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Rice University PH.D. 1982

University Microfilms International 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106

RICE UNIVERSITY

THE ISOLATED INTELLECTUAL IN THE FICTION OF WILLIAM FAULKNER AND MARCEL PROUST: AN ANALYSIS OF FAILURE AND SUCCESS IN TRANSCENDENCE OF TIME

By

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A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

Ph.D. in ENGLISH

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HOUSTON, TEXAS

MARCH, 1982

ABSTRACT

THE ISOLATED INTELLECTUAL
IN THE FICTION OF WILLIAM FAULKNER AND MARCEL PROUST:
AN ANALYSIS OF FAILURE AND SUCCESS IN TRANSCENDENCE OF TIME

By Helen Sharp Anderson

The constant movement of time is the most significant pattern in the complex texture of the novels of William Faulkner and Marcel Proust. Both authors focus on the continuity of past and present as a central theme, and use the temporal attitudes of their intellectual protagonists as a means of characterization, ultimately arriving at dissimilar conclusions concerning their characters' ability to survive. Whereas Marcel is portrayed in a successful effort to recall the actions of the past through the use of memory and the discovery of a metaphoric method, Faulkner's isolated intellectuals ultimately fail in their effort to understand the discontinuity between past and present.

The quest which enthralls both Faulkner and Proust is the effort to discover elements of timelessness in the self and in experience. In the literary portraits of Marcel and of Faulkner's intellectual figures, they describe the protagonists' quests for unity of being and continuity of time within the framework of past, present, and future. With their philosophical focus on time as an eternal phenomenon which man attempts to survive through forms of transcendence, the Proustian and Faulknerian perspectives are remarkably parallel. While using several of the same aesthetic techniques, however, the two authors present their fictional interpretations of man's effort to transcend the passage of time in completely different manners.

With his imagination focused on the present, and the belief that he experiences life's reality through the repetition of sensation, Marcel realizes that recurring sensation can restore his original sense of being, fusing past and present into one. Reality is thus revealed in arrested moments of memory that Marcel can then aesthetically reproduce in art, hoping that his writing will have the same effect of restoration of being for the reader.

With imaginations held captive by the past, Faulkner's intellectuals believe that life's only reality is to be found in the recreation of their idealistic obsessions from a time long ago. Whereas Proust employs the aesthetic device of arrested moments and recurrent sensation as Marcel's artistic means of transcending time, Faulkner uses the arrested moments of his intellectual protagonists as an aesthetic device to reveal the static, spatially frozen quality of time created from an emotional impasse caused by the outraging of their ideals.

Through use of the identical aesthetic device of the arrested moment, which Proust expands to be all encompassing and Faulkner contracts to be static and rigid, both writers nevertheless emerge with a philosophical emphasis on man's constant need for restoration of being, which represents life itself. In his focus on the primacy of the artist, however, Proust's angle of vision is slightly different from that of Faulkner, who, while personally demonstrating the significance of artistic vision, refuses to approve it or prescribe it for the fictional beings he created.

Ultimately, for both Faulkner and Proust, the concept of time as motion not only pervades, but determines the form and content of their work. For them both immobility is simply an aesthetic spatial technique, a momentary fixity presented against the diachronic flow of time.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In looking back over the years of effort that this project has absorbed, I am reminded by my graying hair and wizened brow that undertakings of such scope should not be attempted by the faint of heart. Although all who have listened to the descriptions of the topic were sympathetic, there were only a few who sustained me through the years of research, writing, and typing of the manuscript.

My first thanks go to Dr. Walter Isle, who was constantly calm and encouraging while the dissertation assumed enormous proportions, manifesting both Faulknerian fragmentation and Proustian preciosity. The final version reflects his faith in my quest for form.

Secondly, I acknowledge and celebrate the skills of Frances Sills, whose dexterity, ingenuity, and good humor in coping with a word processor created coherence out of indecipherable copy.

And lastly, all of my gratitude goes to my husband, John Shaw, whose brilliant editorial insights were equalled only by his patience in enduring the multiple versions of each of the chapters.

My silent blessings are intended for the nameless and numerous research assistants at the Library of Congress, in Washington, D.C., who supervised my five-year residence there.

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INTRODUCTION

The principal object of this study has been to present an analysis of the successes and failures of the isolated intellectual protagonists who search for transcendence of time in the novels of Faulkner and Proust. In order to view the temporal dilemmas of these characters in the proper context, I have opened with a chapter which focuses on the twentieth century obsession with time, and have sought to delineate the sense of "self-alienation in time," which results from the modern fear of fusion of human consciousness with time and space.

With the theory that Faulkner's and Proust's concepts of time ultimately determine the form and content of their novels, I have focused my analysis on the lives of Marcel and Faulkner's isolated protagonists to demonstrate that their temporal theories ultimately dictate the success or failure of their searches for continuity of time and unity of being, which form the core of the novels. The literary portraits of Marcel and of Faulkner's intellectuals provide a technique through characterization in which Proust and Faulkner use similar spatial and temporal elements, ultimately arriving at dissimilar ethical conclusions concerning their characters' ability to survive.

In The Sound and the Fury, for example, Quentin's conception of time is so reminiscent of Marcel's that there is a strong likelihood that Faulkner had read at least part of A la recherche du temps perdu before beginning to write a novel about a time-obsessed figure. Since Swann's Way was published in the United States in 1922, Within a Budding Grove in 1924, The Guermantes Way in 1925, and

Cities of the Plain in 1927,[1] it would not have been difficult for Faulkner to have read them before beginning to write The Sound and the Fury in 1928.

In his library at "Rowan Oak" Faulkner had the two-volume edition of C. K. Scott Moncrieff's translation of Remembrance of Things Past, containing all seven of Proust's novels, which was published in 1934. Faulkner had placed his autograph and the date, 1941, in both volumes.[2] However, the inscribed date was frequently a whimsical choice on Faulkner's part, as Joseph Blotner explains in the Introduction of William Faulkner's Library -- A Catalogue.

> There is only one reliable sign of esteem for books in his library. Those he cared about he inscribed, usually with his name, the date, and the place in ink. Two hundred and fifty-five of the books are so marked. And they are, for the most part, the ones to which he publicly gave his allegiance. . . . The earliest dated inscription is in a Christmas gift he received in 1920. . . . The next two are in 1924. One is in Eric Dawson's Henry Becque: Sa vie et son théâtre. The other is in James Joyce's Ulysses. This book is inscribed "Rowan Oak" six years before the Faulkners moved there . . . his friend, Ben Wasson, inscribed a copy of the Anthology of Magazine Verse for 1920 to him on January 5, 1921, and when Faulkner wrote his own name in the book, he put below it "Rowan Oak. 1930." These two inscriptions . . . suggest that the reader cannot assume that Faulkner did not own the book prior to the date he put in it.[3]

In addition to the complete volumes of Remembrance of Things Past, Faulkner also had a copy of Un amour de Swann, published in 1919 as a limited edition for the members of the "Club du meilleur livre."[4] Although this volume was not autographed, the fact that it was a second copy of a novel he already owned in English is significant. As Blotner points out: "His special favorites . . . are marked not only by inscriptions but also by duplicates."[5]

In addition to the similarity in the portrayal of time-obsessed figures, there are other significant links between Faulkner and Proust, which have directed my ideas in comparing the fates of their intellectual protagonists. In their efforts to create entire fictional worlds that endure for several generations

in mythical villages, Faulkner and Proust create multifaceted universes from their own imaginations. In works which juxtapose the richness of the past with the inadequacies of the present, they search diligently to find a source of continuity with the past. Through variations of twentieth century literary techniques which focus on identification of the present with cultural mythology, both Faulkner and Proust attempt to find in the past a source of meaning larger and deeper than the rational. Both authors discover -- through myth -- a spatial bridge to the past circumventing the modern dilemma of discontinuity.

Faulkner's creation of Yoknapatawpha was vitally important in his literary career. Despite its mythical base, Yoknapatawpha County provided him with grass roots reality and a social context in which to situate the characters of his early romantic imagination. It was a setting in which they grew from romantic figments of his imagination into realistic people. His fictive county provided the catalyst in which the healthiest elements of Faulkner's romanticism could be mixed with the realistic details of Southern custom, creating a successful sense of fictional tension.

Proust's sense of place was equally central to his work, with his creation of the imaginary towns of Combray and Balbec, which were the most important locales of Marcel's youthful experiences. Created from Illiers, a small town on the border of La Beauce and Perche, Combray has ultimately become the spiritual home for readers on several continents.

In order to create a sense of continuity of life in Yoknapatawpha, Faulkner used the same characters and settings in more than one novel. The impulse to form a fictional world by linking characters and settings together goes back to Greek epics and tragedies, the Bible, and Shakespearian history plays. Sir Walter Scott, Balzac, Proust, Joyce, Mann, Mark Twain, and Sherwood Anderson,

for all of whom Faulkner felt keen admiration, used this device. From Sartoris in 1929 to The Reivers in 1962, Faulkner created a genealogical network of family trees, whose branches cover the 2400 square miles of Yoknapatawpha County, creating a vital sense of the interconnection of life in a small community for three generations. The fictional time span of the novels is enlarged still further by the memories and myths of those who lived earlier -- Colonel John Sartoris, Old Lucius Quintus Carothers McCaslin, and Thomas Sutpen, dating back to well before the Civil War.

In a similar manner, Proust's work spans three interrelated generations of society. The society that Marcel first comes to know is the Parisian society of the nineties, opulent and stylized with its art "nouveau." Swann typifies the wealthy and sophisticated bourgeoisie which is newly integrated into that society. The Verdurins are presented as a caricature of that same bourgeoisie. As the narrator enters his adolescence in the early part of the twentieth century, we see the society of a civilization that is in the flux of change. And with the First World War a new society begins to emerge with the final destruction of the social world that he knew. Thus, Proust's novel covers approximately a century in the lives of the characters themselves, with the focus particularly on the forty years or so of the narrator's life.

In addition to the narrator's own memory, Proust adds a cultural memory that constantly moves backwards in time. Early in the flow of the narrative the narrator tells a story of Swann's love for the beautiful courtesan, Odette de Crecy, which took place before the narrator was born. Although the story seems to have no direct relation to Marcel, he suggests that this is not the case, and at the end of A la recherche du temps perdu, the importance of Swann to him becomes apparent.

