fifty times a day, calling for the "lift," should never himself call it anything but a "liff." (II:819)
>
> [Quant au langage du liftier, il est curieux que quelqu'un qui entendait cinquante fois par jour un client appeler: "Ascenseur", ne dît jamais lui-même qu' "accenseur". (III:187)]

Actors become important for Proust's narrator because of what their bodies and words are 'really saying' in contrast to their diction. Actors have stage names, as well as their given names, yet their bodies point in still other directions. Proust sees that the roles which they perform are headed for dissolution, returning to "elements that contain nothing of them," returning to that place without "lifelines" or consonants.

> Since actors had ceased to be for me exclusively the depositaries, in their diction and playing, of an artistic truth, they had begun to interest me in themselves; I was amused, imagining that I was contemplating the characters in some old comic novel, to see the heroine of the play, struck by the new face of the young man who had just come into the stalls, listen abstractedly to the declaration of love which the juvenile lead was addressing to her, while he, through the running fire of his impassioned speech, still kept a gleaming eye fixed on an old lady seated in a stage box, whose magnificent pearls had caught his fancy; and thus, thanks mainly to the information that Saint-Loup had given me as to the private lives of actors, I saw another drama, mute but expressive, enacted beneath the words of the spoken drama which in itself, although of little

merit, interested me too; for I could feel germinating and blossoming within it for an hour in the glare of the footlights, created out of the agglutination on the face of an actor of another face of grease-paint and pasteboard, and on his individual soul of the words of a part, those robust if ephemeral, and rather captivating, personalities which are the characters in a play, whom one loves, admires, pities, whom one would like to see again after one has left the theatre, but who by that time have already disintegrated into an actor who is no longer in the situation which was his in the play, into a text which no longer shows the actor's face, into a coloured powder which a handkerchief wipes off, who have returned, in short, to elements that contain nothing of them, because of their dissolution, effected as soon as the play is over--a dissolution which, like that of a loved one, causes one to doubt the reality of the self and to meditate on the mystery of death. (II:175-6)

[Depuis que les acteurs n'étaient plus exclusivement pour moi les dépositaires, en leur diction et leur jeu, d'une vérité artistique, ils m'intéressaient en eux-mêmes; je m'amusais, croyant avoir devant moi les personnages d'un

vieux roman comique, de voir, au visage nouveau d'un jeune seigneur qui venait d'entrer dans la salle, l'ingénue écouter distraitement la déclaration que lui faisait le jeune premier dans la pièce, tandis que celui-ci, dans le feu roulant de sa tirade amoureuse, n'en dirigeait pas moins une oeillade enflammée vers une vieille dame assise dans une loge voisine, et dont les magnifiques perles l'avaient frappé; et ainsi, surtout grâce aux renseignements que Saint-Loup me donnait sur la vie privée des artistes, je voyais une autre pièce, muette et expressive, se jouer sous la pièce parlée, laquelle d'ailleurs, quoique médiocre, m'intéressait; car j'y sentais germer et s'épanouir pour une heure à la lumière de la rampe--faites de l'agglutinement sur le visage d'un acteur d'un autre visage de fard et de carton, sur son âme personnelle des paroles d'un rôle--ces individualités éphémères et vivaces que sont les personnages d'une pièce, séduisantes aussi, qu'on aime, qu'on admire, qu'on plaint, qu'on voudrait retrouver encore, une fois qu'on a quitté le théâtre, mais qui déjà se sont désagrégées en un comédien qui n'a plus la condition qu'il avait dans la pièce, en un texte qui ne montre plus le visage du comédien, en une

> poudre colorée qu'efface le mouchoir, qui sont retournées en un mot à des éléments qui n'ont plus rien d'elles, à cause de leur dissolution, consommée sitôt après la fin du spectacle, et qui fait, comme celle d'un être aimé, douter de la réalité du moi et méditer sur le mystère de la mort. (II:470-1)]

How, for Proust, is the name of the body different in dance than theatre? How is dissolution understood -- "the mystery of death" -- in the animate form of dance and movement? What can be known of the "reality of the self" from the body of the dancer? I quote a vignette at length:

> I was delighted to observe, in the thick of a crowd of journalists or men of fashion, admirers of the actresses, who were greeting one another, talking, smoking, as though at a party in town, a young man in a black velvet cap and hortensia-coloured skirt, his cheeks chalked in red like a page from a Watteau album, who with smiling lips and eyes raised to the ceiling, describing graceful patterns with the palms of his hands and springing lightly into the air, seemed so entirely of another species from the sensible people in everyday clothes in the midst of whom he was pursuing like a madman the course of his ecstatic dream, so alien to the preoccupations of their

life, so anterior to the habits of their civilisation, so enfranchised from the laws of nature, that it was as restful and refreshing a spectacle as watching a butterfly straying through a crowd to follow with one's eyes, between the flats, the natural arabesques traced by his winged, capricious, painted curvetings. But at that moment Saint-Loup conceived the notion that his mistress was paying undue attention to this dancer, who was now engaged in a final rehearsal of a dance-figure for the ballet performance in which he was about to appear, and his face darkened.

"You might look the other way," he said to her sombrely. "You know that those dancer-fellows are not worth the rope which one hopes they'll fall off and break their necks, and they're the sort of people who go about afterwards boasting that you've taken notice of them. Besides, you know very well you've been told to go to your dressing-room and change. You'll be missing your call again."

A group of men--journalists--noticing the look of fury on Saint-Loup's face, came nearer, amused, to listen to what was being said. And as the stage-hands had just set up some scenery on

our other side we were forced into close contact with them.

"Oh, but I know him; he's a friend of mine," cried Saint-Loup's mistress, her eyes still fixed on the dancer. "Look how beautifully made he is; just watch those little hands of his dancing away by themselves like the rest of him!"

The dancer turned his head towards her, and his human person appeared beneath the sylph that he was endeavouring to be, the clear grey jelly of his eyes trembled and sparkled between eyelashes stiff with paint, and a smile extended the corners of his mouth in a face plastered with rouge; then, to amuse the young woman, like a singer who obligingly hums the tune of the song in which we have told her that we admired her singing, he began to repeat the movement of his hands, counterfeiting himself with the subtlety of a mime and the good humour of a child.

"Oh, it's too lovely, the way he mimics himself," cried Rachel, clapping her hands.

"I implore you, my dearest girl," Saint-Loup broke in, in a tone of utter misery, "don't make an exhibition of yourself, I can't stand it. I swear if you say another word I won't go with you to your room, I shall walk straight out."

(II:180-2)

[. . . et j'étais déjà charmé d'apercevoir, au milieu de journalistes ou de gens du monde amis des actrices, qui saluaient, causaient, fumaient comme à la ville, un jeune homme en toque de velours noir, en jupe hortensia, les joues crayonnées de rouge comme une page d'album de Watteau, lequel, la bouche souriante, les yeux au ciel, esquissant de gracieux signes avec les paumes de ses mains, bondissant légèrement, semblait tellement d'une autre espèce que les gens raisonnables en veston et en redingote au milieu desquels il poursuivait comme un fou son rêve extasié, si étranger aux préoccupations de leur vie, si antérieur aux habitudes de leur civilisation, si affranchi des lois de la nature, que c'était quelque chose d'aussi reposant et d'aussi frais que de voir un papillon égaré dans une foule, de suivre des yeux, entre les frises, les arabesques naturelles qu'y traçaient ses ébats ailés, capricieux et fardés. Mais au même instant Saint-Loup s'imagina que sa maîtresse faisait attention à ce danseur en train de repasser une dernière fois une figure du divertissement dans lequel il allait paraître, et sa figure se rembrunit.

"Tu pourrais regarder d'un autre côté, lui dit-il d'un air sombre. Tu sais que ces danseurs ne valent pas la corde sur laquelle ils feraient bien de monter pour se casser les reins, et ce sont des gens à aller après se vanter que tu as fait attention à eux. Du reste tu entends bien qu'on te dit d'aller dans ta loge t'habiller. Tu vas encore être en retard."

Trois messieurs -- trois journalistes -- voyant l'air furieux de Saint-Loup, se rapprochèrent, amusés, pour entendre ce qu'on disait. Et comme on plantait un décor de l'autre côté nous fûmes resserrés contre eux.

"Oh! mais je le reconnais, c'est mon ami, s'écria la maîtresse de Saint-Loup en regardant le danseur. Voilà qui est bien fait, regardez-moi ces petites mains qui dansent comme tout le reste de sa personne!"

Le danseur tourna la tête vers elle, et sa personne humaine apparaissait sous le sylphe qu'il s'exerçait à être, la gelée droite et grise de ses yeux trembla et brilla entre ses cils raidis et peints, et un sourire prolongea des deux côtés sa bouche dans sa face pastellisée de rouge; puis, pour amuser la jeune femme, comme une chanteuse qui nous fredonne par complaisance l'air où nous

> lui avons dit que nous l'admirions, il se mit à refaire le mouvement de ses paumes, en se contrefaisant lui-même avec une finesse de pasticheur et une bonne humeur d'enfant.
>
> "Oh! c'est trop gentil, ce coup de s'imiter soi-même, s'écria-t-elle en battant des mains.
>
> -- Je t'en supplie, mon petit, lui dit Saint-Loup d'une voix désolée, ne te donne pas en spectacle comme cela, tu me tues, je te jure que si tu dis un mot de plus, je ne t'accompagne pas à ta loge, et je m'en vais . . . (II:475-6)]

Proust's dancer articulates movements that are without names. The dancer then mimics movement, and also represents a character, that is, a sylph. The dancer is in another world, separated from the difficulties of dialogue between Saint-Loup and his mistress. We can see the juxtaposition between two languages, one danced and the other spoken.

In Du côté de chez Swann Proust discusses the real and the acted as he makes a distinction between the bodily and the social world. He discusses the difficulties his narrator has in transmitting a written message to his mother who at that moment appears to be on stage:

> I had a suspicion that, in her eyes, to carry a message to my mother when there was a guest would appear as flatly inconceivable as for the door-keeper of a theatre to hand a letter to an actor

upon the stage. (I:30)

[Je me doutais que pour elle, faire une commission à ma mère quand il y avait du monde lui paraîtrait aussi impossible que pour le portier d'un théâtre de remettre une lettre à un acteur pendant qu'il est en scène. (I:28)]

When discussing his grandmother's sickness, he compares her body to that of the theatre. During illness there is a confused distinction between inside and out, spectator and actors. Proust considers his grandmother's ailments:

If the morbid phenomena of which her body was the theatre remained obscure and beyond the reach of her mind, they [the ailments] were clear and intelligible to certain beings belonging to the same natural kingdom as themselves, beings to whom the human mind has learned gradually to have recourse in order to understand what its body is saying to it, as when a foreigner addresses us we try to find someone of his country who will act as interpreter. These [ailments] can talk to our body, can tell us if its anger is serious or will soon be appeased. (II: 308)

[Si les phénomènes morbides dont son corps était le théâtre restaient obscurs et insaisissables à sa pensée, ils étaient clairs et intelligibles pour des êtres appartenant au même règne physique

> qu'eux, de ceux à qui l'esprit humain a fini par s'adresser pour comprendre ce que lui dit son corps, comme devant les réponses d'un étranger on va chercher quelqu'un du même pays qui servira d'interprète. Eux peuvent causer avec notre corps, nous dire si sa colère est grave ou s'apaisera bientôt. (II:594)

At this point the doctor arrives. Yet the mystery of the nameless processes of the body, in both illness and health, have no place for the doctor. The body is another separate being for us, as unattached as the rest of the human race.