Proust and Faulkner thus strived for more than an image of life; both sought an image magnified and intensified by the imagination. For both writers, literary creation was the detailed representation of life as it is, which they then placed in constant oscillation with the imaginary vision of a more intense form of existence. Both would have agreed with the definition of an artist as one who "takes the essence of his special world, color or document, and creates a new world of them."[7] Neither was interested only in reproducing the heroic or pleasant things from the past. The ultimate aesthetic goal which their fiction reveals is the creation of an image capable of incorporating both present and past through intensification. Through the presentation of motion with artifice and action with form, it is possible for both to attain what Faulkner spoke of as a "rectification of the world we live in," as well as a form of aesthetic fulfillment which completes the "things we can never consummate."[8]

And finally, in addition to the similarity of their sense of time and place, Faulkner and Proust found a common link in their sense of history. Jean-Jacques Mayoux's description of Faulkner's sense of the past can apply equally well to Proust:

> He reflects and expresses the anguish of a disintegrating class and society, of various representatives of that society and of a class thrown by the waves of history beyond reality (as a fish might be thrown out of water), and wandering in its mind in a lost world.[9]

Henry James's remark about Hawthorne, that "it takes a great deal of history to produce a little literature, [and] . . . it needs a complex social machinery to set a writer in motion," seems to relate to Faulkner and Proust as well.[10]

For all members of Southern society the Civil War created a hiatus or interruption in identity which ended the Southern dream of an ideal society and rendered their code of manners irrelevent. Faced with the realities of

Reconstruction in the future, the Southerner looked to the past for security and stability, romanticizing the aristocratic mythology of the planter, and attempting to bury feelings of guilt and defeat. As the facts of the Civil War were transmuted into legend, elements of chivalric romance began to be associated with the Confederate cause and the defeat. The cavalier code which had seemingly provided a pattern of conduct before the war, was reemphasized to become a form of heroic recklessness.

Scrutiny of Proust's work reveals that the French society of la Belle Epoque, situated between the Franco-Prussian War and the years immediately after World War One, provided him with a strikingly similar amalgam of pastoral and classical mythology. The French counterpart of the Southern agrarian myths was the vision of ancien regime France, unsullied by revolution, where there was nulle seigneur sans terre and nulle terre sans seigneur. This vision, which was hardly a product of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, nonetheless was revived by the fall of the Second Empire, and given its most vibrant expression by the renascent aristocracy supportive of a monarchist restoration under the Comte de Chambord.

From 1870 until the First World War, the French Assembly effectively contained a monarchist majority, and lacked only the opportunity to rebuild its visions of a Bourbon past in the ruins of the Third Republic. The echoes of a non-industrial past with its accompanying spectrum of values and priorities thus attracted and repelled Proust for many of the same reasons that it did Faulkner. The legendary past of la vielle France exerted a sentimental attraction in one direction, while the impetus of the modern age clearly was progressing in another direction. Both and neither were fully acceptable to Proust, and the juxtaposition

of values and perceptions of both ages were compressed by him into a vision of time in which he could also bring mythology into play.

The historical parallels between the milieux of Marcel Proust and William Faulkner are thus both striking and provocative: the experience of military defeat prompting visions of earlier halcyon epochs; an evolving society set against a static or retrograde ethos; the framework and modes of thought and action buffeted by new technology and concepts of reality. The seemingly parallel background is indicative of the two authors' remarkably similar sensibilities and modes of literary response, which led me to undertake this study.

As a child of the South with roots in Mississippi, and as an adoptive step-child of France, I thought -- with some missionary zeal -- that I had the opportunity to establish a kind of cultural parity between the two authors. In the end, however, while I can still, to use Lawrence Durrell's phrase, bask in their prose "like an apple baking in its jacket," I find Faulkner somehow stunted as a result of his Southern roots. While his imaginative, creative, and descriptive powers clearly are equal to those of Proust, his innate distrust of purely intellectual analysis, and his harnessing of any manifestations of such energy within the strong traces of established cultural norms, is both characteristically Southern and ultimately limiting.

The relative absence, and indeed, unacceptability of intellectual activity is pervasive even today in the South, and may stem from the insoluble conundrum of slavery. Attempts to deal intellectually with the institution and the problems it engendered tended historically to be divisive, and very little intellectual activity could occur without encountering race as a stumbling block. The social reaction to this impasse was the figurative banishment of intellectual activity and intellectuals themselves as rude intrusions into the fragile social

framework. A code of politesse thus emerged to replace analysis or accuracy as a measure and end of discourse.

I became fascinated by Faulkner's intellectuals, in part because the species is almost as rare and endangered in the social world of the South today as it was in the twenties. No such social prohibitions of critical thought, however, interrupt the flow of Proust's analytical writing. France, then as now, promotes liberty of analysis to the point of becoming license. That fact helps to explain why Proust managed to find an intellectual way out of his temporal labyrinth while Faulkner chose to isolate or destroy anyone who had such pretensions.

Yet, in the shared tendency to create and people mythological kingdoms, Proust would have had no argument with Faulkner's statement that the underlying "aim of every artist is to arrest motion, which is life, by artificial means and hold it fixed so that 100 years later when a stranger looks at it, it moves again since it is life."[11] As novelists, Faulkner and Proust both believed in the eternal, enduring quality of art. And so in their fictional kingdom they represented eternity, which is conceived as a quality of human experience existing outside of and beyond the passage of physical time, in the constant flirtation with human consciousness of mortality.

In their love/hate relationship with the world of reality, Faulkner and Proust were forced to seek transcendence through the power of their imaginations, creating visions of the world as it should have been and might still be in their fiction. Recognizing that the world of aesthetic creation is not adequate without the reality of the everyday world from which to spring, both authors reached toward eternity without being willing to renounce life itself.

For Faulkner and Proust the world of reality and the world of the imagination form a vital symbiosis, from which they were able to create the

kingdoms of their fiction. For them the worlds of Yoknapatawpha, Combray, and the Faubourg Saint-Germain were never complete, but always in the process of living and changing, an evolution reflected in the constantly developing form of their fiction, with the accretions and deletions it revealed until their deaths. It was in their constant oscillation between the world of reality with its sense of durational time, and the world of the imagination with the possibility of transcendence that their art was created.

NOTES

[1]Richard P. Adams, Faulkner: Myth and Motion (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1960), p. 137.

[2]Joseph Blotner, Introduction to William Faulkner's Library -- A Catalogue (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1964), p. 96.

[3]Blotner, pp. 7-8.

[4]Blotner, p. 96.

[5]Blotner, p. 8.

[6]Adams, p. 135.

[7]Willard Huntington Wright, The Creative Will, quoted in David Minter, William Faulkner: His Life and Works (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), p. 78.

[8]James B. Meriwether and Michael Millgate, ed., Lion in the Garden: Interviews with William Faulkner, 1926-1962 (New York: Random House, Inc., 1968), p. 255, quoted in Minter, p. 78.

[9]Jean-Jacques Mayoux, "The Creation of the Real in Faulkner," in William Faulkner: Three Decades of Criticism, ed. Frederick J. Hoffman and Olga Vickery (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.), p. 173.

[10]Richard Chase, The American Novel and Its Tradition (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1957), pp. 219-220.

[11]Lion in the Garden, p. 253, quoted in Minter, p. 78.

". . . reality will take shape in the memory alone, the flowers that people shew me nowadays for the first time never seen to me to be true flowers."

Marcel Proust

". . . Do you mark how the wistaria . . . distills and penetrates this room as though . . . by secret and attritive progress from mote to mote of obscurity's myriad components? That is the substance of remembering -- sense, sight, smell: the muscles with which we see and hear and feel -- not mind, not thought."

William Faulkner

"There are two worlds, one the world of time, where necessity, illusion, suffering, change, decay, and death are the law; the other world of eternity, where there is freedom, beauty, and peace. Normal experience is in the world of time, but glimpses of the other world may be given in moments of contemplation or through accidents of involuntary memory. It is the function of art to develop these insights and to use them for the illumination of life in the world of time."

Marcel Proust

CHAPTER ONE

OBSESSION WITH TIME IN TWENTIETH CENTURY LITERATURE: THE QUEST FOR RECONCILIATION OF PAST AND PRESENT IN THE FICTION OF WILLIAM FAULKNER AND MARCEL PROUST

The problem of dealing with time in the twentieth century has become synonymous with the problem of dealing with human insecurity in a hostile universe. Attempting to maintain a rational and self-conscious time sense, artists and writers of the twentieth century have become aware of a growing sense of "self-alienation in time," as they defend their sense of self against the forces pushing human consciousness into fusion with time and space.[1]

In earlier eras the human mind was conceived as a fixed spatial entity unrelated to the flow of time, which gave man a greater sense of control over his destiny. In traditional philosophy, including Platonic theory, the mind was established as a static spatial entity existing apart from the flow of time. It was possible, therefore, for man to formulate unchanging, idealistic concepts about the temporal and spatial aspects of the universe, and believe that time was an illusion.

More modern philosophers, however, such as Henri Bergson[2], Alfred North Whitehead,[3] and Samuel Alexander[4] have removed the conceptual barriers that previously existed separating the human mind from time and space, the divisions upon which were based concepts of the mind as a free agent capable of existing as an entity apart. The twentieth century literary views of time and

space all generally conform with the philosophical theories of reality as constantly making and unmaking itself, never finally emerging as something completely made. With this fusion of time and space the individual has become a dynamic, self-creative agent, who may choose his own destiny. Paradoxically, however, he has been deprived of an objective view of that destiny, and therefore rendered incapable of controlling it by conscious means. Thus, rather than being a free agent, the human mind in the twentieth century constantly risks becoming absorbed into temporal and spatial chaos.

For many twentieth century writers the importance of a personal solution to the time problem has become linked to attaining a sense of self-identity, which in turn depends upon the ability to relate the pattern of significant personal associations to objective historical facts that occur in time. For these novelists, attempting to answer the question, "What am I?" has led to an analysis of "What I have become"[5] in the evolution of time.

The Influence of Objective and Subjective Attitudes Towards Time on Literature

A literary analysis of the form, content, thought, and symbolism of all works of fiction is predicated upon an understanding of the author's attitude towards the concepts of time and space. One of the major roles of the critic in the twentieth century is, indeed, determining the totality of meaning of a writer's work by discerning his sense of man's temporality. A major literary preoccupation, as Georges Poulet points out, is

> the problem of time and the non temporal: how to deal with it; and how to express it . . . A main motivation . . . is seen to be man's singular interest in the disposition of ideas in the spaces of his mind; in his dread of Time; or his pleasure in duration. . . .[6]

Paradoxically, time can be interpreted either as an immediate aspect of man's consciousness or as a logical construct claiming objective validity, and the choice of interpretation dictates the general frame of reference for all inquiries into its significance.

Each author's solution to the problem of time is ultimately revealed in the fictional techniques he employs in creating piot, structure, suspense, tempo, causality, sequence, continuity, characterization, and point of view. The difficulty comes from the challenge of constructing an integral fictional form with a successive representation of developing parts, as they must necessarily be presented in the literary time-medium. As Henry James points out:

> This eternal time question is . . . for the novelist always there and always formidable, always insisting on the effect of the great lapse and passage, of the dark backward and abysm, by the terms of truth, and on the effect of compression, of composition and form, by the terms of literary arrangement.[7]

He concludes by saying that "this is altogether to my view the stiffest problem that the artist in fiction has to tackle."[8]

In its linear aspect, it is possible to view time as the mechanical passage of seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, and years, in a flat, logical and categorical progression. In a broader sense, however, time's natural movement may be regarded as an ongoing action of cyclical change, change which, in the ceaselessness of its ebb and flow, invites human interpretation via the catalysts of memory and imagination. Every writer must negotiate some course between the two extremes of the linear and cyclical, and emerge with a general intellectual evaluation of time's significance for his particular age.

Although man is not compelled to philosophize on the subject of time, he is forced by life to come to terms with time and to decide what he wants to make of it. Each age expresses its evaluation of time in a general intellectual

formulation which creates an inescapable impact upon the individual. For each individual there is a necessary confrontation with the dilemma of how to incorporate memory and imagination while reconciling the mechanical (linear) and the natural (cyclical) modes of time. The ideal relationship between man and time is achieved by the individual who is able to involve himself in chronological time, without allowing it to tyrannize his inner being, which he reserves as a sanctum for dreams and aspirations.

To discover how an author's concept of time influences the value and meaning of his novels, it is first necessary to define time as a factor or theme present in the work of fiction, and then to analyze the "temporal and interior spatial dimensions" of the work.[9] Each novel has its own time scheme or chronology, but the chronology only becomes a temporal problem when the arrangement of events in the work itself assumes the proportions of a thematic concern. Similarly, a character's reactions to the past or a novelist's treatment of history attain temporal importance only when the novelist presents the joining of past to present as a problematic issue. In the modern literary character's search for personal identity or security in an alien world, his sense of time and his ability to reconcile past with present may dictate success or failure.

Time as a Determinant of Form and Content in the Work of Faulkner and Proust

Time is the central intellectual problem in the fiction of Marcel Proust and William Faulkner, the two twentieth century novelists whose temporal and spatial visions will be the subject of this study. For both authors the constant movement of time, which sweeps men and events along in its path, is the most significant pattern in the complex texture of their work. Proust's concern with

time cannot be attributed to the simple fact that he is writing about the past, but is instead related to his effort to describe the process by which the mind can retain and recall the actions of the past.[10] Like Proust, Faulkner deals with the central theme of the continuity of past and present. He uses emotional attitudes toward time as a means of characterization and ultimately of moral judgment. Unlike Proust, however, Faulkner portrays characters who either fail in an effort to understand the discontinuity between past and present, or fail to make any intellectual effort to comprehend at all.

The purpose of this study is, therefore, to indicate how Proust's and Faulkner's concepts of time determine the form and content of their novels. Their perceptions of reality and the aesthetic elements of their work will then be analyzed in greater depth to determine the temporal and spatial elements that direct the form of their writing in general, and to delineate the philosophical focus and actions of their intellectual protagonists in particular.

In the modern tradition of T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and James Joyce, Faulkner's work portrays man's desire to maintain a rational time sense in juxtaposition with the forces of the universe which are attempting simultaneously to fuse human consciousness with the movement of time and space. Faulkner's sympathy for a static or fixed "spatial" concept of the universe is dramatized in the complex characterization of the isolated intellectual protagonists who appear throughout the novels. The evolution of a "spatial" technique of momentary fixity, whether manifested in static characters or instants of arrested motion, achieves the effect of Grecian frieze-like immobility in Faulkner's work. The use of this spatial technique forces the reader to apprehend the diversity of Faulkner's narrative at certain single synchronic moments, while simultaneously perceiving the temporal aspects as they evolve diachronically in the flow of time.

Faulkner's development of "spatial" or static form as an aesthetic technique which attempts to achieve transcendence of time through immobility is a central element of this study, and will be utilized as a means of analysis in the individual character studies that occur in the ensuing chapters. The intellectual Faulkner characters will be examined in terms of their search for continuity of time and unity of being in the light of the Bergsonian concept of duration and the Proustian belief in the movement of memory leading towards transcendence of time. These two twentieth century theories influenced Faulkner's process of characterization in different ways.

Recognizing that the problem of reconciling the past with the present was the ultimately absorbing problem of Marcel, Proust's narrator in A la recherche du temps perdu, Faulkner admitted in an interview with Loic Bouvard that appeared in 1959:

> ...I feel very close to Proust. After I had read A la recherche du temps perdu I said "This is it!" -- and I wished I had written it myself.[11]

Although many critics have quoted Faulkner's remark, very few have analyzed the reason for Faulkner's admiration of Proust, and no one has attempted to relate their concepts of time in terms of similarities and differences in modes of characterization and aesthetic form.

An analysis of the aesthetic form and philosophical focus of Proust's work will be presented as elements embodied in Marcel's search for continuity of time and unity of being, creating an interesting parallel with and ultimate divergence from the quests and fates of Faulkner's intellectual protagonists. Although dissimilar in their authors' final ethical evaluation, the literary portraits of Marcel and of Faulkner's intellectual figures provide a technique through characterization in which Proust and Faulkner use comparable spatial and

temporal elements. Yet, paradoxically, by different paths, both novelists themselves achieve the same ultimate goal of transcendence of time.

This study does not attempt to explain all aspects of Faulkner's and Proust's writing. In discussing the similarities and differences in the ways in which Marcel and Faulkner's intellectuals try to resolve their temporal dilemmas, and the consequences of their choices, the focus of the study is directed more toward delineation of values and interpretation of meaning than toward technique and structure. Elements of technique will be examined whenever necessary, however, to support the theory of simultaneous use of spatial and temporal form in the works of both authors.

The Theme of the Quest to Unite Past and Present in Proust's Work

The quest to recapture the past and lost time as a means of regaining the identity and continuity of the self has appeared in many fictional versions of twentieth century literature. The theme of the quest has come to have great significance for the novel and for modern man, and frequently is expressed in an incorruptible dream of an absolute, which proves to be an illusion. In his fear of the loss of this absolute, the individual discovers a split occurring between his innocent earlier self and later disillusioned self. In his attempt to remake his life and reestablish his personal identity by staking everything upon regaining his ideal, the individual runs the risk of discovering that the split between his earlier self and his later self is too deep to be mended.[12] On the other hand, if the individual is successful in his effort to gain a sense of continuity between past and present, he will have discovered the only path that leads to achievement of personal identity. Therein lies the correlation between the recapturing of time,

the recollective, imaginative reconstruction of one's personal past, and the continuity and identity of the self.

From the very beginning of Proust's novel, when the protagonist attempts to adapt himself to reality while awakening from a deep sleep, Marcel engages in a search to understand himself in relationship to the reality of the outside world. Not unlike Sir Galahad in Malory's "Morte d'Arthur" or Spenser's Red Cross Knight of Holiness in "The Faerie Queene," Marcel commits himself to a quest for the absolute. This search, although conducted in contemporary France and Italy, will involve the protagonist in all the disillusionments and defeats generally associated with the ancient tradition of the quest.

Proust concentrates the subtlety of his analytical ability on the examination of possible absolutes capable of withstanding the passage of time. In the experiences of Marcel's evolving life, the absolutes which he investigates are friendship and the loyalty it entails, love with its passions and jealousies, and convictions of the mind and spirit -- with their perceived philosophical, political or theological truths -- which seem at the time to be enduring and steadfast. Marcel discovers that although these human experiences seem real and immutable, in fact, when subjected to the passage of time, all of his observations and conclusions change, and are ultimately consigned to oblivion. In The Sweet Cheat Gone he writes:

> . . . I ought really to have discovered sooner that one day I should no longer be in love with Albertine. When I had realized, from the difference that existed between what the importance of her person and of her actions was to me and what it was to other people, that my love was not so much a love for her as a love in myself, I might have deduced various consequences from this subjective nature of my love and that, being a mental state, it might easily long survive the person, it must, like every mental state, even the most permanent, find itself one day obsolete, be "replaced," and that when that day came everything that seemed to attach me so pleasantly, indissolubly, to the memory of Albertine would no longer exist for me. It is the tragedy of other people that they are to us merely

> showcases for the very perishable collections of our own mind.[13]

At length Marcel becomes aware that for him ultimate reality exists in the restoration of his sense of being caused by recurring sensation, a process he believes can be aesthetically recreated in art. He decides his writing is to be focused on the desire to generate restoration of being, which necessitates a painstaking account of the search for identity.

The Theme of the Quest to Recapture the Past in Faulkner's Work

Rather than revealing the mutability of absolutes in time through a process of self-discovery, Faulkner chooses to dramatize the lives of intellectual characters who stubbornly cling to idealistic views they believe to be absolutes through which they can relive the past. Unlike Marcel, Faulkner's isolated character-types refuse to question the validity of the ideal standards which become their obsession, staking the success of their lives on quests to uphold abstract concepts they believe capable of withstanding the disintegration and decay of time.

The disillusionment that comes with change not only destroys the dream of such isolated characters, but frequently results in tragedy. In the cases of Horace Benbow, Quentin Compson, and Gavin Stevens, the idealized virtue is feminine purity which operates as a standard upholding tradition and family name; for the schoolmaster, Labove, the abstract ideal is feminine fertility; and for Gail Hightower, the exalted value is courage, represented for him in a moment of daring bravado in the life of his grandfather. For Isaac McCaslin, the dream is of a return to pre-lapsarian innocence, embodied in the wilderness and necessitating the renunciation of his patrimony. For Charlotte Rittenmeyer in <u>The Wild Palms</u>,

the ideal of romantic love is the guiding principle; while for the Tall Convict of "Old Man," an isolated but less intellectual character, the code of chivalric conduct nevertheless provides a rigid standard.

Describing the mind-set of the Tall Convict as he rescues the woman in the tree during the flood, Faulkner portrays the stubborn idealism of all the isolated characters. Despite disappointment and disillusionment that the woman he rescues is awkward and pregnant, the Tall Convict clings to his original quest, which necessitates sustaining the original romantic concept directing all of his actions:

> . . . he watched her move, gather herself heavily and carefully to descend -- that heaviness which was not painful but just excruciatingly careful, that profound and almost lethargic awkwardness which added nothing to the sum of that first aghast amazement which had served already for the catafalque of invincible dream since even in durance he had continued (and even with the old avidity, even though they had caused his downfall) to consume the impossible pulp- printed fables carefully censored and as carefully smuggled into the penitentiary; and who is to say what Helen, what living Garbo, he had not dreamed of rescuing from what craggy pinnacle or dragoned keep when he and his companion embarked in the skiff.[14]

In the case of all of Faulkner's obsessed and isolated figures, adherence to belief in a static absolute destroys the character's ability to live freely in the flow of time.