> It is in sickness that we are compelled to recognize that we do not live alone but are chained to a being from a different realm, from whom we are worlds apart, who has no knowledge of us and by whom it is impossible to make ourselves understood: our body. (II: 308)
>
> [C'est dans la maladie que nous nous rendons compte que nous ne vivons pas seuls mais enchaînés à un être d'un règne différent, dont des abîmes nous séparent, qui ne nous connaît pas et duquel il est impossible de nous faire comprendre: notre corps. (II:594)]

The madeleine' incident at the beginning of Du côté de chez Swann points to the epiphanic nature of the physical world. Proust clarifies the presence of the past as it

gives form to the presence of the body which receives sensation. (This can be distinguished from the traditional assumption that the madeleine gives form to temporality and memory.)

> The past is hidden somewhere outside the realm, beyond the reach of intellect, in some material object (in the sensation which that material object will give us) of which we have no inkling. (I:47-8)
>
> [Il est caché hors de son domaine et de sa portée, en quelque objet matériel (en la sensation que nous donnerait cet objet matériel) que nous ne soupçonnons pas. (I:44)]

As Proust continues, the essence of the taste of the madeleine ". . . was not in me, it *was* me." [. . . n'était pas en moi, elle était moi." (I:45)] As he writes, "It is plain that the truth I am seeking lies not in the cup but in myself." [Il est clair que la vérité que je cherche n'est pas en lui, mais en moi. (I:45)] Over a hundred pages later the narrator is able to make a physical sign and form with his body, offering ". . . a screen with my hands" (I:151). [. . . un écran de mes mains (I:139)] This is not a theatrical form of "acting," but is an action of the body (as also was Proust's writing):

> And then I returned to the hawthorns, and stood before them as one stands before those

> masterpieces which, one imagines, one will be better able to "take in" when one has looked away for a moment at something else; but in vain did I make a screen with my hands, the better to concentrate upon the flowers, the feeling they aroused in me remained obscure and vague, struggling and failing to free itself, to float across and become one with them. (I:151)
> [Puis je revenais devant les aubépines comme devant ces chefs-d'oeuvre dont on croit qu'on saura mieux les voir quand on a cessé un moment de les regarder, mais j'avais beau me faire un écran de mes mains pour n'avoir qu'elles sous les yeux, le sentiment qu'elles éveillaient en moi restait obscur et vague, cherchant en vain à se dégager, à venir adhérer à leurs fleurs. (I:139)]

Mary Ann Caws, in "Artful Mosaic and Natural Turn: Representing Recall with a Proustian Twist," illustrates a mannerist tendency in Proust. She shows how the past experience in Proust is present with 'contemporaneous' time. Unlike Kierkegaard's melancholic reflections on those moments now past, in Proust

> . . . recollection [is] redeemed by being not the double of some past sensation now lost, but this experience exactly coincident in the present making itself, through artful work, permeable to

> the past, remaining visibly and sensibly *of a different matter*. (295)

There is a material overlaying of time and sensation. Caws writes,

> The contrapposto position exactly characterizes the Proustian mode of hovering over an experience as it simultaneously reaches back into the memory to recall past associations and forward to try to repeat the experience, dwelling on and within the sensations of the moment. (282)

She also notes the importance of the action of the narrator turning away from the hawthorns. The fragrance of the hawthorns

> . . . is unchanging and stable, and were there to be no turn in the posture of the narrator -- thus, in the text as experienced by the reader, in the same fashion as the hawthorns are read or experienced by the narrator -- nothing would be altered or made more profound. So a turn outward must be made . . . (283)

How does Proust's writing itself describe the turning and agitation of his body? First of all, his literary work circles continuously around the possibility of naming precisely those things that withhold names, that is, nature, art, and the body. Why is Proust unable to articulate his body within the process of writing?

If only I had been able to start writing! But, whatever the conditions in which I approached the task (as, too, alas, the undertakings not to touch alcohol, to go to bed early, to sleep, to keep fit), whether it was with enthusiasm, with method, with pleasure, in depriving myself of a walk, or postponing it and keeping it in reserve as a reward for industry, taking advantage of an hour of good health, utilising the inactivity forced on me by a day's illness, what always emerged in the end from all my efforts was a virgin page, undefiled by any writing, ineluctable as that forced card which in certain tricks one invariably is made to draw, however carefully one may first have shuffled the pack. I was merely the instrument of habits of not working, of not going to bed, of not sleeping, which must somehow be realised at all costs; if I offered them no resistance, if I contented myself with the pretext they seized from the first opportunity that the day afforded them of acting as they chose, I escaped without serious harm, I slept for a few hours after all towards morning, I read a little, I did not over-exert myself; but if I attempted to thwart them, if I decided to go to bed early, to drink only water, to work, they grew restive, they

adopted strong measures, they made me really ill, I was obliged to double my dose of alcohol, did not lie down in bed for two days and nights on end, could not even read, and I vowed that another time I would be more reasonable, that is to say less wise, like the victim of an assault who allows himself to be robbed for fear, should he offer resistance, of being murdered. (II:151-2)

[Si, au moins, j'avais pu commencer à écrire! Mais, quelles que fussent les conditions dans lesquelles j'abordasse ce projet (de même, hélas! que celui de ne plus prendre d'alcool, de me coucher de bonne heure, de dormir, de me bien porter), que ce fût avec emportement, avec méthode, avec plaisir, en me privant d'une promenade, en l'ajournant et en la réservant comme récompense, en profitant d'une heure de bonne santé, en utilisant l'inaction forcée d'un jour de maladie, ce qui finissait toujours par sortir de mes efforts, c'était une page blanche, vierge de toute écriture, inéluctable comme cette carte forcée que dans certains tours on finit fatalement par tirer, de quelque façon qu'on eût préalablement brouillé le jeu. Je n'étais que l'instrument d'habitudes de ne pas travailler, de ne pas me coucher, de ne pas dormir, qui devaient

> se réaliser coûte que coûte; si je ne leur résistais pas, si je me contentais du prétexte qu'elles tiraient de la première circonstance venue que leur offrait ce jour-là pour les laisser agir à leur guise, je m'en tirais sans trop de dommage, je reposais quelques heures tout de même à la fin de la nuit, je lisais un peu, je ne faisais pas trop d'excès, mais si je voulais les contrarier, si je prétendais entrer tôt dans mon lit, ne boire que de l'eau, travailler, elles s'irritaient, elles avaient recours aux grands moyens, elles me rendaient tout à fait malade, j'étais obligé de doubler la dose d'alcool, je ne me mettais pas au lit de deux jours, je ne pouvais même plus lire, et je me promettais une autre fois d'être plus raisonnable, c'est-à-dire moins sage, comme une victime qui se laisse voler de peur, si elle résiste, d'être assassinée. (II:447-8)]

The narrator's body -- and the author's body -- both appear within the vortex of his writing. The body both pushes and eclipses the literary work.

Initially Proust has offered the reader a philosophy of names, particularly in "Noms de Pays: le Nom" in Du côté de chez Swann. Despite his articulate and evocative characterization of distinctions between names and words, imagined rather than 'real' places and people (and their

corresponding names), and the enclosure of cities and places within names, Proust nevertheless leaves behind this somewhat tidy, somewhat logical area of analysis.

Why is Proust's logistics of names left incomplete? Why does he depart from carefully argued and described theories of names and meaning? The name which Proust so clearly, and early on, valued, and which as Barthes notes was so important a cornerstone to the formulation of the construction of A la recherche du temps perdu, ceases to have structural importance for Proust. Indeed, the name no longer serves Proust -- in the way that the body comes to serve -- as a dichotomy between action and inaction, between writing and the hesitations toward writing.

Notes

1. Sarah Lawall, in her insightful Critics of Consciousness: The Existential Structures of Literature introduces a number of distinctions concerning space and time in her summary of literary critic Georges Poulet's work on Proust. Poulet begins his L'Espace proustien, according to Lawall, with a distinction between Bergsonian and Proustian time: "L'Espace proustien begins by contrasting Bergson's sense of an active, continuous time with Proust's creation of a static, panoramic (spatial) time" (76-7). Lawall also discusses Poulet's clarification of Proust's sense of place rather than space, "*lieux* instead of *espace*" (106).

2. Proust writes of Françoise that

> She managed to embody everything that she could not express directly in a sentence for which we could not find fault with her without accusing ourselves, indeed in less than a sentence, in a silence, in the way in which she placed an object in a room. (II:373)
> [Elle savait faire tenir tout ce qu'elle ne pouvait exprimer directement, dans une phrase que nous ne pouvions incriminer sans nous accuser, dans moins qu'une phrase même, dans un silence, dans la manière dont elle plaçait un objet. (II:655)]

3. Proust illustrates a woman in motion, in Le côté de Guermantes, showing how she is the highest *gestural* form of what she expresses through movement. Proust's description oscillates between the dissolution of her atmospheric presence and the concreteness of her movements. What Proust is watching is felt to be existing as if from the sensations of the strokes of a painter. We do not know when her movement is bodily or mystical, mobile or immobilized:

> I told myself that the woman whom I could see in the distance, walking, opening her sunshade, crossing the street, was, in the opinion of those best qualified to judge, the greatest living exponent of the art of performing those movements and of making of them something exquisite. Meanwhile she advanced towards me, and, unconscious of this widespread reputation, her narrow, refractory body, which had absorbed nothing of it, was arched forward under a scarf of violet silk; her clear, sullen eyes looked absently in front of her, and had perhaps caught sight of me; she was biting the corner of her lip; I watched her adjust her muff, give alms to a beggar, buy a bunch of violets from a flower-seller, with the same curiosity that I should have felt in watching the brush-strokes of a great painter. And when, as she passed me, she gave me a bow that was accompanied sometimes by a faint smile, it was as though she had sketched for me, adding a personal

dedication, a water-colour that was a masterpiece of art. Each of her dresses seemed to me her natural and necessary setting, like the projection of a particular aspect of her soul. On one of these Lenten mornings, when she was on her way out to lunch, I met her wearing a dress of bright red velvet, cut slightly low at the neck. Her face appeared dreamy beneath its pile of fair hair. I was less sad than usual because the melancholy of her expression, the sort of claustration which the startling hue of her dress set between her and the rest of the world, made her seem somehow lonely and unhappy, and this comforted me. The dress struck me as being the materialisation round about her of the scarlet rays of a heart which I did not recognise in her and might perhaps have been able to console; sheltered in the mystical light of the garment with its soft folds, she reminded me of some saint of the early ages of Christianity. (II:146)