Thus, both Faulkner and Proust define their characters and their perspectives on life by the success or failure of their search to learn about themselves and achieve a sense of identity. Their novels focus on the modern "crisis of knowing," which in both cases is accompanied by an intense "quest for form." The critical concern of this study, therefore, will be the formulation of aesthetic and moral judgments on the characters' crucial decisions about the forms their lives have assumed as they are reflected in the form of the novels.[15]

Marcel's Success in Dealing with Duality of Ongoing Natural Time and Timelessness in Human Consciousness

In the history of literary quests for a sense of continuity, identity, and unity within the framework of an individual's personal past, memory has always been the key to the search to find the self.[16] It is the one power capable of operating in the dual role of its personal function in human experience, and its function within the objective succession and order of time.[17] But Proust quickly discovers that although memory can retain cherished thoughts, impressions, and experiences, its strength is constantly frayed by the cutting edge of time's passage.

Ignoring the writers and philosophers who interpret time as a logical construct with objective validity, Proust, as a disciple of Bergson, focused on the problem of clarifying and defining the meaning of significant impressions of time. For him the Bergsonian philosophy of durational time based on perceiving the act of time's passage as an "immediate datum of consciousness," was particularly relevant.[18] With his focus on the creation of literature, Proust realized that the meaning of time in literature could only be found within the context of the world of personal experience and not in the natural, objective order. Hence his portrayal of Marcel's effort to achieve and communicate the consciousness of time as it enters the texture of human life.

Marcel's ultimate goal, which he grows to recognize and understand during the course of his maturation, is to liberate himself from the chronological order of time in nature which leads inevitably towards death. He wants instead to recapture time in human experience through the power of his imagination, rather than to establish a timeless ideal realm in the Platonic sense. The important theme of returning to the life of human experience rather than to an existence of abstract stasis is constantly repeated throughout <u>A la Recherche du temps perdu</u>.

Marcel constantly anticipates the next sense impression in his life of the present in order to enjoy the magical web of hidden relationships with which it is united to his memory of the past. He explains:

> . . . let a sound already heard or an odour caught in bygone years be sensed anew, simultaneously in the present and the past, real without being of the present moment, ideal but not abstract, and immediately the permanent essence of things, usually concealed, is set free and our true self, which had long seemed dead but was not dead in other ways, awakes, takes on fresh life as it receives the celestial nourishment brought to it.[19]

Believing that there is a definite linkage between sense impressions, memory, and the ability to achieve transcendence of time with the aid of them both, he continues:

> A single minute released from the chronological order of time has re-created in us the human being similarly released, in order that he may sense that minute. And one comprehends readily how such a one can be confident in his joy; even though the mere taste of a madeleine does not seem to contain logical justification for this joy, it is easy to understand that the word "death" should have no meaning for him; situated outside the scope of time, what could he fear from the future?[20]

Using the sensory experience of the taste of a madeleine as a springboard, Marcel discovers that such sensory stimuli, through remembered associations with similar stimuli in a different time frame, have the power to release him from his entrapment in the present and free him from the tyranny of time. While these sounds, tastes, and fragrances become "ideal" in their appearance as the "permanent essence of things," Marcel points out, however, that they are linked with real life, and are not "abstract" entities existing only in his mind.

The differentiation between the ideal and the abstract is central in separating Proustian thought from Platonic theory. In contrast to Plato's philosophy of abstraction leading towards an ultimate ideal, Proust's celebration

of transcendent imagination links the power of man's imagination to time in human consciousness.[21] Proust removes his ideal -- the achievement of the "permanent essence of things" -- from the timeless perfection of Platonic ideas, and in so doing creates a form of "inverted Platonism," which celebrates the timeless qualities in actual life experiences and in man himself.

Thus, Proust's resolution of the dualism of mutable time in nature and the immutable lies in enduring qualities in experience and in the self. These qualities can be found in his belief in the power of human imagination, which when excited by mundane stimuli, soars "outside the scope of time" and releases all men from their entrapment in the chronological order. There is, therefore, a permanent Proustian link of memory between the action of man's transcendent imagination and natural ongoing time. And the discovery of this link provides Marcel with ultimate success in his "crisis of knowing."

Failure of Faulkner's Intellectual Protagonists to Deal with Duality of Time

Faulkner, on the other hand, handles the duality of time in nature and time in human experience quite differently, embodying the objective and subjective aspects of time in varying configurations in two distinctly dissimilar character-types. His first approach to the duality of natural and human time is revealed in the isolated intellectual protagonists, who seek to escape time, nature, and reality subjectively through their romantic imaginations. Unlike Marcel, who ultimately relates his imagination to the experience of life, in their search for a timeless, Platonic absolving, Faulkner's intellectual figures prefer the exaltation of death, or a static form of death-in- life, which they dedicate to the pursuit of their ideal.

For most of the isolated Faulkner characters, dedication to pursuing an ideal results in a life focused on a dream or fantasized version of the past.

The ongoing power of dead figures from the past who are capable of influencing action in the present is revealed in a conversation between Gail Hightower and Byron Bunch in Light in August:

> "Why do you spend your Saturday afternoons working at the mill while other men are taking pleasure downtown?" Hightower said.
>
> ". . . I know now why it is," Byron thinks. "It is because a fellow is more afraid of the trouble he might have than he ever is of the trouble he's already got. He'll cling to trouble he's used to before he'll risk a change. Yes. A man will talk about how he'd like to escape from living folks. But it's the dead ones that lay quiet in one place and dont try to hold him, that he cant escape from."[22]

For Faulkner's intellectual characters who exist in a world of their own abstractions, a flattened and foreshortened sense of time focused on the past is more comfortable than a sense of time's ceaseless motion, in which they feel threatened and lost. In their desire to live in dreams of the past, and prevent continuity of the time-flow into the present and the future, Faulkner's alienated figures assume a static pose in regard to the changing time of nature. To control natural time, they attempt to order it with their own abstract concepts. The perception of time as conflated and truncated reflects a "spatial" concept of temporality, an identifiable characteristic of those who seek to transcend time, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

Thus, it is finally the goal of attempting to transcend time by retreating into the past which defeats all of Faulkner's intellectual characters. And it is their defeat in achieving this goal, and the resulting failure in their "crisis of knowing," which differentiates the Faulknerian intellectual protagonists from Marcel. Proust's protagonist finds that the creation of art offers him the opportunity to transcend the past and the present, and to achieve immortality in the future.

Faulkner's Primitive Characters Embody Duality of Time

In a second fictional approach to the duality of natural and human time, Faulkner takes an extremely unusual literary step in his representations of the various intuitive "primitive" characters who appear in his fiction. In characters such as Darl Bundren in As I Lay Dying, Benjy Compson in The Sound and the Fury, Lena Grove in Light in August, and Eula Varner in The Hamlet, he creates an unorthodox combination of time in human experience mingled with the universal, objective time of nature. In the fusion of natural and human time, while emerging with characters who seem more intuitive and less cerebral than ordinary human beings, Faulkner creates a sense of elemental, natural force in order to achieve continuity between nature and humanity, and to decrease man's consciousness of alienation in a hostile universe.

In As I Lay Dying Dewey Dell Bundren describes the intuitive power that allows Darl to become conscious of her pregnancy without being told:

> And I did not think that Darl would, [know], that sits at the supper table with his eyes gone further than the food and the lamp, full of the land dug out of his skull and the holes filled with distance beyond the land. . . . It was then, and then I saw Darl and he knew. He said he knew without the words like he told me that ma is going to die without words, and I knew he knew because if he had said he knew with the words I would not have believed that he had been there and saw us. But he said he did know and I said "Are you going to tell pa are you going to kill him?" without the words I said it and he said "Why?" without the words. And that's why I can talk to him with knowing with hating because he knows.[23]

And in The Hamlet Jody Varner is described in his comic efforts to impose a sense of discipline and control on the elemental femininity of his sister Eula, who barely contains the natural force that has burgeoned into human female form:

> . . . he wondered at times in his raging helplessness how buttocks as constantly subject to the impact of that much

> steadily increasing weight could in the mere act of walking seem actually to shout aloud that rich mind- and will-sapping fluid softness sitting, even on the moving horse, secret and not even sullen, bemused with that whatever it was which had nothing to do with flesh, meat, at all; emanating that outrageous quality of being, existing, actually on the outside of the garments she wore and not only being unable to help it but not even caring.[24]

For Faulkner's primitives who exist in a continuum of time and space, there is no separation of natural and human time. For their author the movement from belief in duration to acceptance of the myth of natural cyclical recurrence, which they seem to personify, was an apparently effortless progression. Created as prototypes of human beings embodying elemental natural forces, Faulkner's primitives operate in his novels in much the same way as did the figures of Greek mythology. Imbuing the denizens of a mythic world with supernatural qualities in an effort to humanize the uncontrollable powers of nature, the ancients were attempting to achieve the same sense of identification of natural forces with humanity that Faulkner was seeking.

Such characters created on a scale larger than life can act as catalysts to decrease man's consciousness of alienation in a hostile world. With the merger of human durational consciousness of time with natural, cyclical time, however, the human mental balance becomes a delicate one, and there is no opportunity to succeed in a "crisis of knowing" in terms of attaining self-identity. Although Dilsey, Lena Grove, and Eula Varner are relatively successful in coordinating their lives in the flow of time, other primitive characters have progressed beyond their fragile equilibrium. Benjy in his idiocy, and Darl Bundren in his madness have become absorbed by the movement of natural time, to the detriment of their human consciousness.

Thus, Faulkner incorporates a chaotic and unruly sense of natural time in his work, portraying man's need for closeness to the earth, but, at the same time, creating a sense of ambiguity concerning the human values which he feels

are enduring and worthy of praise. The ambiguity is increased by the shifting of time patterns, which frequently seem ambivalent. In the intuitive characters, whom Faulkner seems to find praiseworthy and capable of enduring, there is a durational time sense incorporating continuity of past, present, and future. Yet no primitive character excites a sense of human identification in the reader. On the other hand, Faulkner's intellectual figures, who strive and fail to attain a transcendent sense of time, and who lead unsuccessful lives, somehow manage to stimulate the reader's empathy. Any interpretation of Faulkner's own temporal values in terms of his characters is, therefore, frequently problematical, and can best be addressed through an analysis of his conflicting portrayal of durational and transcendent perspectives on time, which follows.