[Je me disais que la femme que je voyais de loin marcher, ouvrir son ombrelle, traverser la rue, était, de l'avis des connaisseurs, la plus grand artiste actuelle dans l'art d'accomplir ces mouvements et d'en faire quelque chose de délicieux. Cependant elle s'avançait: ignorant de cette réputation éparse, son corps étroit, réfractaire et qui n'en avait rien absorbé était obliquement cambré sous une écharpe de surah violet; ses yeux maussades et clairs regardaient distraitement devant elle et m'avaient peut-être aperçu: elle mordait le coin de sa lèvre; je la voyais redresser son manchon, faire l'aumône à un pauvre, acheter un bouquet de violettes à une marchande, avec la même curiosité que j'aurais eue à regarder un grand peintre donner des coups de pinceau. Et quand, arrivée à ma hauteur, elle me faisait un salut auquel s'ajoutait parfois un mince sourire, c'était comme si elle eût exécuté pour moi, en y ajoutant une dédicace, un lavis qui était un chef-d'oeuvre. Chacune de ses robes m'apparaissait comme une ambiance naturelle, nécessaire, comme la projection d'un aspect particulier de son âme. Un de ces matins de carême où elle allait déjeuner en ville, je la rencontrai dans une robe d'un velours rouge clair, laquelle était légèrement échancrée au cou. Le visage de Mme de Guermantes paraissait rêveur sous ses cheveux blonds. J'étais moins triste que d'habitude parce que la mélancolie de son expression, l'espèce de claustration que la violence de la couleur mettait entre elle et le reste du monde, lui donnaient quelque chose de malheureux et de solitaire qui me rassurait. Cette robe me semblait la matérialisation autour d'elle des rayons écarlates d'un coeur que je ne lui connaissais pas et que j'aurais peut-être pu consoler; réfugiée dans la

lumière mystique de l'étoffe aux flots adoucis elle me faisait penser à quelque sainte des premiers âges chrétiens. (II:442-3)]

4. Claudia Brodsky Lacour's pithy and detailed article "Remembering Swann: Memory and Representation in Proust" and her discussion of Proust in The Imposition of Form: Studies in Narrative Representation and Knowledge raise surprising questions concerning assumptions about the narrative 'meaning' of the madeleine. For our purposes Brodsky's work is particularly important in clarifying that the 'experience' of the madeleine is not necessarily a narrative situation on any account. To rephrase the madeleine 'experience' in 'physical' (i.e. anti-narrative) terms, one can see that something is occurring that is having a problematic relation to a narrative.

Also see footnote #4 in "Remembering Swann" where Brodsky gives a comprehensive analysis of how the madeleine is construed similarly in many literary critical works.

Chapter 5: Gertrude Stein: Emphasis, Isadora Duncan, and Theories of Movement

I will first examine how Stein's commitment to emphasis and intensity gives birth to a form of writing which is devoid of conventional representation and narrative. I then use sections from Stein's piece on Isadora Duncan, and several unpublished fragments, to understand what animate writing is for Stein. Stein's manuscript on Duncan is particularly important because she does not fasten the dancer's movement in a narrative form. Simple and precise words are streamlined to offer movement potential. While Stein's words do not exactly create motion, in the same way that steps in dance do not, steps and words can be focussed so that the momentum of emphasis builds.

Stein has never given a complete account of her theory of repetition even though she continually demonstrates how repetition is one of her operative principles. Indeed, in several of her critical essays she writes that there is no such thing as repetition. In her lecture, "Portraits and Repetition," Stein even suggests that repetition does not exist within her own work. She remained aware of the interpretive problem stemming from her use of repetition, and one of her goals in giving a series of lectures in the United States in 1934 was to present a set of literary principles that would clarify her style of writing. Stein argues against a literal and referential meaning of language

through an interest in the idea of 'insistence', suggesting instead that signification through language is the result of a fabric of animate language.

Wendy Steiner in Exact Resemblance to Exact Resemblance cites the "Portraits and Repetition" lecture in a discussion on the formation of Stein's psychological theories of identity, and refers to Stein's early work at Radcliffe with William James. Steiner describes literary portraiture in Stein's work and its relation to the composition of individual identity. Stein's literary portraits are generally short and abstract pieces of writing that only occasionally resemble those individuals for whom they are titled. Steiner notes that for Gertrude Stein the literary portrait (rather than prose or poetry) was a mechanism for understanding identity in an animate form: "In its most mature form, the portrait was to present the individual as an entity, as a degree, a mode, of movement" (43). Steiner refers to Stein's later portraits, where "all conventional traits of the subject are missing; the subject is simply a dynamic, immediate movement of language" (44). In her article "The Steinian Portrait" she clarifies three phases of development within Stein's portraiture. The third phase of portraiture was directed to "a kind of 'text-object' aiming at the same degree of 'movement' and life within it that its subject had" (137).

In the first paragraph of "Portraits and Repetition"

Stein writes, "perhaps it is possible to know that it is moving even if it is not moving against anything" (Lectures 165). For Stein something is moving even when it is not moving against another surface, entity or form. Her ideas of movement will become clearer after considering her statements on repetition. Stein introduces her discussion of repetition in the second paragraph of the lecture. Here she questions the existence of repetition, preferring instead the idea of insistence. She writes, "there is the important question of repetition and is there any such thing. Is there repetition or is there insistence" (166). She then uses an example of how her writing is comprehended by American journalists. While the journalists who criticize Stein's work may use different words and phrases, Stein claims that their theme is the same. They, in a sense, repeat themselves without any new ideas. While Stein uses the same words over and over the substratum of meaning is not redundant, and is continually active in the abstract transition from idea to idea. Stein writes, "every time one of the hundreds of times a newspaper man makes fun of my writing and of my repetition he always has the same theme, always having the same theme, that is, if you like, repetition" (Lectures 167). The essential difference here is found in the signification of words. For Stein the use of words in repetitive fashion provides a forum for perceiving the activity and continuity of ideas beneath the

words. A journalist may change the words around here and there, according to Stein, but the journalist does not demand or tolerate new ideas. Rather, a journalist is bound to the parameters of the prototypical fashioning of the article. The journalist's language is a form of repetition for Stein because it is 'bound'.

Expression, insistence, and emphasis are key terms for Stein in her delineation of the use of repetition as a kinetic activity. Once one is expressing there can never be repetition, no matter how often something is restated. Insistence is originated from within the expressive act. Insistence requires emphasis, and emphasis belies and negates the possibility of repetition,

> but once started expressing this thing, expressing any thing there can be no repetition because the essence of that expression is insistence, and if you insist you must each time use emphasis and if you use emphasis it is not possible while anybody is alive that they should use exactly the same emphasis. (Lectures 167)

In the last third of her lecture, Stein is concerned with what I will term 'continuous succession' in contrast to 'general repetition'. Stein's writing uses a form of 'continuous succession': phrases and words are repeated in various word orders. Often the principle of the word ordering is based on visual or aural repetition. Stein

refers to this activity of writing as the 'moment to moment emphasizing that makes repetition.' The opposite of this is 'general repetition' which refers to the mundane and prototypical forms of existential possibility in which most people live. Stein delineates, for example, how most lives are demarcated by the polar categories of success and failure. But if one were to 'think about' these categories then one is not repeating, "any two moments of thinking it over is not repetition" (Lectures 195):

> Now you see that is where I differ from a great many people who say I repeat and they do not. They do not think their succeeding or failing is what makes repetition, in other words they do not think that what happens makes repetition but that it is the moment to moment emphasizing that makes repetition. (Lectures 195-6)

Most lives, according to Stein, are constructed of general patterns of repetition ('general repetition') though this remains unclear to most people. The succeeding and failing Stein refers to, "succeeding and failing is repetition because you are always either succeeding or failing" (Lectures 195), is precisely the opposite of what Stein is able to uncover through her stylistic use of emphasis.

Stein discusses the way repetition functions by introducing the subjects of cinema, daily living, description, and remembering. Stein says that her portraits

were built on the same premises and crafted in the same manner as the cinema. She writes that in her portraits she continued the same process she began developing in her novel The Making of Americans:

> I continued to do what I was doing in the Making of Americans, I was doing what the cinema was doing, I was making a continuous succession of the statement of what that person was until I had not many things but one thing. (Lectures 176-7)

She is referring here to her use of repetition as 'continuous succession'. She immediately counters, in the following paragraph, that she really does not think of her writing in cinematic terms, in fact she is not certain she has ever even seen a cinema. Nevertheless, "one is of one's period," and this time period in which we live is for Stein "undoubtedly the period of the cinema and series production" (Lectures 177).

Stein's discussion on how the cinema functions is clarified in a more precise manner than she often offers:

> In a cinema picture no two pictures are exactly alike each one is just that much different from the one before, and so in those early portraits there was as I am sure you will realize as I read them to you also as there was in The Making of Americans no repetition. Each time that I said the somebody whose portrait I was writing was

> something that something was just that much different from what I had just said that somebody was and little by little in this way a whole portrait came into being, a portrait that was not description and that was made by each time, and I did a great many times, say it, that somebody was something, each time there was a difference just a difference enough so that it could go on and be a present something. (Lectures 177)

The inching forth of the cinema image, each frame slightly gradated from the previous and forthcoming images, creates the illusion of movement. Stein was interested in the 'continuous succession' of the linguistic image and her choice of the cinema as paradigmatic of her own work is particularly relevant since from a visual perspective Stein's words often appear to move forward with this same frame by frame pacing. As with the image that changes only slightly in each cinematic frame, Stein repeats words and then utilizes words with visual and aural similarities, as well as longer repetitive phrases, to create an overall image. This image, like the cinema, seems itself to be in motion.

The inching forward, the slight difference in emphasis, and the activity of this difference is what keeps life from a quotidian repetition ('general repetition'). Thus Stein introduces a discussion on the relation of daily living to

repetition. Emphasis is what makes existing, that is 'being', and thus creates a world that is animate and without repetition.

> As I say what one repeats is the scene in which one is acting, the days in which one is living, the coming and going which one is doing . . . [this] is a repetition, but existing as a human being, that is being listening and hearing is never repetition. It is not repetition if it is that which you are actually doing because naturally each time the emphasis is different just as the cinema has each time a slightly different thing to make it all be moving. And each one of us has to do that, otherwise there is no existing. (Lectures 179)

Stein then considers the relation of description to repetition. It is within this discussion that Stein approaches her own work, because to discuss description necessarily involves the principles of literary theory. Stein states that when things are existing, and here she means when things exist in an animate and emphasized state, there is no repetition. There is only repetition when there are descriptions of things. Existence itself is so animated and insistent that there can be no repetition.

> If this existence is this thing is actually existing there can be no repetition. There is

> only repetition when there are descriptions being given of these things not when the things themselves are actually existing and this is therefore how my portrait writing began. (Lectures 170-1)

But existing as a form of emphasis can only be a possibility when there is no remembering. For Stein "remembering is repetition" (Lectures 178). Thus Stein is interested in creating a form of writing that is not about remembering. Indeed, Stein problematizes the nature of novels because they are only about remembering, and therefore are passive, "soothing."

> When I first began writing although I felt very strongly that something that made that some one be some one was something that I must use as being them, I naturally began to describe them as they were doing anything. In short I wrote a story as a story, that is the way I began, and slowly I realized this confusion, a real confusion, that in writing a story one had to be remembering, and that novels are soothing because so many people one may say everybody can remember almost anything. It is this element of remembering that makes novels so soothing. (Lectures 181)

Stein prefers to theorize the opportunity of "living in moving," rather than remembering.