Faulkner's Combination of Durational and Transcendent Time Patterns

In order to be consistent in philosophical outlook, most authors feel the need to choose either the durational approach to time (as followers of Bergson and the twentieth century perspective on time), or the approach to life through the grand pattern of transcendence (as followers of Platonic tradition, regarding time as an illusion and thereby eliminating a sense of duration). In novels written from the durational point of view in which time is not set up in a particular order because past, present, and future easily melt into one, aesthetic emphasis is placed on the individual time sense of the characters involved. In direct contrast, fiction incorporating a transcendent perspective presents a mythical universal pattern as being of greater importance than the individual experience of time. The novels of Kafka and Thomas Mann, with their overarching span of time which may cover hundreds of years, provide examples of the transcendent time pattern. In such works the importance and impact of the protagonists' lives are minimized in the wide sweeping scope of universal time.[25]

In Faulkner's novels, however, a mixture of the durational and transcendent senses of time occurs in different character-types, with no immediately clear intellectual statement from him concerning the temporal perspective which he feels will best aid man in his effort to endure and prevail. Faulkner's innate tendency to merge durational and transcendent perspectives without qualifying their good and bad aspects is evident in an interview with Loic Bouvard in which he attempted to explain his concept of time. Bouvard related:

> "There isn't any time," [Faulkner] replied. "In fact I agree pretty much with Bergson's theory of the fluidity of time. There is only the present moment, in which I include both the past and future, and that is eternity."[26]

Faulkner then added, "I was influenced by Bergson, obviously."[27]

The statement that "there isn't any time" was Faulkner's attempt to explain that he did not believe in the significance of natural, objective time as measured by the clock. Although Bergson would never have bluntly denied the existence of objective time, he probably would have recognized Faulkner as a wayward American disciple of his durational theory.

Faulkner often proclaimed his belief in the ongoing nature of time, even hinting at a concept of its cyclical quality in statements such as:

> It's man in the ageless, eternal struggles which we inherit and go through as though they'd never happened before, shown for a moment in a dramatic instant of the furious motion of being alive.[28]

And yet, as indicated earlier, in his portrayal of primitive figures who best reveal a sense of continuity of past, present, and future, the characters have become subhuman in their merging of human durational time with natural, cyclical time. Although they seem close to the earth, they are thus scarcely the human prototypes whom one would care to emulate. As a paradoxical contrast, Faulkner's descriptions of many of the isolated, alienated characters permit a greater degree of human identification.

Although it is possible to conclude that Faulkner may not have had a clear understanding of the distinction between the durational and transcendent perspectives on time, and the need to decide to emphasize one or the other, a better explanation of the mingled time sense may come from acknowledging Faulkner's aesthetic desire to combine the two to present his own somewhat confusing double focus on time. The ambiguous result of the composite is seen in isolated, intellectual characters, who combine a distorted sense of duration, in which they feel trapped, with a sense of transcendence which leads to death and destruction. On the other hand, pure durational time appears in a different, simpler guise in the primitive figures, whose serenity acts as a fictional foil for the alienated individuals. In this presentation, Faulkner seems to embrace durational time as a fictional technique to control and counteract his own romantic imagination which urged him towards transcendence and isolation.

Hence, in any critical exploration of Faulkner's use of the concept of durational time as a means of characterization, one discovers that an ongoing sense of time can be presented either as a bane or a blessing for the individual described. Rather than providing a constant sense of continuity and comfortable integration with the motion of life, durational time frequently appears to portray an enclosed, alienated reaction to reality. Duration thus becomes a means of expressing both continuity and discontinuity of time, depending upon the perspective of the character in which it appears.

In contrast to Proust's presentation of Marcel's ultimate acceptance and affirmation of durational time which he learns to transcend through artistic creation, Faulkner seems to reserve a valid sense of duration and its relation to reality primarily for those non-intellectual characters who are closest to nature, and non-judgmental of their fellow man. In the portrayal of his primitive

characters, Faulkner introduces either a dramatic sense of endurance of time or of unrelieved duration in a temporal vacuum.

In the characterization of Lena in Light in August, in her interminable quest, for example, we find a time continuum marked only by intensity and lacking any sense of length or pace. Lena seems to symbolize pure motion, which harmonizes naturally and comfortably with the motion of earthly life, seeming to move effortlessly and inevitably forward, encountering no obstacles or frustrations. By self-definition, she is a natural force, and in the ceaselessness of her movement she embodies Faulkner's major technical goal of uncontrollable motion.

From the beginning of Light in August, Lena is described as traveling in a quiet corridor of time "paved with unflagging and tranquil faith and peopled with kind and nameless faces and voices."[29] Using a Bergsonian image, Faulkner describes her as viewing time as a "spoolful of events measured out and visible in their entirety, but unbroken by any sharp divisions between past, present, and future."[30] The image of time Faulkner uses is a wagon that Lena watches blending with the road behind her "with all the peaceful and monotonous changes between darkness and day, like already measured thread being rewound onto a spool."[31] She makes no conscious temporal distinctions in her observation about the approaching wagon. The time when she first hears the wagon approach and the moment she climbs aboard, the moment of leaving the wagon, and the time when it will fade beyond sight and hearing, all merge in Lena's awareness. She simply assumes the driver will offer her a ride:

> then it will be as if I were riding for a half mile before I even got into the wagon, before the wagon even got to where I was waiting, and that when the wagon is empty of me again it will go on for a half mile with me still in it.[32]

As the "basic dimensions of future, present and past . . . merge into a single amorphous image," we realize that Faulkner has created a character who comprehends time sensuously rather than rationally, who grasps time at its source, "fusing the road, the wagon, and herself, into a single continuum."[33]

The same absence of an objective time sense, implying a merging of all time into a durational rhythm characterized by the intensity of female biological functions, is found in Faulkner's presentation of Eula in The Hamlet. He describes her as seeming

> to exist in a teeming vacuum in which her days followed one another as though behind some sound-proof glass, where she seemed to listen in sullen bemusement, with a weary wisdom heired of all mammalian maturity, to the enlarging of her own organs.[34]

In the unusual use of the sense of hearing as a means of determining the temporal aspect of growth, Faulkner indicates the inability of the senses to distinguish divisions in the durational rhythm of days, which follow one another in a "teeming vacuum." Eula's sense of time is visceral, relating only to her physical sensations, rather than to any vestige of objectivity.

Durational time used in a slightly different manner is again evident in The Hamlet in the experience of the schoolteacher, Labove, who attempts to teach in the one-room school house at Frenchman's Bend while playing football for the University at Oxford. As one of Faulkner's obsessed intellectual characters who strive to achieve idealized goals, Labove pushes himself to the limit of endurance to continue teaching while playing football forty miles away. Faulkner describes Labove's sense of the time immediately past as forming a durational continuum with the present. But, while susceptible to a sense of durational time, because of his more complex intellectual attributes, Labove is able to arrest time and motion when he focuses on an event of emotional importance.

The Faulknerian narrative voice intones the passage of hours, days, and months which have passed for Labove in a durational blur:

> . . . it recapitulated, ran fast and smooth and without significance now in his memory, finished and done and behind him, meaning nothing, the fall itself going fast, dreamlike and telescoped. He would rise in the icy attic at four o'clock and build fires in the houses of five different faculty members and return to feed and milk. Then the lectures, the learning and wisdom distilled of all man had ever thought, plumbed, the ivied walls and monastic rooms impregnated with it, abundant, no limit save that of the listener's capacity and thirst; the afternoons of practice . . . the preparing of coal and wood against tomorrow's fires. Then the cow again and then in the overcoat which the coach had given him he sat with his books beneath the lamp in his fireless garret until he went to sleep over the printed page. He did this for five days, up to the Saturday's climax when he carried a trivial contemptible obloid across fleeing and meaningless white lines. Yet during these seconds, despite his contempt, his ingrained conviction, his hard and spartan heritage, he lived, fiercely free -- the spurning earth, the shocks, the hard breathing and the grasping hands, the speed, the rocking roar of massed stands, his face even then still wearing the expression of sardonic not-quite- belief.[35]

In describing Labove as a more sophisticated, intellectual character, Faulkner presents duration in a more controlled form. Although Labove's memory runs "fast and smooth . . . [and] dreamlike," amalgamating time into a collage, yet at the essential moment of consciousness, time stops for Labove, and he is able to transcend it, "his face even then . . . wearing the expression of not-quite-belief." In contrast to Lena's and Eula's sensuous grasp of time, Labove is totally rational, and thus able to stop the flow of time in his own consciousness as though his mind is snapping a picture, freezing all motion in the process. This, of course, is essentially the act of arresting time, which is more highly developed in Faulkner's fuller characterization of Quentin Compson, Horace Benbow, Gavin Stevens, Ike McCaslin, and Gail Hightower. Thus, in Labove, we find a good example of the mingling of the durational and transcendent perspectives on time.