> We in this period have not lived in remembering, we have living in moving being necessarily so intense that existing is indeed something, is indeed that thing that we are doing. And so what does it really matter what anybody does. The newspapers are full of what anybody does and anybody knows what anybody does but the thing that is important is the intensity of anybody's existence. (Lectures 182)

The intensity of existence means that a new style of writing is required that will not be about remembering per se, and will therefore not have a story. As we have noted, Stein clarifies that this literary work has already begun because Proust, Stein and Joyce have all written novels that are not about a story, and have no story. This new style creates a disequilibrium between words and their meanings. For example, the only words Stein becomes interested in are those that have no "quality of description." She writes, "I became more and more excited about how words which were the words that made whatever I looked at look like itself were not the words that had in them any quality of description" (Lectures 191). For Stein the words that make something "look like itself" are words that have a 'relation' to that thing, but do not have a 'descriptive relation' to that thing.

> And the thing that excited me so very much at that

> time and still does is that the words or words that make what I looked at be itself were always words that to me very exactly related themselves to that thing the thing at which I was looking, but as often as not had as I say nothing whatever to do with what any words would do that described that thing. (Lectures 191-2)

Stein considers whether a word that describes something 'makes' that thing itself exist. Can the word also 'make' the thing what it is without any direct relational correspondence to the thing as it is? As Stein asks, "did it make itself by description by a word that meant it or did it make itself by a word in itself" (Lectures 191).

Stein then offers a metaphysical account of her writing and introduces the possibility of pure movement. She states that as she wrote she "created something out of something without adding anything" (Lectures 204). Her portraits were about making something happen 'inside'.

> It was to me beginning to be a less detailed thing and at the same time a thing that existed so completely inside in it and it was it was so completely inside that really looking and listening and talking were not a way any longer needed for me to know about this thing about movement being existing. (Lectures 202)

The dichotomy between inside and outside sets up for Stein

the possibility, after many years of writing with little consideration for the public, of understanding the existence of an audience. The inclusion of a sense of the audience, and Stein's discussion of the inside and outside of things, enables her to deviate even more completely from the 'outside' and instead toward the 'inside' of the work of art, and thus toward a portrait as a thing of its own significance. She writes about her discovery of the audience:

> However the important thing was that for the first time in writing, I felt something outside me while I was writing, hitherto I had always had nothing but what was inside me while I was writing. Beside that I had been going for the first time since my college days to lectures. I had been going to hear Bernard Fay lecture about Franco-American things and I had become interested in the relation of a lecturer to his audience. I had never thought about an audience before not even when I wrote Composition As Explanation which was a lecture but now I suddenly began, to feel the outside inside and the inside outside . . . (Lectures 205)

Now we can ask how Stein's delineation of repetition refers back to her sense of movement qua movement. In her search for a world devoid of 'general repetition' Stein

renounces remembering and description. An animated language is originated from this renunciation that is fresh from its severance with meaning. This particular use of language is replete with signification because allegiance to the definitions of words has been removed. Words are free within a fabric of movement. Stein writes "I said in the beginning of saying this thing that if it were possible that a movement were lively enough it would exist so completely that it would not be necessary to see it moving against anything to know that it is moving" (Lectures 170). Stein's words thus become 'meaning themselves' without adherence to subscribed meaning, just as her theory of movement (movement qua movement), has no relation to anything outside of that movement.

The meaning of words is not a static, translatable meaning, but itself is then in motion.

> Then we have insistence insistence that in its emphasis can never be repeating, because insistence is always alive and if it is alive it is never saying anything in the same way because emphasis can never be the same . . . (171)

As Steiner writes of Stein, "She is thus rejecting conventional modes of conceiving action, and insisting upon the state of being in action" (Exact 43). Stein senses that it is possible for movement to exist without something moving against it. For Stein this is contrary to one's

sense of perception when riding in a train, since in "a train moving there is no realization of it moving if it does not move against something" (Lectures 165).

A portrait for Stein becomes a pure form of something moving without any relation to another moving or unmoving thing, and with no relation to subscribed meaning outside of the meaning and the movement it is itself creating. The portraits are not hermetic, as they might at first seem, but are rather systems of meaning in motion, without the possibility of 'fastening' the signification. Stein concludes her theory of movement in the lecture by introducing her own portraits of George Hugnet and Bernard Fay.

> It really does not make any difference who George Hugnet was or what he did or what I said, all that was necessary was that there was something completely contained within itself and being contained within itself was moving, not moving in relation to anything not moving in relation to itself but just moving, I think I almost at that time did this thing. Do you at all in this portrait of George Hugnet that I will now read to you do you really see what I mean and in this portrait of Bernard Fay.

GEORGE HUGNET

George Genevieve Geronimo straightened it out without their finding it out.

Grammar makes George in our ring which Grammar makes George in our ring.

Grammar is as disappointed not is as grammar is as disappointed.

Grammar is not as Grammar is as disappointed.

George is in our ring. Grammar is not is disappointed. In are ring.

George Genevieve in are ring.

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BERNARD FAY

Patience is amiable and amiably.
What is amiable and amiably.
Patience is amiable and amiably.
What is impatience.
Impatience is amiable and amiably.

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Anyway this was to me a tremendously important thing and why. Well it was an important thing in itself for me but it was also an important thing because it made me realize what poetry really is. (Lectures 202-3)

Steiner claims the portraits are a locus for the erasure of difference between prose and poetry for Stein. Stein brings the prose form to the poetical enterprise. Steiner also writes that the intention in Stein's final phase of portraiture is "to produce a portrait sign that does not work mediately, but instead, immediately, so that a perception of the sign functions as a perception of the subject himself" (Exact 63). The portraits, then, are to be read not as having a specific relation to meaning as we know it, but rather as language that replaces its meaning, in motion, and thus introduces emphasis anew and vies with a world of 'general repetition'.

Stein acknowledges that most of her portrait pieces have little, if any, relation to their subjects. Yet one can see a lyric (even incantational) handwriting in the manuscript pages of the portrait that is generally attributed to Isadora Duncan, "Orta Or One Dancing." The size of Stein's writing in this portrait is large and often even prodigious -- spatially magnified as Duncan's movements were -- and her handwriting protrudes across the lines of the paper into open space.

The melodic nature of Stein's literary work has been obfuscated since most readers only know her work in its typeset form. The typewritten manuscripts that Alice B. Toklas dutifully prepared for Stein, as well as the more recent typographical design of the computer, have altered

the way we see both repetition and flux in Stein. But Stein's use of repetition, as she describes in her 1934 lecture "Portraits and Repetition" given during her speaking tour of the United States, was based on a belief in emphasis, insistence, and motion. Indeed, Stein's understanding of repetition is closer to the bodily emphasis of the dancer than the reified nature of conventional language.

Stein refers to something "moving even if it is not moving against anything" (Lectures 165). Is this not the definition of free dancing that Duncan embodied -- a physical universe where movement has no impediment? Stein's notion of moving "without moving against something else" can be evidenced in her attenuated handwriting. The Orta portrait is not finished until she has filled every page of her school-like composition notebook. She writes from front page to last in the notebook, and then returns sequentially to the beginning of the notebook on the backside of the pages. She mimes a traversing of the stage from side to side; her portrait is complete when the movement throughout the notebook, from front to back to front again, is finished. Duncan, as well, danced in a manner such that the origination of the phrase fell toward its dissipation.

The handwriting in the Orta manuscript is not only quite large, it is loosely rounded and spills across the page with no resting place[1]. In dance individual positions

and gestures are increased through time and across space to become movement. Similarly, in Stein's Orta text the individual words become invisible: they are lost in the sweep of the movement action and therefore function as residue once expelled. Gestures and words become traces of the movement of the bodies of both women writers; to read the words is to become a part of their movement path. The Orta portrait gives us a special understanding of how to read Stein, that is, to search for the movement of reading rather than reading in the conventional sense of locating meaning and description.

For Duncan and Stein the sensation of the body in motion is paramount. In the following paragraph we can see two women sensing the body within the expressive, circling logic of its motion, i.e. dancing:

> She was thinking, she was believing, she was dancing, she was meaning. She was thinking, she was believing in thinking, she was thinking in believing, she was believing in dancing, she was thinking in believing in dancing. She was thinking in believing in dancing having meaning. She was believing in thinking in dancing having meaning. She was dancing in having meaning, she was having meaning in dancing, she was dancing, she was believing, she was thinking, she was answering, she was careless in domineering, she

> was going on answering, she was worn with believing, she was careless in domineering, she was energetic in answering, she was believing in going in any direction, she went on in changing, she was simple in not going on questioning, she was moving changing, she was changing in connecting, she was seeing feeling in connecting dancing, she was feeling in careless domineering, she was needing dancing in believing. ("Orta" 10)

This description is of the *inside* of dancing and the *inside* of writing -- not the contours of skin and costume against space, but the feeling of being in the dancing that one is doing. While Stein refers to believing eleven times in this paragraph, she is also "worn with believing." She refers often to thinking, dancing, and meaning. Oddly she refers to "going on answering" and then being "energetic in answering." Then, Stein writes of changing, questioning, and connecting.

There is even an ontology to dancing (ontology is not necessarily static[2]), "She would be dancing in being that one the one having been dancing" ("Orta" 10). But how can we hold onto this piece? How can we know what Stein is writing about if the subject is in motion, and if the meaning of the subject is in motion? How do we discuss a text that begins,

> Even if one was one she might be like some other

> one. She was like one and then was like another one and then was like another one and then was like another one and then was one who was one having been one and being one who was one then, one being like some. ("Orta" 1)

The sequencing, the movement into things, and the staying between things reminds one of the training in rehearsal of a dancer preparing steps. There is a movement forth and back, not a repetition, but a search for movement language.

We see that 'meaning' is "doing the dancing": "Meaning doing dancing is the thing this one is doing" ("Orta" 3). As with the construction of Stein's portrait, the dancer is "believing in moving in any direction" ("Orta" 12). She was both dancing and not dancing:

> She was one dancing and she was one not dancing. She was one not dancing. She was one dancing. She was one believing in meaning being existing. She was dancing. ("Orta" 12)

As with Husserl we see a continuum of resting in non-resting, a constant gradation between motion and inaction.

Remembrance is also involved in dancing:

> She had been dancing. She was dancing. She could be dancing. She could remember that she could be dancing. She did remember something of that thing. She did remember anything of that thing. She did remember everything of being one who could

be dancing. ("Orta" 12)

Near the end of the manuscript we often find the word dancing, "In dancing she was dancing" ("Orta" 16). As when shaking a tree for plums, if the word dancing is written enough times it becomes itself dancing, loosening itself from the page in a 'jump up and around':

> She was one not changing. She was one dancing. She was one showing everything of this thing, of being one dancing.
>
> In being one going on being that one the one dancing she was one who would have been one going on dancing if she had not come to be one showing some that every one could be needing to be understanding the meaning of believing that dancing is existing in thinking in meaning being existing. She would have been one going on being one dancing if she were not being that one the one dancing. She would have been one going on being dancing if she had not been that one the one who had been dancing.
>
> Being one dancing and being one remembering everything of that thing is something. Being one dancing and being one going on being one dancing is something. Being one dancing and being one believing in feeling in thinking in meaning being existing is something. Being one dancing is

something. In being one dancing this one the one dancing is one doing that thing doing dancing. In being one dancing this one is being that one the one dancing.

This one in being dancing is one being dancing. In being one being dancing this one is one who in being dancing is one expressing that thing expressing being one dancing. In dancing this one is one expressing that dancing is existing. In dancing this one is expressing anything. In dancing this one is one feeling the expressing everything. In dancing this one is dancing. In dancing this one is being one dancing. In dancing this one is being that one the one dancing.

In being one dancing this one is being one remembering anything in dancing. In being one dancing this one is one remembering something in dancing. In being one dancing this one was dancing and dancing being that thing being dancing this one was doing that thing was doing dancing. In being one dancing this one was one being dancing. In being dancing this one was dancing. In dancing this one was dancing.

In dancing she was dancing. She was dancing and dancing and in being that one the one dancing

and dancing she was dancing and dancing. In dancing, dancing being existing, she was dancing, and in being one dancing dancing was being existing.

She was one and being one she was one in a way being one, she was one dancing. She was one she was one dancing. She was one dancing, she was being one, she was in a way one, she was one, she was one dancing.

In being one, in being in a way one, she was one dancing. In being one dancing, she was in a way one. She was in a way one. She was one dancing, she was one remembering anything of dancing, she was in a way one. She was one dancing. In being one who was one dancing she was in a way one. She was in a way one, that is, she was one and being one she was one dancing and being one dancing she was one being that one the one dancing, and being that one the one dancing she was one. She was one, that is, she was one being one dancing. She was one and she was being dancing, that is in a way she was one. In being dancing, she was one, that is, she was in a way one.

She was in a way one, that is she was dancing, that is she was in a way one, that is she

> was dancing, and she was one dancing and being that one the one dancing, being that one she was in a way one. She was one, she was in a way one, she was dancing. ("Orta" 15-16)

As the manuscript closes, she is "resembling some" ("Orta" 17) and "knowing one another" ("Orta" 18). She was "expressing something" and "telling something" ("Orta" 18). There is a

> complete connection being existing in her being one dancing between dancing being existing and her being one not being one completing being one, she was one dancing and being that one she was that one and being that one she was that one the one dancing and being the one dancing being that one she was the one going on being that one the one dancing. She was dancing. She had been dancing. She would be dancing. ("Orta" 18)

Thus we can see how the word dancing when repeated enough times becomes not repetition, but rather the moving thing itself.

Dydo is one of the very few writers (Steiner was another) who have consulted Stein's handwritten manuscripts. Stein's "hand moving on paper" is central:

> The energy of a piece comes in part from the act of writing, which enters it as value that can be read, just as hues and brush strokes can be read

> in a painting. A text must be transcribed with attention to the evidence of its making. Print, while it cannot always reproduce that process, need not wipe it out. Inside a text are the lines that carry the words, the hand moving on paper, line breaks and spaces dictated by notebook or leaf, size and folds of paper, pen or pencil forming words, the shape of a draft visible in the way it is copied into an notebook, and even the effort to end a work in the space of one notebook. (Reader 7)

We can refer to the intention of the painter on the painted canvas as well as the writer's intention toward the manuscript. Both show the hand as it composes:

> We see the intentions in the way the hand formed the words and moved them on the page; in notebooks chosen; pen or pencil used; in fast, slow, tight, or loose writing; in lines, breaks, spacing, excisions. (Dydo, Reader 11)

In "Reading the Hand Writing: The Manuscripts of Gertrude Stein" Dydo has found a particularly descriptive text by Stein which refers to the act of her writing,

> I write the way I used to write in Making of Americans, I wander around and I come home and I write, I write in one copy-book and I copy what I write into another copy-book and I write and I

> write....I have come back to write the way I used to write and this is because now everything that is happening is once more happening inside, there is no use in the outside.... ("And Now," 1933, ms. draft) (qtd. in Dydo 86)

Dydo also refers to Stein's word patterns as being in constant motion. Motion is the thing that recomposes them: our motion in reading them and Stein's while writing them. The words themselves are intrinsically animate -- as if they move themselves into compositions. Stein's word patterns "refuse to be pinned down, appear unstable. Like the glass bits in a kaleidoscope, they constantly move, combining and recombining steadily in new patterns"[3] ("Reading" 84).

Dydo makes a distinction between Stein's carnets and cahiers, "Together, the small, preliminary notebooks, or *carnets*, and the larger manuscript books, or *cahiers*, allow us to enter Stein's mature creative process" ("Reading" 86). Both allow us to see Stein's handwriting and its relationship to ideas of movement. Words are already in motion, or perhaps they must be 'triggered' to begin. Dydo discusses how the French school notebooks, in which Stein often wrote, helped Stein begin writing:

> When Stein began writing in a *cahier*, the stories on the covers sometimes helped her to get started. Here she writes in a notebook on Lamartine from the series *Les Educateurs de la*

Jeunesse (Teachers of Youth): "I wondered how I would begin / my Lamartine / with a song about my queen" ("An Indian Boy," 1923). Lamartine and Toklas help Stein to start but do not become a part of her piece. Likewise, when she worries what to write about and decides that she will not write about a volcano, though the cover of the notebook on volcanoes tells us where she got the idea, it is clear without the *cahier* that volcanoes are not what she will write about. As Stein gathered her resources by concentrating on the immediate, details might enter her work from anything she could see, including the notebooks. Some of these details remain as casual triggers of words. Others, however, determine central construction, making the texts difficult to understand unless the sources are traced. Wendy Steiner has shown some of the ways in which cover illustrations determine texts. For example, to understand the portrait of Ernest Hemingway, the references on the covers must be understood (110-18). Stein apparently was not fully aware of how impenetrable some of her pieces became that relied on such details. The ways in which elements from the notebooks are selected, played with or absorbed into her work require further study.

("Reading" 91-2)

Dydo also senses Stein's body and its relation to using spatial shape in her work,

> One more extraordinary aspect of the manuscripts demands attention: writing as a physical act in space. The title "Five Words in a Line," as usual, is literally true: in the *cahiers* approximately five handwritten words fitted on a line. Stein must suddenly have become aware of this fact and begun to play with it. She also frequently filled given spaces. For example, she sometimes drafted answers on the back of letters received. Since such letters were usually folded in half, in thirds, or both, she tended to fill each half or each third or sixth, as if it were a separate page, rather than to open the sheet and write from top to bottom. It is important to know whether the format of a notebook or even a scrap of paper determined the visual shape of words in composition. Some sections of "An Elucidation" (1923) are drafted in a tiny pad, which results in very short lines and small units -- including the statement, "Small examples are preferable." By the time the pieces are typed or printed, the spatial quality of the handwritten work is gone. Yet to return to the manuscripts

> and follow the hand shaping words, lines, and pages in the *carnets* and the *cahiers* makes exhilarating contact with the act of composition. ("Reading" 94)

Dydo is concerned with the materiality of what Stein has written, that is, the manuscripts. These bring us to the materiality of Stein's body, especially since Stein's body in its 'automatic'' or 'triggering' relation to writing has an editorial function in a similar spatial sense as the pages on which she writes[5]. Stein uses her body and the space in which it moves to traverse and fill (decorate, articulate, expand upon) space as the dancer uses the parameters of a stage space to delineate the expression of the movement.[6]

Dydo notes that Stein's writing had painterly elements of composition in the way space was utilized:

> Many manuscripts are filled to the last line of the last page of the last *cahier* of any one work. In such *cahiers* Stein did what painters do when they fill a canvas: she fitted a composition into a given space. For these works she cannot have completed a draft in a *carnet* and copied it since it is impossible to plan space from one notebook to another. Indeed, she often began or continued but hardly ever finished pieces in a *carnet*. Her artistic problem became to *complete* a

> composition within a set space, not simply to *stop* it. Sections of what became the teasing, grammatical portrait of Bernard Fay appear first in the long "Sentences" (1928). Stein used sentences from this piece, with revisions, and transferred them into a new, illustrated *cahier* as the opening of the portrait "Bernard Fay" (late 1928). She continued composing directly in the *cahier* and finished the portrait at the bottom of the inside back cover. Completing works in a given space forced her to confront the problems of endings. Donald Sutherland, who never saw any of the manuscripts, was aware of Stein's use of pages as spatial units of writing (113-14). ("Reading" 94-5)

Dydo's understanding of Stein's interest in artistic completion within a set space clarifies the importance of bodily expressivity. As Dydo argues, it is not simply a question of stoppage but of artistic completion. Thus the physical and expressive parameters of the spatial configurations in which Stein writes, and the space of her body as it is writing, are intertwined. As the dancer steps in and out of motion and repose -- being simply different versions of each other -- so too Stein "goes on" in her writing as her words seem to go on, "Stein's is a world -- a space -- of unending process, which does not unroll toward a

conclusion but *goes on*, steadily and simultaneously, in many forms" ("Reading" 95). Outside of the Orta portrait Stein has few, though occasional, references to dance:

> Willie Jewetts dance in the
> tenth century chateau
> Soultz Alsace dance
> on the Boulevard Raefail
> Spanish French dance
> on the rue de la Boetie
> Russian Flemish dance
> on the docks dudes

While we do not see what is 'in' the dances, they are listed as a collection which ends with the activities of dudes "on the docks."

In her fragment "Animated" we have a sense -- as we have seen in the Orta piece -- of an interior feeling of movement. Krzysztof Ziarek refers to this as the "event-character of the work of art"[7] (125). Stein writes,

> Animated
>
> By animated we mean listen to them.
> By that we mean that we move in one way.
> We move in one way and then we say
> Fifty five alive.
> Fifty five alive.

Don't be foolish.
Don't be foolish.
Do we say don't be foolish.

She connects the animated with the process of listening. This "means" one certain type of moving. This leads to several repetitions.

In another fragment, "Postal Cards," she clarifies her disinterestedness in narrative writing:

Postal Cards

Were you it.
Were you a postal card
Were you on a postal card
I do not care about imitating narratives.

Then we find her idea of naming in "Names of Flowers":

Names of Flowers

Gertrude
The peace of Europe.
The princess of Monaco.
Victory.
Tulips.

I murmur to my servant. Don't ring the bell. I
also say. Don't attack me.
By being unkind I please brothers.
Brother brother go away and stay.

As we see from the multiple distractions that both intrude upon and create the piece, the immediate world of her bodily perceptions and the activities around her assist in editing the work.

Her somewhat longer piece "Can You See the Name" may help:

Can You See the Name

The name that I see is Howard.
Yes.
And the water that I see is the sea.
Yes
And the land is the island.
Yes.
And the weather.
And the weather.
Cold.
Indeed.
And the cause.
The cause of what.

The cause of lust.

Lust is not a name.

Indeed not.

And bushes.

Can you fear bushes.

Not I.

You mean you are braver.

Braver and braver.

What is the meaning of current.

Current topics.

Yes and then.

And then colors.

Green colors.

Lord Melbourne says blue is unlucky.

This is fear.

When can you see us.

Whenever I look.

And when are you careful.

I am very careful to smile.