And finally, creating an interesting temporal parallel with Faulkner's intellectual characters, the isolated and enigmatic figure of Joe Christmas in Light in August personifies a sense of the durational merging of present time with the past in which he ultimately becomes trapped. Faulkner describes his state of psychological immobilization and suspension before he attempts to murder Joanna Burden in Light in August with the words:

> The dark was filled with the voices, myriad, out of all time that he had known, as though all the past was a flat pattern. And going on: tomorrow night, all the tomorrows, to be a part of the flat pattern, going on. He thought of that with quiet astonishment: going on, myriad, familiar, since all that had ever been was the same as all that was to be, since tomorrow to-be and had-been would be the same.[36]

Trapped in outer chronological time, yet with an inner sense of its endless duration, Christmas finds his objective and durational senses merging into chaos from the shock after his murder of Joanna Burden. In Faulkner's words:

> He has not slept very much since Wednesday, and now Wednesday has come and gone again, though he does not know it. When he thinks about time, it seems to him now that for thirty years he has lived inside an orderly parade of named and numbered days like fence pickets, and that one night he went to sleep and when he waked up he was outside them.[37]

Here linear, chronological time is symbolized in the "orderly parade of named and numbered days like fence pickets," which Christmas is forced outside of as a result of committing the murder. This expulsion from the world of chronology acts as a source of disorientation, plunging him into durational time with its nightmarish sense of the fusion of past, present, and future. Rather than bringing the reassurance of self- identity, the beginning of a durational time sense only serves to complete the closed circle of isolation, which describes Christmas's existence. Because of the impossibility of identifying himself racially in terms of black or white in a society which demands rigid categorization, he is unable to

attain a sense of integral wholeness. Faulkner describes Christmas's entry into Mottstown as completing the last portion of the circle of his alienation:

> . . . he is entering it again, the street which ran for thirty years. . . . It had made a circle and he is still inside of it, though during the last seven days he has had no paved streets, yet he has travelled further than in all the thirty years before. And yet he is still inside the circle. "And yet I have been further in these seven days than in all the thirty years," he thinks. "But I have never got outside that circle. I have never broken out of the ring of what I have already done and cannot ever undo," he thinks quietly.[38]

Thus, for Joe Christmas, a sense of durational time is as great a source of entrapment and isolation as is his sense of chronological time with its "named and numbered days like fence pickets." At the end, his goal is to escape from this endless durational sense -- to transcend time through death. Faulkner presents Joe's death as physical and psychological release, which he describes in terms of spiritual triumph:

> . . . the man seemed to rise soaring into their memories forever and ever. They are not to lose it, in whatever peaceful valleys, beside whatever placid and reassuring streams of old age, in the mirroring faces of whatever children they will contemplate old disasters and newer hopes. It will be there, musing, quiet, steadfast, not fading and not particularly threatful, but of itself alone serene, of itself alone triumphant.[39]

And so, for Faulkner, the sense of the durational is not adequate as a vital temporal perspective for alienated or isolated characters, whose goal is to escape from ongoing time. And in their choice of transcendence, which leads to death, the reader is left with a sense of the inadequacy of both temporal perspectives.

Depicting those who are able to see time as whole as being able to endure and prevail, while yet reserving sympathy for those who seek transcendence, Faulkner's temporal solution offers salvation only to those

characters who can continue to hold the two divergent perspectives in simultaneous suspension. In the same interview with Bouvard, he intimated that maintaining a double temporal perspective could be the solution to the problem of time .

Disagreeing with Sartre's and Camus's atheistic perspectives on life, Faulkner expressed his personal idea of the combined durational and transcendent nature of reality in religious terms by explaining:

> "I'm not talking about a personified or a mechanical God, but a God who is the most complete expression of mankind, a God who rests both in eternity and the now . . . a deity very close to Bergson's."[40]

Faulkner's insistence on the mingling of "eternity and the now" as a literary reflection of his perception of a God-centered universe seems to provide the fullest explanation of the constant shifts between transcendent and durational time that occur in his novels. The characters whom he seems to extol -- Judith Sutpen, Charles Mallison, Ratliff, and Harry Wilbourne -- are those who are able to embrace the dual perspective that "rests both in eternity and the now," while revealing but not analyzing their concepts of both durational and transcendent time. Thus, Olga Vickery emphasizes that the key to the temporal paradox lies in Faulkner's belief that

> the communal and anonymous brotherhood of man can be re-established if man individually cherishes . . . his human identity and accepts responsibility for all time as well as for the particular time into which he was born.[41]

In the final analysis, however, Faulkner provides no link that man can count on to resolve the dualism of mutable time in nature and the immutable, enduring qualities in experience and in the self. His failure to supply this link in terms of espousing the human power of durational consciousness, of memory, or of

man's transcendent imagination transformed into art, results in the ultimate failure of almost all of his characters in their "crisis of knowing" themselves in the passage of time. Hence the failed quests for form in the lives created by Faulkner's intellectual characters.

Durational and Transcendent Time in the Works of Faulkner and Proust

Critics have reached different conclusions about the relationship of durational and transcendent time in the work of Faulkner and Proust. In Temps et roman (1946), Jean Pouillon places Proust's work in the category of the "novel of duration," and Faulkner's fiction under the classification of "the novel of destiny," because of his observation that Faulkner's representation of the past includes the universal past rather than simply his personal past.[42]

This study will take issue with such a rigid critical perspective, which places Proust and Faulkner in opposing temporal categories, and in its place will posit the theory that a combination of the durational and transcendent approaches to time appear in the works of both. Previous critical analyses of the two authors have failed to discuss and compare the unusually similar mixture of the two time senses that occur in the works of each. A duality of attitudes towards time, appearing simultaneously in the novels of Faulkner and Proust, is the explanation behind the mixture of temporal and spatial form in their writing. Although, as noted above, critics analyzing Proust's mingling of the durational and transcendent have called his philosophy "inverted Platonism" in its ultimate emphasis on human durational time,[43] there has been no complete critical examination of the reason for and outcome of Faulkner's combination of the two views of time.

In the history of Faulkner criticism, although very little has been said about Faulkner's inconsistency in using both durational and transcendent perspectives within the same novel, much critical attention has been devoted to arguments about whether his time sense is discontinuous, cutting off a sense of future from past and present, and culminating in a fatalistic philosophy.

Critical Perspectives on Faulkner's Sense of Time

The criticism stating that Faulkner's novels contain a fatalistic philosophy was first stated in Jean-Paul Sartre's seminal 1939 essay on Faulknerian time. In describing Faulkner's sense of time, in which he thought there was no representation of the future, he wrote:

> If the future has reality, time withdraws us from the past and brings us nearer to the future; but if you do away with the future, time is no longer that which separates, that which cuts the present off from itself. . . . Man spends his life struggling against time, and time, like an acid, eats away at man, eats him away from himself and prevents him from fulfilling his human character. Everything is absurd. "Life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."[44]

Along with a sense of mission in life, the concept of the future was of paramount importance to Sartre, and his criticism of Faulkner as a passive writer who had no sense of the future must be viewed as a subjective expression of Sartre's own philosophy.[45] With Sartre's view of life as a constant progression into an unpredictable and elusive future, man to him was but a "moving point constantly advancing into new self-creation."[46] And if, as he postulated --

> there was no God to conceive human nature a priori, existence preceded essence and each person made his own essence, as the moving point, which was himself, advanced from past into future. . . the past was a not-yet toward which man moved in constant pursuit of an actuality which became past as rapidly as he overtook it. [Then] man was nothingness continually coming into being.[47]

Given this philosophical thrust towards confronting the future, it is understandable that Sartre should rail against the ideas of those whom he perceived as focused on the past. In his essay on Faulkner's sense of time, he found that both Proust and Faulkner removed the possibility of a future, and this, he argued, was the basis for Faulkner's despair. It is worth quoting at length from Sartre's article, for it had such far-reaching influence on the linkage and evaluation of Faulkner and Proust which took place in the writing of later critics.

Sartre first touched on Faulkner's use of memory which he believed paralleled that of Proust:

> . . . The order of the past is the order of the heart. It would be wrong to think that when the present is past it becomes our closest memory . . . Only its own density and the dramatic meaning of our life can determine at what level it will remain.
>
> Such is the nature of Faulkner's time. Isn't there something familiar about it? This unspeakable present, leaking at every seam, these sudden invasions of the past, this emotional order, the opposite of the voluntary and intellectual order that is chronological but lacking in reality, these memories, these monstrous and discontinuous obsessions, these intermittences of the heart -- are not these reminiscent of the lost and recaptured time of Marcel Proust?[48]

Sartre then acknowledged that despite the similarity in metaphysical approach, Proust's real hope was to recover the past, whereas for Faulkner, the past was never lost but simply engulfed the present. He stated:

> . . . for Proust salvation lies in time itself, in the full reappearance of the past. For Faulkner, on the contrary, the past is never lost, unfortunately; it is always there, it is an obsession one escapes from the temporal world only through mystic ecstasies. A mystic is always a man who wishes to forget something, his self, or more often, language or objective representations. For Faulkner, time must be forgotten.[49]

Sartre concluded that Proust's fictional technique might be expected to be more fragmentary and unchronological, closer in style to that of Faulkner, because of

the similarity of their emphasis upon past time. He believed this to be a backward point of view leading to a closed concept of the present and future, synonymous with despair and abandonment of classical literary controls. He wrote:

> To tell the truth, Proust's fictional technique should have been Faulkner's. It was the logical conclusion of his metaphysics. But Faulkner is a lost man, and it is because he feels lost that he takes risks and pursues his thought to its uttermost consequences. Proust is a Frenchman and a classicist. The French lose themselves only a little at a time and always manage to find themselves again. Eloquence, intellectuality, and a liking for clear ideas were responsible for Proust's retaining at least the semblance of chronology.[50]

And finally, Sartre pointed out that it is preoccupation with the problem of time that links Proust and Faulkner, and that their fictional efforts are part of the larger contemporary literary trend to deal with time on a personal, psychological basis, which has become symbolic of twentieth century literature. He explained:

> The basic reason for this relationship [between Proust and Faulkner] is to be found in a very general literary phenomenon. Most of the great contemporary authors, Proust, Joyce, Dos Passos, Faulkner, Gide, and Virginia Woolf have tried, each in his own way, to distort time. Some of them have deprived it of its past and future in order to reduce it to the pure intuition of the instant; others, like Dos Passos, have made of it a dead and closed memory. Proust and Faulkner have simply decapitated it. They have deprived it of its future -- that is, its dimension of deeds and freedom.[51]

In his analysis of The Sound and the Fury, Sartre lamented that "everything has already happened." He accused Faulkner of having a vision of "the present [that] is nothing but a chaotic din, [and] a future that is past," which directed his fictional efforts to reverse time. He created a striking image of Faulkner's effort to reenter past time:

> . . . Faulkner's vision of the world can be compared to that of a man sitting in an open car and looking backward. At every moment, formless shadows, flickerings, faint tremblings and

> patches of light rise up on either side of him, and only afterward, when he has a little perspective, do they become trees and men and cars.
>
> The past takes on a sort of super-reality; its contours are hard and clear, unchangeable. The present, nameless and fleeting, is helpless before it. It is full of gaps, and, through these gaps, things of the past, fixed, motionless, and silent as judges or glances, come to invade it. Faulkner's monologues remind one of airplane trips full of air- pockets. At each pocket, the hero's consciousness "sinks back into the past" and rises only to sink back again. The present is not; it becomes. Everything was.[52]

And finally, at the end of Sartre's article on The Sound and the Fury, he condemned Faulkner by saying, "We live during an age of impossible revolutions, yet Faulkner uses his extraordinary art to describe a world which is dying of old age and suffocation."[53]

Sartre's interpretation of Faulkner's and Proust's temporal focus as pointing only toward the past, however, is ultimately incomplete. There is a major difference in the manner in which Faulkner and Proust deal with their sense of the past, and it is not as Sartre suggested, simply a matter of decapitating time by depriving it of its future. Whereas for Proust the exercise of regaining lost time was used as a magic formula to aid in the creation of literature for the future, for Faulkner the past becomes a fathomless swamp only in the minds of the isolated characters who sustain themselves in their illusions of the past. For other Faulkner characters the future constantly offers new choices, and in this aspect Faulkner's and Sartre's outlooks are in harmony. Because both believed that radical change is part of man's nature, for both men opposites and contradictions could exist and develop simultaneousiy. Ultimately the works of both Sartre and Faulkner are capable of soaring beyong logical- linear contradictions, and conclude by holding opposites in simultaneity.[54]

Following Sartre's comments in 1939, during the next two decades of Faulkner criticism, opposing schools of thought concerning his sense of time

emerged. These critical approaches interpreted Faulkner's view of time as either discontinuous or continuous, and have continued attracting new adherants to each point of view.

Most of the French critics of Faulkner have chosen to follow Sartre and have taken their stand in the discontinuous school of thought. From Jean Pouillon, who credited "destiny" as the force which dictates that the past shall prevail over the present and future in Faulkner's novels,[55] to M. le Breton,[56] who concentrated on Faulkner's pessimism, and J.-J. Mayoux,[57] who discussed Faulkner's presentation of the gloomy obstinacy of time, they all converged on what they believed to be a fatalistic Faulknerian philosophy of despair.

Even Andre Malraux, a novelist dedicated to belief in action, and a perspicacious critic, failed to understand Faulkner's real message. In the Preface to the French edition of Sanctuary, he stated that Faulkner creates a world in which man is constantly crushed, a world in which

> there is no "man" . . . or any values, or even any psychology . . . But there is a Destiny standing, single, behind all these different yet similar beings, like death behind a ward for the incurable.[58]

Projecting an aspect of his own view of the world into Faulkner, he continued:

> . . . Faulkner escapes into the irremediable. . . . An inexorable, sometimes epic force is released in his work whenever he succeeds in bringing one of his characters up against the Irremediable. And perhaps the irremediable is his only true subject, perhaps his only aim is to crush man. . . .[59]

Although these interpretations of Faulkner's work by French critics reveal sensitivity and intelligence and were among the earliest recognitions of Faulkner's genius, nonetheless, the conclusions offered are misinterpretations of his writing. They are a confusion of means with ends.

Both Sartre and Malraux assume that Faulkner's final purpose is to arrest motion, which is, as Faulkner insisted himself in various interviews, only a tool or technique used to reveal the motion of life in the most dramatic mode possible. In 1954 in an interview with Jean Stein for the Paris Review, Faulkner said, "Life is motion," and "the aim of every artist is to arrest motion, which is life, by artificial means and hold it fixed so that a hundred years later, when a stranger looks at it, it moves again since it is life."[60] Thus a full understanding of Faulkner's belief in the importance of change and motion in life is a prerequisite to a consideration of his handling of time and his use of history, which are related.

The American critics who have stressed discontinuity in Faulkner's sense of time include Walter Slatoff and Donald Sutherland, who contend that Faulkner is as insistent about fragmenting time as he is in fusing it.

In Quest for Failure Slatoff discusses the dual emphasis on time in Faulkner's work, pointing out that Faulkner both "sees and presents time as continuous and whole," while at the same time "his presentation makes time discontinuous and seals off the past from the present." Slatoff believes that both interpretations are correct, because "clearly, Faulkner wants to do both of these things, to emphasize both the pastness of the past and its presentness;" so the resulting divergence of critical point of view is understandable.[61]

Noting that the continual juxtaposition of past and present events is one of Faulkner's "most persistent and widely noted structural devices," Slatoff points out that

> the result of the persistent juxtaposition is in part a sense of separateness between moments in time. We watch . . . the clock jump back and forth between moments rather than move imperceptibly from one to another. It is true that Faulkner is very much concerned with the idea of the past fusing with the present either in someone's consciousness or in a realm outside time, but his method is such that the past exists largely as moments or flashes with gaps in between and with gaps between them and the present.[62]

In response to the argument that Faulkner's form and content both emphasize a view of time as continuous and whole, Slatoff argues that while this may have been Faulkner's intention, the use of such constant juxtaposition results in a pervasive sense of fragmentation.

In "Time on Our Hands" Donald Sutherland describes his view of Faulkner's sense of the past by emphasizing its removal from the flow of present time. He suggests that Faulkner's "real basis of composition is an absolute past, not a consecutive history. It is a flat simultaneous past over which the 'order of the heart' can move as it pleases. . . ."[63] In order to better describe the richness of the Faulknerian past and the chasm separating it from the present, Sutherland uses strong pictorial imagery:

> Faulkner's past feels like the paintings of Pompeii, which are all as if painted the very day they were buried in ashes, an inordinately rich and fluid sensuality arrested and separated from us both by a terrible hardness of surface and a definite catastrophe.[64]

He concludes, "I think this hard and immobile past, separate both from us and from the continuity of history, is the only kind of past that really convinces us."[65]

In contradistinction to the school of fragmentation and doom, Perrin Lowrey and Peter Swiggart, the two leading members of the theory of continuity formulating the basis of Faulkner's portrayal of time, present a much more positive interpretation of his works. In an essay analyzing Faulkner's handling of time in The Sound and the Fury, Swiggart takes issue with Sartre's comparison of Faulkner and Proust, in which Sartre states that the characters of both authors are motivated by blind mechanical fate and live only in the past.[66]

Dealing point by point with Sartre's argument on The Sound and the Fury, Swiggart analyzes the example of Quentin Compson, who is obsessed by the past and driven to suicide to try and halt the passage of time. In response to

Sartre's statement that Quentin's obsession is symbolic of Faulkner's own obsession with past time, Swiggart counters that:

> Quentin's dilemma . . . is under dramatic control. His sophisticated self-destruction is structurally balanced by the endurance and emotional stability of other characters, such as the idiot Benjy and the negress Dilsey.[67]

And he concludes that Sartre's interpretation simply "ignores Faulkner's use of a dynamic concept of time that transcends Quentin's temporal dilemma and casts it into both moral and dramatic perspective."[68] Rather than mechanistic and fatalistic, Faulkner's objective, according to Swiggart, lies in transcendence of time.

Continuity and Discontinuity in Faulkner's Sense of Time

Actually, both schools of thought -- the discontinuous and the continuous views of time -- are relevant to Faulkner's works, for both temporal perspectives coexist in counterpoint. The difficulty lies in interpreting Faulkner's ethical evaluation of the different perspectives. The continuing duality of the Faulknerian time sense, which incorporates transcendence as well as duration, is constantly visible in the symbolic temporal contradiction of his intellectual and his primitive characters.

The romantic self-destructive notion of escaping chronological time to reach a timeless mystical realm espoused by Quentin Compson, Gail Hightower, Ike McCaslin, and other isolated protagonists, does not represent the ideal Faulknerian time sense. For, from his reading of Bergson and James Joyce, Faulkner had become a disciple of duration, generally believing in the validity of the concept of a continuous uninterrupted flow of time between past, present, and

future. The sense of duration seemed to offer Faulkner relief from his general pessimism about the linear time process.

Faulkner's Belief in Action and Change

Faulkner's philosophy is not ultimately one of portraying the harmony and disharmony of man with the universe as a simplistic dichotomy. In the final analysis, the pattern that emerges in his fiction is one of decision-making and action, indicating steps that must be taken in order to broaden the scope of man's interaction and communication with man and with society as a whole.

When Faulkner was at the University of Virginia he was asked whether Ike McCaslin in Go Down, Moses could represent the predicament of modern man who has been unable to "find a humanity that he can fit in with." Faulkner very specifically explained, first, the possible human responses to the dilemma of contemporary life, and then, the most admirable of those possibilities:

> . . . there are some people in any time and age that cannot face and cope with the problems. There seem to be three stages: The first says, This is rotten, I'll have no part of it, I will take death first. The second says, This is rotten, I don't like it, I can't do anything about it, but at least I will not participate in it myself, I will go off into a cave or climb a pillar to sit on. The third says, This stinks and I'm going to do something about it. McCaslin is the second. He says, This is bad, and I will withdraw from it. What we need are people who will say, This is bad and I'm going to do something about it, I'm going to change it.[69]

If Sartre could have heard this explanation of Faulkner's belief in action and change two decades earlier as he was preparing his critical texts, he would have been startled to realize how closely Faulkner approaches his own Existentialist beliefs. For Faulkner represents man as bearing his destiny within himself, through his personal decisions creating the form of his life, while learning to disregard the inexplicable and irrational elements which are beyond human control.

Although there is a certain burden of history that is passed on from generation to generation with its element of guilt from the sins of the past, Faulkner believes that each individual is free either to extenuate or expiate the culpability. Through each present action, the design of the past can be confirmed or reshaped. Thus the pattern of history is neither deterministic nor immutable; it is not formulated by abstract laws of politics and economics, but rather, in a durational sense, represents the emotions and actions of individuals and their cultures, and this gives it its shape.[70]

While at the University of Virginia, Faulkner described his concept of man in relationship to time:

> . . . to me, no man is himself, he is the sum of his past. There is no such thing really as was because the past is. It is a part of every man, every woman, and every moment. All of his and her ancestry, background, is all a part of himself and herself at any moment. And so a man, a character in a story at any moment of action if not just himself as he is then, he is all that made him. . . .[71]

Thus, according to Faulkner, man's fate is the necessity of change; man's hope is that "by his own efforts" he can create a better form of change. It is impossible to imagine an outlook that is more focused on the future than this way of looking at the world.[72]

Faulkner spoke most revealingly about change when he was asked the direct question of whether he intended his readers "to sympathize more with Old Ben (in The Bear) . . . or . . . the hunters. . . ." He answered:

> What the writer's asking is compassion, understanding, that change must alter, must happen, and change is going to alter what was. That no matter how fine anything seems, it can't endure, because once it stops, abandons motion, it is dead. . . .[73]

This belief in constant change is at the very core of Faulkner's work.

Critical Perspectives on Proust's Sense of Time

Throughout the decades of Proustian criticism, a large number of critics have viewed Proust as living only to recover the past, thereby separating past from present and future, and creating a discontinuous time sense. Sartre's interpretation of the absence of the future in Proust's work is typical of the majority view:

> . . . Proust's heroes never undertake anything. They do, of course, make plans, but their plans remain stuck to them and cannot be projected like a bridge beyond the present. They are day-dreams that are put to flight by reality. . . .[74]

Many critics have mistakenly categorized Proust as following in the tradition of a long line of debilitated neurasthenic aesthetes, and have said that the decision to create a work of art at the end is inadequate to counteract his flight from the realities of life. Edmund Wilson in Axel's Castle expresses this view, and while recognizing that Proust hoped to be able to oppose the flux of time by the creation of a work of art, Wilson fails to attribute special significance to the extreme intensity of the last volume in which Proust states the aspect of a prophetic mission that he is attempting to fulfill.