Then we have our way.

Indeed you do and we wish it.

We are glad of your wishes.

It is not difficult to drive.

Curtain let us.

We do

We will.

Thank you so much.

You learnt that before.

I learn it again.

Do you know the difference in authors.

The name of the water, that she is able to see is the "sea," as "the land is the island." The weather is the word cold. But "list is not a name." And "braver. / Braver and braver" must have a relation to braveness. The "meaning of current" becomes "current topics." This current jumps to colors, specifically green and blue. Then she is back to fear again.

Then leading -- indirectly -- to previous learning which is learned again. But "Do you know the difference in authors"? Will this help us see the name?

Randa Dubnick's The Structure of Obscurity: Gertrude Stein, Language, and Cubism contextualizes Stein's use of naming within an expansive fabric of ordering, logic, categorization, and defining:

> If language was truly one of Stein's main concerns, then naturally definition and classification would be the logical processes most relevant to her writing, for they are two key components of ordering the world through language by naming and sorting objects. (87)

Dubnick is able to chart different styles in Stein's

"obscure" writing:

> In her first obscure style, Stein uses definition and classification straightforwardly, but the difficulty of the tasks she undertakes challenges the power of logical structures to deal with them, so tautology, paradox, and circular statements result. In her second obscure style, definition and classification are used playfully, as Stein recognizes that language can be used arbitrarily. As Schmitz points out, "The world systematized and tabulated by discursive language (system upon system, one string after another) begins to collapse when the arbitrary basis of language . . . is scrutinized." And in the merging of the two styles in works like *The Geographical History of America*, both a serious and a playful attitude toward naming and sorting exist side by side. (88-89)

While I have suggested throughout the dissertation that naming has a bodily relation to the thing named, Dubnick's reference to Barthes illustrates some of the problems that emerge from such an analysis. Dubnick leads into Barthes' argument:

> Since naming (defining, classifying, labeling) is so fundamental to language, the arbitrary use of definition is probably the most

revolutionary linguistic act possible short of coining one's own words. But Stein's playful use of definition also acknowledges that language is really a system in which the arbitrary couplings of words and meanings (signifiers and signifieds) have become accepted due to widespread conventional use. Roland Barthes points out:

> Starting from the fact that in human language the choice of sounds is not imposed on us by the meaning itself (the *ox* does not determine the sound *ox*, since in any case the sound is different in other languages), Saussure had spoken of an *arbitrary* relation between signifier and signified. . . . [W]hat is arbitrary is the relation between signifier and the "thing" which is signified (of the sound *ox* and the animal the *ox*). . . . [But] the association of sound and representation is the outcome of a collective training [and] is by no means arbitrary. (94)

Arbitrary language usage is not randomness. Rather, according to Dubnick, it can be poetic:

> Once the limitations of language's power to definitively name and order reality become

> evident, the recognition that words can be used arbitrarily seems to follow (p. 203): "What are words. / Any word is a word." Moreover, "And what is what is what is what" (p. 238). Once the arbitrary nature of words and logical structures is acknowledged, these can be used freely and playfully, for the sake of qualities other than their ability to name and sort the objects in the real world. It becomes possible to use words poetically. (102)

As Steiner notes in Exact Resemblance to Exact Resemblance, "To tell what someone is doing is to give his action a name, thus to compare it to other actions and to reify its process-quality" (42). As she notes, "the 'moving' subject is all that Stein is interested in" (45). The individual of a portrait, particularly in the case of the Orta text, "is seen as a completely unique, non-relational movement" (45). Steiner argues that the portraits are "to have the very degree and intensity of movement that its subject has." Indeed, the portrait can have the same *movement itself* that the subject has, or even yet can *turn the language of the subject back into the movement language that the subject uses to originate movement*.

Steiner writes that Stein "and Solomons discovered that one of the characteristics of automatic writing was '*A*

marked tendency to repetition . . . " (Exact 48). Steiner discusses how the repetitions in automatic writing and in Stein's work do not necessarily mean that Stein's work was automatic writing as many critics believe. Steiner quotes Solomons who writes that "Miss Stein found it sufficient distraction often to simply read what her arm wrote, but following three or four words behind her pencil" (48). The description of Stein's moving arm reminds us of the discussion in chapter 2 which concerned Husserl's awareness of his own process of writing.

Steiner also asks about the relation of Stein to phenomenology,

> When we consider that Stein's ideas about language, her bracketing-off of various factors in order to concentrate on only one, and her intricate analysis of time have led several critics to wonder if she might not have been well acquainted with the writings of the phenomenologists . . . (Exact 54)

In a footnote she quotes B.L. Reid, "'Exact reproduction' . . . is something very close to the so-called 'reduction' process of the Phenomenologists, and one cannot help wondering whether Miss Stein had encountered Husserl or his followers" (qtd. in Steiner, Exact 54). In the same footnote she writes that "The influence of William James is probably the significant factor in any relation between

Stein and the Phenomenologists, since he is in part their precursor . . ."

Steiner presents a passage from James that reminds us of Genette's analysis of pacing in Proust. In Genette's discussion of Proust pacing is juxtaposed between the rate of the reader reading and the rate of action in the novel. In comparing Stein and James we see distinctions between the pacing of the sentence and the pacing of our thoughts. James also refers to a bird and its flights and moments of stasis as we saw in Husserl.

> For James, thought is translated not only by functional units, such as subject and object, but also by the parts of speech. He explains these in a very famous passage describing the rate of change in the objects of our thought in terms of the 'pace' of the sentence:
>
> > When the rate is slow we are aware of the object of our thought in a comparatively restful and stable way. When rapid, we are aware of a passage, a relation, a transition *from* it, or *between* it and something else. As we take, in fact, a general view of the wonderful stream of our consciousness, what strikes us first is this different pace of its parts. Like a bird's life

> it seems to be made of an alternation of flights and perchings. The rhythm of language expresses this, where every thought is expressed in a sentence, and every sentence closed by a period. The resting-places are usually occupied by sensorial imaginations of some sort, whose peculiarity is that they can be held before the mind for an indefinite time, and contemplated without changing; the places of flight are filled with thoughts of relations, static or dynamic, that for the most part obtain between the matters contemplated in the periods of comparative rest.
>
> *Let us call the resting-places the 'substantive parts,' and the places of flight the 'transitive parts,' of the stream of thought.*

Here, even in the naming of the parts of thought, James uses terms which apply to language -- "substantive" and "transitive." (Exact 55)

Steiner's references to James make clear the submerged relation between speech, thought and its action,

> Here, most explicitly, James makes the parallel with language: "The truth is that large tracts of

> human speech are nothing but *signs of direction* in thought . . . These bare images of logical movement . . . are psychic transitions, always on the wing, so to speak, and not to be glimpsed except in flight." (Exact 55-6)

Steiner then analyzes grammar in Stein as this pertains to her overall project of flux:

> Transitive words, on the other hand, will be favored since they express pure flux, the state of motion itself without regard to the beginnings or endpoints of the process. (Exact 56)

Steiner continues her discussion of James, the flux of language, and the influence of James on Stein:

> It is interesting that James himself seemed to favor these transitive words, not in his own writing, of course, but in theory. For they have an additional quality which struck him as particularly mimetic of thought. We recall that one of James's primary notions about thought was that it was in constant flux and that no two thoughts were ever precisely the same. Since many of the transitive words have the ability to appear in different shapes, or to have the same shape and refer to different phenomena -- to be "shifters," as the modern linguistic terms stresses -- they reflect materially the changes of thought.

English nouns, on the other hand, are invariable except for the plural and the possessive, and thus present a problem which James discusses as follows: "What, after all, is so natural as to assume that one object, called by one name, should be known by one affection of the mind? But if language must thus influence us, the agglutinative languages, and even Greek and Latin with their declensions, would be the better guides. Names did not appear in them inalterable, but changed their shape to suit the context in which they lay. It must have been easier then than now to conceive of the same object as being thought of at different times in non-identical conscious states" (pp. 236-37). Because of this Ronald Bartlett Levinson concludes from Stein's enthusiasm for verbs and shifters that "among the virtues attributed to them is the truly Jamesian excellence that they move and change, thus manifesting their relative adequacy to the changeful 'stream of consciousness'" (p. 127). "Most if not all of Miss Stein's writing which resembles in form and content the early automatic writing, is the attempt to put into practice some notions of the ideal function of language, notions which were in all probability derived from . . .

William James" (p. 125). (Exact 56-7)

We see just such a seriated juxtaposition of contiguous verbs in the Orta portrait. Steiner also analyzes Stein's problematization of nouns and the naming function. She notes that initially most of Stein's portraits had references to names only in the title since when a name is enlisted "the attention of the perceiver is drawn from the structure of the sentence to some datum of reality and the mode of the sentence shifts from the aesthetic to the referential" (58). By using the title to reference a name,' the abstraction and vibrant movement of the text is able to exist separately. In the case of the Orta text we see several titles that appear in motion, "Orta Or One Dancing," "Orta Davray," "Alma Davray," "Isadora Dora Do," and "Dora or DoRa."

Given the originality of Stein's theories of movement, and their importance in understanding her use of emphasis and insistence it is curious that there has been so little research on her movement theories. B.L. Reid in Art by Subtraction offers an entire chapter on the subject which he titles "Theories of Movement: Moving Is in Every Direction." He discusses movement succession, inside or interior movement (what he refers to as "'within' or self-contained" movement), and directionless movement (106). He does not take note of Stein's idea of 'movement which moves without moving against something else'. According to Reid

the three types of movement he discusses were separated in her early works and then intertwined in her later works, being hard to distinguish after about 1913.

We will discuss the first two types that Reid has analyzed, beginning first with succession. But rather than understanding succession as a method which challenges the reader to find new ways of reading, he instead notes that succession as a principle in cinema does not work for Stein as a literary style because it leads to a "flatness of style" which we see "on the printed page as repetition" (109). Rather than understanding how the movement of the words on the page could invigorate language, Reid prefers (as do most) to see repetition as flatness, that is, something overdetermined and reified. Still, his criticism can help us articulate Stein's work. According to Reid, Stein leaves behind her theory of movement succession because "She felt that she had to move toward a new technique for realization of movement" (113) since cinematic succession was "still perilously close to a story line and a time awareness" (113).

Thus she developed what Reid defines as "movement 'within' or self-contained" (113). He ties the following ideas from Stein's The Geographical History of America to the category of movement 'within':

> . . . only the things flying around are interesting which makes the universe . . . flat

> land and the human mind, of course they do they do fly around.
>
> The human mind does not hop around but it flies around.
>
> If anything flies around there is no ending and no begun. (qtd. in Reid 115)

Reid notes that "flying" is differentiated from the "regular, planful, orderly moving along an undulating narrative line" (116).

Stein's explicit use of movement throughout her work suggests that she has a stronger conceptual affinity with Futurism[9] than with Cubism. Marjorie Perloff in Wittgenstein's Ladder begins her chapter on Stein and Futurist F.T. Marinetti with a reference to Wittgenstein's notion of "grammar as the description of how sentences are actually formed" and not necessarily whether sentences make sense or what sentences are supposed to do (84). Perloff refers to Françoise Collin's discussion of Stein's writing as a third language (neither American nor French). Perloff writes that Steinian language "exposes . . . the implications contained in phrases, word groups, words, and morphemes," and notes the action of language when describing how the meaning of words "depends on their function in the specific context of action we call the

language game" (98).

The end of Perloff's chapter on Stein and Marinetti clarifies the debt in Stein's work to a Futurist "visual poetics" from 1914 forward. Perloff observes that Stein, like Wittgenstein, "took ordinary language so seriously" (112). As I have mentioned earlier, this seriousness of language, its materiality, what literary critic Jonathan Monroe refers to as the "objects" of language, and what I refer to as sculptural and concrete language[10], is precisely what allows meaning to have porousness and movement in Stein's work.

The fourth chapter of Harriet Chessman's The Public is Invited to Dance, "The Caressing of Names," offers a sensual approach to naming and to the "objects" of language. Chessman quotes Stein in Lectures in America, referring to poetry as "a state of *knowing and feeling* a name." Chessman continues,

> Words become palpable entities, with weight, volume, and value, capable of being "caressed," even as they come so close to what "anybody" knows and feels that they seem almost to be a part of the one(s) who caress(es) them. (81)

An endnote by Chessman cites William H. Gass as he links Stein's language to statuary,

> Gass speaks of this dimension of Stein's writing as an "escape from protective language," from a

> kind of language that "names" but never "renders," "replaces events with speech," and "says" rather than "shows." Stein, he suggests, gives "to her words the feelings that arise from things"; she creates "from her words real objects, valuable for themselves, capable of an independent existence, as physical as statuary." (221-2)

The motion that is of concern to Stein is that of things not normally considered to be in motion, such as reified objects, i.e. statuary. Her idea of motion is not metaphysical, not 'air writing upon air'. Chessman writes,

> Each instance of the word "rose," as Stein would claim, is a new one. The word, in appearing not once but many times, draws attention away from its status as a referential sign, which is so familiar to us that we can no longer experience the word's freshness. The word, as a word, renders its immediacy and liveliness, its openness to our caresses, by its insistent and multiple appearances. (82)

The multiple appearances are part of its appearing motion.

There is no repetition in Stein, there is only a motion-project. Chessman continues,

> . . . the object of poetry is "to feel the thing anything being existing": to achieve an intimacy with the process and movement, the very

liveliness, of the world . . . (83)

Stein envisages a system of naming names that is tied to her system of 'movement without reference to moving against something'. Chessman describes how "In her *Tender Buttons* period (around 1912) Stein attempts a form of 'naming things that would not invent names, but mean names without naming them'" (84). To mean names without naming is to go into the force of the activity of making names. Names, as the clay that makes pots on a turning wheel, are thrown to the wind in a vortex. By refusing to place meaning or names in a reified form she honors the activity of naming over the name. Words can be used as dancers are used in choreography[11]. As Stein writes, "I took individual words and thought about them until I got their weight and volume complete and put them next to another word" (qtd. in Chessman 90).

Notes

1. Poet John Ashbery, in a short review of Stein's work (particularly referencing Stanzas in Meditation), refers to movement flow in Stein's language:

> There is certainly plenty of monotony in the 150-page title poem which forms the first half of this volume, but it is the fertile kind, which generates excitement as water monotonously flowing over a dam generates electrical power. (104)

2. Fred Nichols has noted that Stein substitutes movement (in her special sense) for traditional ontology.

3. Ellen Berry's analysis of Stein refers to Polan's ideas of the performative nature of Stein's work which "ceases to be about anything but [its] own kinesis" (144).

4. Stein's "recording" of the movements of her own body while writing can be distinguished categorically from the cerebral nature of automatic writing.

5. Since one of Stein's subjects is the sensations of her body we can often see these places of body-editing in her texts -- not editing in the cognitive sense, but changes in physical temperament. These feelings rechart a movement course, and reintroduce a word, idea, or thought which is then funneled back through her body.

6. Proust's continuous writing on the galley proofs has a bodily urgency in relation to writing which is similar to Stein's expansive writing. While this writing for Proust seems to be generally of a patchwork fashion, it has a forward momentum that is less directed by the parameters of the physical page and more by the necessity of continuation.

7. Krzysztof Ziarek refers to Jean-François Lyotard's definition of the avant-garde "as the attempt to disclose the event-character of the work of art, as the effort to move beyond the limit of expression and, interrupting the conventions of representation, to inscribe in art the instance of happening" (125). Stein's work, writes Ziarek is "centrally engaged with the event" (130). Ziarek uses Stein's How to Write to illustrate the unfolding that Lyotard relates to the rigor of the event:

> Even though Lyotard does not pursue this point about Stein, his remarks about the rigor with which avant-garde art and writing treat the event -- the rigor that, unlike the philosophical-scientific one, does not have to do with conceptual clarity and absence of contradictions but rather with the precision with which one attends to the unfolding of words and language -- suggests the manner in which we can begin to articulate

> the importance of Stein's writing to avant-garde practices. What needs clarification above all is the extent to which Stein's idiom -- its characteristic disfiguration of grammar and syntax and subversion of the rules of literary writing -- is a response to the event-character of experience and its erasure from linguistic practices. (130)

Ziarek continues his analysis of how the event is central to Stein's idea of grammar:

> Stein claims in the first chapter of *How to Write*, "Saving the Sentence," that sentences, as the basic units of writing, have to be seen not in grammatical terms but as the open-ended events of meaning: "A sentence has wishes as an event" (*How to Write* 18), and, later on in "Sentences": "This is a sentence if it is an event" (*How to Write* 144). (131-2)

Ziarek notes that it is difficult to "hold on to" Stein's literary work,

> Stein's way of writing deliberately makes it impossible for the reader to retain the text, to form an image or a memory on the basis of which one could claim to know, remember, or understand these texts. Most of the time, there is no plot, no narrative development, no set of ideas or even an aesthetics or poetics strictly speaking, by means of which one could hold on to a Stein text. (132)

Ziarek shows how Stein's texts are focussed on their own process of production, "This writing strategy allows Stein to focus her texts, and the reader's attention, away from the conventional nodes of writing -- content, plot, imagery, characters, etc. -- and directly upon the process through which a text emerges and produces meaning" (133).

8. This is similar to many Abstract Expressionist paintings where the title is a key to the referentiality of the abstractness of the painting.

9. Stein's theories of movement could not have been divorced from some of the ideas of the Futurists. She was excited about their notions of movement. As she writes:

> It has been wonderfully spring here for two weeks now. Also the futurists are in town. You know Marinetti and his crowd. He brought a bunch of painters who paint houses and people and streets and wagons and scaffolding and bottles and fruits all moving and where they are not moving here are cubes to fill in. (Stein qtd. in Mellow 205)

10. Poet Lynn Hejinian describes how even inanimate things can be seen as animate in Stein:

> As for movement, Stein wanted to understand things not in isolated rigidity, which falsified and

> monumentalized conditions which were fluid, but as present participants in on-going living -- fountainous living. How does a carafe move? In an arrangement. By being larger than a cup and smaller than a pitcher; by containing less liquid than before; by reflecting light (and thereby color); by being or containing the same color as a piece of paper; by having a vase with flowers not of that color set to the left of it from here but to the right of it from there, and so forth. (132)

The position of an object is always part of motion, part of a larger field choreography.

11. Stein's writing is choreographic (writing and action enmeshed) since her work is not a condensation of action (e.g. abbreviated movement) but is rather fully expatiated action. Rather than *representing* action her words instead *take a similar physical action to read as they would to accomplish* the activity that the word implies or clarifies. Stein's language is not play (as some critics have understood). Rather, the physical work of reading Stein can be quite taxing at times.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Sexuality

The writing of Proust and Stein had an urgency which was not present in the same form for Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. Both philosophers were following lines of philosophical inquiry which caused them to examine the notion and constitution of the body. Despite the immediacy of sensation (or 'primacy of perception' to refer to one of Merleau-Ponty's works), the body they were construing was not wholly 'their own'. Rather, they were speaking of the relation between a subjective empirical body and the relation of that body to general bodies, the bodies of others.

How might we constitute a specific body in fiction as opposed to a general body in philosophy? Both Proust and Stein are particularly interested in the problem of identity and its coordinate position as a component of the body. There has been much research on the multifariousness of Proust's notions of identity. Stein, particularly in Everybody's Autobiography, even The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas, and especially The Making of Americans, as well as her portraits, shows identity to be similar to an Impressionist painting: dots and dabs are located here and there which make rough, composite pictures of personality.

Why does the work of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty seem to have a more reflective -- and less urgent -- relation to

bodiliness? Proust and Stein, as literary writers, assume personal experience to be evendential by its nature. Still, there is a force that we see in both literary writers which pushes the use of language and creates an inventiveness that is felt in the overall structure of A la recherche du temps perdu, and in Stein's use of individual words. What is experimental in Proust is the overlapping and irregular reappearance of motif, and in Stein the abstract composition of juxtaposed language. The simple, small words in Stein are radical through their placement; their associational appearance is always surprising.

What is the urgent force? What form does it take and why do I sense it has a relation to their homosexuality? How is the circumlocutious nature of their writing a part of their hesitation toward defining a homosexual literary identity? How does this feeling of what I know to be an action of self-understanding become perceived as an activity of homosexuality? How does the ontology of what I know of my body, and my body in the state of inscribing its beingness on paper (whether in flighty or melodic form), and inscribing beingness onto other bodies, have a different linguistic relation than what I feel? To find a language is essential for Proust and Stein because the language with which they begin does not feel like their language. For Stein a language of bodily experience reworks syntax; Proust's fleeting and metamorphic descriptions rework

reification. Their language must 'stay true' to the bodily, to the actions of the body and its sensations; it is sexual through its allegiance to the body.

There is *no* homosexuality for the *body* of the homosexual, instead there is simply inscription and decoding. Thus, if homosexuality as a notion is present only as a social category, how does 'language-homosexuality' appear in print? How is 'language-homosexuality' pivotal to literary style (even to bodily style as we could consider elsewhere)? We can see the importance of what is considered fiction: while Proust and Stein are writers of fiction we also know that any text which has a particular consciousness of body has a problematic relation to fiction. The factual element, if you will, is the deployment of a self-understanding sexual body.

What is specific about 'language-homosexuality' and how is it different from 'language-sexuality'? 'Language-homosexuality' is a movement that has an application to larger systems of spatio-temporality. It is a physical application of a defining relationship at the precise moment in its movement. 'Language-sexuality', on the other hand, also defines its presence. Sensation is present in both cases; self-consciousness weighs sensation in 'language-homosexuality' because of its relation to an understanding of form. This understanding implies that form does not break away: it wraps itself. This self-wrapping of

language we see both in Proust and Stein. Bodiliness presses upon the page; the page (through the word) creates 'language-sexuality'. This 'language-sexuality' does not reveal itself in a clarified form as also bodies do not. As we read Proust and Stein we can sense the pressing of form, body, and fiction which is present in sexual presence.

I began by considering style of writing in relation to activities that have or have not been undertaken and I finish with the force and pressing of writing. I have discussed how Proust and Stein sense and "feel" their language, which leads to their search for an internal homosexual language.[1] Their bodies present form which when wrapped is 'language-homosexuality'. [My body has pressed deeply upon the surface beach clay below the towel where I finish writing.]

Do we write in a similar fashion to the way one reflects and agitates in a drawing class with the model in front of one's view, endlessly studying contour, shading, light, and anatomy while trying to impress the body upon the pad of drawing paper? In writing we impress upon the surface with the shifting and weighted balances of a single body in order to know 'what is there'. We know this body by tracing it through writing. We find the body's articulation and the evidence of its force which is sexual. The sexual force of the body is an abbreviation of its expressive force.[2] Thus the writing of Proust and Stein, narrative seriated moments,

passes through bodily, literary, and sexual presence.

Closing Remarks

One subject I would like to consider in more detail is that of Proust's style of writing, and its relationship to action, reflection, description, and memory. Does Proust sense how one phrasal movement of writing (the action of the hand and pen over and on the page) is more essential, and another phrasal movement more oblique? Do we look to the handwriting, the drafts on paper, or to the gesture of actions that have coated the page: is this what is meant by "not finishing a novel?" The multiple and myriad hesitations toward action, the italicizing of activity, the possibility of motion, and the presence of immobility, are all parallel to the actual, continual writing that Proust the author is performing. This clarifies the problem of his vocation as a writer. He was not a writer in the sense of narration, or as we consider the identity of someone who has written something. Rather, he was writing. He will never accomplish the vocation of being a writer because at that point identity, language, and body would cease, as of course they did when he died.

For Proust language was the gestural trace to which I have referred. Language is not only a shadow of movement, it is a shadow of the memory of movement. In A la recherche du temps perdu we have movement that is traced on paper:

the novel is essence of activity, precipe of activity, an action writing that is beautified by memory. When we understand A la recherche du temps perdu as an activity of Proust's writing it becomes difficult to see how the novel can be understood as being largely without "narrative action." Conventional, narrated action is substituted for the action of writing which is extra-temporal: the writing has the time of the body (rather than chronological time). There is a flipping of action from its recorded presence to its language presence. This language presence not only notates movement, but also propels 'literary activity'. Such 'literary activity' is abbreviated movement, a chance to catch the tail of movement.

If thought and language have reflective capability, how do we define and describe what is reflective about movement? How does the body reflect upon its actions at the moment of action? If writing is an action how is it nevertheless wrapped in the reflective? Description provides footholds for action and can also reflect on the scribing motion; it can be expressive rather than mimetic. What Proust describes is the body sensing the imaginary-real.

When the subject is encased in fiction how does this complicate a search for the body? In Stein's Orta portrait there is a choreographic analysis which traces not only dancing, but also notation of dancing. If we look, conversely, at sections in Husserl where he examines the

action of writing we see that he is concerned with how language and sensation are notated, rather than a notation of the deployment in space of the body. Merleau-Ponty has theorized that what we might formerly consider abstract concepts are integral to the physical fabric of the body (time, space, and motion, for example). The body for Merleau-Ponty is not an idea. Yet the ideas that constitute how we find and localize the body are, for Merleau-Ponty, vaporous and free of pictorial representation.

Proust, also, is notating that vaporous subject we call fiction, orchestrating physical and non-physical movements. Thus how can we expect to arrive at something if we position ourselves close to his handwriting? If the parts of the body are not localized, as Merleau-Ponty describes, then what is local about handwriting? Are we closer to the map of the body's actions in handwriting, or close to the map itself? If the graphical code of handwriting is closer to dancing than typescript, is this simply a question of the distance of the audience to the stage? So that typescript is the presentational writing that ballet offers, for example, to larger audiences who must peer from a distance (and in this way ballet is always an art form that must traverse distance through coded signs which are meant to be seen across an expansive void). Whereas handwriting, similar to what we refer to as 'modern dance', does not assume a distance to the audience, is 'written' in an

intimate way, as if the viewer is looking over the shoulder of the writer, or is privy to a language of dancing that is meant for that viewer watching.

Literature is often seen as illustrative. But even if we understand Stein's language to be 'standing in' for the sensing of time and space, or if we see it as 'present for' associational values of language, or her handwriting as melodic, etc., what is difficult about much of her writing -- and we have not looked at her longer and particularly 'abstract' writing, rather we have considered her pedagogic writing where she represents to us her conditions for writing (Lectures in America), and then the writing in which she presents dance movement -- is that Stein generally does not seem to be representing anything outside of language itself. But then we ask, what is this language, what does her language represent? Then, in spite of the abstract use of syntax in Stein and the 'non-locational' words which seem to appear in every which way, we know that her language must be something, and maybe that thing is 'writing' or 'literature' which does not have to be something else.

If Proust's theory of physicality and memory -- that they are contiguous -- is true, then A la recherche du temps perdu is not illustrative in a conventional literary sense, rather the novel is an archipelago of islands of visceral experience and revelation with an otherwise ocean expanse of mnemonic notes associated amorphously with those moments.

But why would we assume that a novel the size of A la recherche du temps perdu would illustrate through description, notation, and even stories, a few isolated points of epicentral physical feeling? Again the problem is in the notion of illustration. A la recherche du temps perdu does not picture these loci. Rather, these moments of truth are scattered frugally in life, and they are picked up in the expanse of life as they are occurring, as they are flowering. We hold onto the petals which lead us to the rest of life, and the next contingent moment.

So if we can conjecture from what I have written in these pages that both Proust and Stein offer narratives without narratives, that is, patterns of writing which generally do not illustrate outside of themselves, do not illuminate the outside, but rather are formed from immediate mental, physical, emotional, and imaginative experiences, like the approach to a wet-laden bough of grapes throwing light back toward the sun, the water of a recent rain crossing at once broadly and individually, then we can see that the life presented is not represented, but rather is expressed and notated. Notation, we see in Stein, is not always 'pretty', but is replete with energy. Notation, we see in Proust, can be descriptively beautiful.[3] There is often a propelling force in Proust's sentences which carries us through his writing action, similar to Stein's in that we become lost in what seems like description, which is

actually activity.

Terminology concerning time and space, which was particularly important to Merleau-Ponty, recurs with different weight and valence in Proust and Stein. (In Husserl such terminology is often subsumed within general philosophic ideas, such as Leib.) We do not see the terms often in Proust, but we see words that seem to be descriptions of the "processes" of time and space: landscape, memory, etc. (In a similar way body is not a frequent word in either Proust or Stein, but there is often a concern for physical presence.) We see in Proust that there is a literary expatiation of key philosophical ideas, most particularly time. For Stein time and space are used as ideas that have a specific history in popular and scientific circles to which she refers with a type of concreteness and frankness (and not exactly a literary feel). Though often referenced, the terms become part of short fable-like stories which then can be 'explained' to a wider public. In this sense while Stein's literary work needs 'explaining' to the wider public, her discussion of contemporary "physics" is elemental and pithy, and she offers well-chosen examples that do help us see the 'face' of how these terms could be reconceived.

Time and space do not stand alone as terms but fold into the notions of body and motion. (Except with Husserl where terminology does not mix, it may reverse in a

positive-negative direction, i.e. motion is rest and vice versa, but it does not transmute into something else.) Husserl conceives of general theories of motion within the philosophical tradition. I have chosen to describe Husserl's theories of motion by employing the word animate. Motion for Merleau-Ponty is generally attached to bodies with sensation. I give many examples of types of movement and activity in A la recherche du temps perdu. Proust does not, again, seem to have an interest in such definitional terminology. Rather, he describes the fields in which terms are operative: what their specific weight and feel is (as well as how the weight and feel is always metamorphic). Stein refers directly to motion as an operative principle in her work.

We have not considered Stein's work together with William James' studies of sensation, or the relation of phenomenology to other analyses of sensation. James was interested in the type of immediacy of response that Stein envisioned in her literary work: the sense that each moment and activity does not have a relationship to something preceding or following it. In this manner Stein did not use repetition since each word and action is sensed at the moment of its application.

Some theorists and critics of literature assume that Proust and Stein offered a rendition of scientific or philosophical concerns of their time. Proust and Stein, on

the other hand, understood their narratives -- if we can use the word in a sense divorced from the idea of a story and instead as a concern with sequencing in both a spatial and temporal sense -- as being connected to work on sensation and perception. Proust and Stein were creating a perceptual language. Both literature and philosophy of the time were seeking terminology for translating experience. This, of course, justifies our investigation of these four writers in one project.

Why, then, consider the literary qualities of both Proust and Stein? If their work was to unfold internal experiences of what initially appears exterior, what is literary about this operation? Because short vignettes, and lengthier stories, continue to appear throughout A la recherche du temps perdu it would be difficult not to consider Proust's enterprise as literary. But because of Proust do we now assume that literature has perceptual qualities which surround the possibility of narrative? While it appears radical to question the literary nature of Proust, the obverse is true with Stein. Rather, generally, we ask how is Stein's work literary. What is literary about sensation? Yet what is the role of literature if not to gesture toward the sensations around us?

In both writers the role of literature becomes ancillary to bodily activity. Literature is not opposed to the bodily, it rides with bodily motion. The bodily is also

filled with literature, and propels itself with literary aims and conceptions. Proust and Stein offer 'perceiving literature', unclothed literature, of which the clothing, the cover of the book, is the body.

Notes

1. Catharine R. Stimpson in her article "The Mind, the Body, and Gertrude Stein" understands the physical nature of Stein's perception. This physical sensibility is related to Stein's sense of the inside, of being "filled up with it." Stimpson introduces one of Stein's reflections on her writing:

> . . . she presents herself as engaged in aural and oral acts, listening and hearing before speaking and telling. That sense of perception as *physical* also emerges in a passage in which she, as perceiver/describer, first incorporates and then linguistically discharges the world: "Mostly always when I am filled up with it I tell it, sometimes I have to tell it, sometimes I like to tell it, sometimes I keep on with telling it." (138)

While I only touch upon sexuality from a theoretical standpoint in this dissertation, my emphasis on physicality is tied to a composite understanding of sexuality. How do we understand sexuality as grounded in bodiliness (and movement of bodies, expressivity of bodies, etc.) rather than familial relations (that is, a psycho-analytic model), etc.? Stimpson finishes the article with a probing passage from Alice B. Toklas. The questions of both Stimpson and Toklas remind us of the critique of sexuality that Foucault gives in Volume 1 of The History of Sexuality:

> In 1947, Alice B. Toklas, though perhaps for reasons of her own, warned against placing too much emphasis on sexuality in the interpretation of Stein's work. She wrote to a correspondent:
>
> > You will understand I hope my objection to your repeated references to the subject of sexuality as an approach to the understanding of Gertrude's work. She would have emphatically denied it -- she considered it the least characteristic of all expressions of character -- her actual references to sexuality are so rare. . . . Gertrude always said she did not like private judgments.
>
> One must wonder if future scholars will not ask about us, "Why were they so interested in sexuality? What did the fascination with sexuality itself encode, disguise, and hide? For what was sexuality their metaphor? (144)

2. Rather then the idea that the sexual force is the epicenter of the expressive which was critiqued by Foucault in his discussion of 'modernist repression' in The History of Sexuality: Volume 1.

3. Fred Nichols has noted that descriptive language always seems to point outside of language.

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