Wilson seems to misinterpret the magnitude of Proust's literary effort, which was not simply to produce a work of art, but to create something which could defy the passage of time. Proust felt that his work could do this as no other work of art could, because his writing was not only the means of expressing his vision, but was a direct description of the steps by which the vision might be attained, with the presentation of a method which demands the complicity of the reader who reexperiences its exact effect.[75]

Although Proust constantly alternates the presentation of durational and transcendent time, he is frequently critically regarded as focusing primarily

on duration revealed in the continuous life of memory and its extension of the past into the present. The image of the past grows ceaselessly in the present, however, as Proust skillfully reveals in the constant change of the present that occurs in Marcel's world.

At the end of Swann's Way Marcel describes his return many years later to the Allée des Acacias, where he used to marvel at the beauty of Mme. Swann as she took her daily promenade in the Bois de Boulogne. Looking at the same forest paths in the present, Marcel becomes aware of the enormous changes that have occurred since his days of youthful desire, which he describes:

> . . . when I was young and had faith . . . I would hasten eagerly to the spots where masterpieces of female elegance would be incarnate for a few moments beneath the unconscious, accommodating boughs. . . . The idea of perfection which I had within me I had bestowed, in that other time, upon the height of a victoria, upon the raking thinness of those horses, frenzied and light as wasps upon the wing, with bloodshot eyes . . . which now, smitten by a desire to see again what I had once loved, as ardent as the desire that had driven me, many years before, along the same paths, I wished to see renewed before my eyes. . . . Alas! there was nothing now but motorcars driven each by a moustached mechanic, with a tall footman towering by his side. I wished to hold before my bodily eyes, that I might know whether they were indeed as charming as they appeared to the eyes of memory, little hats, so low- crowned as to seem no more than garlands about the brows of women. All the hats now were immense, covered with fruits and flowers and all manner of birds. In place of the lovely gowns in which Mme. Swann walked like a Queen, appeared Greco-Saxon tunics . . . or sometimes, in the Directoire style, "Liberty chiffons" sprinkled with flowers like sheets of wallpaper.[76]

In the movement of time from the era of the horse-drawn victoria and low-crowned hat to the motorcar and large hat covered with fruits and flowers, Proust reveals his awareness of the steady advance of chronological time, which memory alone cannot halt.

Later, in The Past Recaptured, returning to Paris after many years' absence, Marcel is astounded by the physical changes that have occurred in his

friends and social acquaintances of the Faubourg Saint-Germain. Encountering them at the reception of the Princesse de Guermantes, he observes:

> Some men limped, but one realized that it was not the result of a carriage accident, but of a stroke, and because they already had one foot in the grave. . . . Some women . . . half paralysed, seemed unable quite to disengage their dress, caught on the stonework of their tomb, and they could not straighten up, bent over as they were, with their heads inclined, in a stooping posture that suggested their present situation, tottering between life and death until they should make the final plunge. . . . For I knew that these changes meant, what they were the prelude to . . . therefore this whiteness of the hair was very impressive in the women, combined with so many other changes. A name was mentioned to me and I was stupefied to think that it designated both the blonde woman at the dance whom I had once known and the thick-set lady in white hair who was walking heavily past me. Together with a certain high colour, that name was, perhaps, the only thing in common between the two women, the one in my memory and the one at the Guermantes reception, more different from one another than the ingenue and the dowager in a play.[77]

With Proust's keen awareness of and despair over the passage of time, it is clear that his work incorporates the heavy burden of the past while moving with painstaking steps forward. This almost imperceptible movement towards the future is akin to time itself, and is quite different from the fixity of focus on the past which Sartre attributed to Proust's fiction.

Roger Shattuck, one of the recent Proustian critics whose approach has been influential in the effort to reinstate A la recherche du temps perdu within the theory of continuous time, writes:

> After its complicated chronological preliminaries, the novel moves forward in time even though the action in its psychological and social preoccupations faces the past. The narrative tone that results, composed of sudden apparitions and gradual disappearances, hauntingly recalls the view from the rear platform of an old-fashioned observation car. There one always felt a faint wistful vertigo produced by this backward advance into the future out of a diminishing past. . . .[78]

Continuity and Discontinuity in Faulkner's and Proust's Portrayals of Time

The theory that both Faulkner and Proust are ultimately trying to present time in its continuity, albeit a continuity which contains many fragmented and discontinuous elements, is the subject of this study. And the corollary to the theory of continuity is the belief that unity of time implies unity of the self, and unity of the work of art as well. For it is the interdependence of time and the self (or of the actions and characters depicted in and through time) that ultimately creates the unity of the work of art. This interdependence in turn, signifies that time, the self, and the work of art reciprocally reveal the same pattern of identity, continuity, and unity.[79]

It is finally the author himself, as the creator of the work of art, who in a literary context imposes identity and unity upon the characters. Although the fictional character may fail in the process of self-integration, it is ultimately the author who is responsible for representing the active, organizing and regulative functions of the self. Hence, the amount of critical attention that has been devoted to the question of whether Faulkner and Proust are fatalists promulgating deterministic philosophies of despair and hopelessness.

In their ability to present a sense of linear, clock-time, while simultaneously including durational and transcendent perspectives to provide possible escapes from chronology, Faulkner and Proust indicate the temporal choices that confront mankind. Although they ultimately differ in the way that transcendence can be attained, they are in the accord on the concept of an "enduring, identical self [existing] in and through the experience of temporal duration."[80]

The Faulknerian and Proustian Quest for Unity of Being and Continuity of Time

The ultimate quest for Faulkner and Proust is thus the same -- to discover what is timeless in the self and in experience, and to celebrate the discovery of these timeless elements in the artistic creation of their work. The method both authors use in their search for timelessness is the literary portrait, through which they investigate the possibility of a sense of continuity and unity of the self in the midst of temporal succession and change.

In a literary treatment two aspects of the self are particularly significant. First, the self seems to reveal a tendency toward dynamic organization which prevails over and above the succession of fragmentary impressions and ideas. The ego is actively involved in interpreting, organizing, and synthesizing the experience of life, and it does so from the perspective of the self as a whole, creating a sense of unity of being. And secondly, the self reveals a certain quality of continuity; it contains a structure which demonstrates both unity and continuity, the structural phenomena that result in man's conception of himself as the same person throughout his lifetime.[81] Both qualities -- unity of being and continuity in time -- are thus inherent in man's sense of self, creating literary validity for the fictional portrayal of characters searching for a cohesive personal identity. These two principles may in fact be considered minimum conditions for what is known as personal identity in experience.[82]

In the following pages these two principles will be utilized in studying the literary portraits of Marcel and of Faulkner's intellectual characters. First, there will be an examination of the characters' means of attaining or failing to attain unity of the self. In their historical search for self-identity -- through memory, the sense of duration, the process of disillusionment, and stoic endurance -- the growth from innocence to experience is described in terms of its

temporal progress. Secondly, describing the characters' search for a sense of temporal continuity, methods ranging from duration to forms of mythology and cyclical time will be analyzed. It is in the search for temporal continuity that Marcel and Faulkner's intellectual figures all use the technique of arrested time with its potential for synchronous, spatial revelation.

Employing the dialectics of time and space, Faulkner and Proust thus describe their intellectual characters in the process of self-discovery in search of unity of being, and in the effort of reconciling past and present to achieve a sense of temporal continuity. Although both Proust and Faulkner attain their own sense of transcendence through art, only Proust is able to state his belief through Marcel's evolution that the artist shall prevail and endure. In the portrayal of the failed lives of intellectual figures whose goal is to halt the passage of time, Faulkner reveals his ambivalence toward the artist's need to arrest motion, and, indeed, toward any sense of artistic transcendence for mankind in general. Ultimately he is able to conclude only that through human interaction man himself can endure and prevail.

Notes

[1]Peter Swiggart, "Time in Faulkner's Novels," Modern Fiction Studies, 1, No. 2 (May 1955), 27.

[2]Henri Bergson (1859-1941) was the author of Time and Free Will (1888), Matter and Memory (1896), Introduction to Metaphysics (1903), and The Creative Mind (1934). He received the Nobel Prize in literature in 1927. Bergson believed that through intuition man has a sense of the life force which pervades all becoming, and through intuition can perceive the reality of time as duration, indivisible and unmeasurable. Duration can be demonstrated through the phenomena of memory.

[3]Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947) was the author of "The Anatomy of Some Scientific Ideas -- Space, Time, and Relativity," in The Organisation of Thought, Educational and Scientific, (1917), Process and Reality, An Essay in Cosmology, (1929), Nature and Life, (1934), and Essays in Science and Philosophy, (1947).

[4]Samuel Alexander (1859-1938) was the author of Space, Time and Deity: The Gifford Lectures at Glasgow, 1916-1918.

[5]Hans Meyerhoff, Time in Literature (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1955), pp. 27-28.

[6]Elliott Coleman, trans., Preface, Studies in Human Time, by Georges Poulet (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1956), pp. vii-viii.

The innovations of Mann and Kafka in Germany, Proust and Gide in France, Dos Passos, Gertrude Stein, Faulkner, and Thomas Wolfe in the United States, and Dorothy Richardson, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and Aldous Huxley in England reveal the wide variety of fictional forms in which the twentieth century obsession with time has been cast. These are among the most prominent of the novelists who form what Wyndham Lewis disparagingly labeled "The Time-School of modern fiction." (Adam Abraham Mendilow, Time and the Novel [New York: Humanities Press, 1972], p. 31.)

[7]Henry James, Preface to Roderick Hudson, in the Collected Edition 1907- 1909, quoted by Mendilow, p. 17.

[8]Henry James, "London Notes," in Notes on Novelists (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1914), p. 349, quoted in Mendilow, p. 17.

[9]Coleman, p. ix.

[10]Swiggart, p. 25.

[11]Loïc Bouvard, "Conversation with William Faulkner," Modern Fiction Studies, 5 (Winter 1959-1960), 362, quoted in Margaret Church, Time and Reality: Studies in Contemporary Fiction (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1963), p. 228.

[12]Meyerhoff, p. 54.

[13]Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past, trans. C.K. Scott Moncrieff and Frederick A. Blossom (New York: Random House, Inc., 1927), II, 773.

[14]William Faulkner, The Wild Palms, (New York: The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., Signet Modern Classics, 1968), p. 115.

[15]Donald M. Kartiganer, "The Sound and the Fury and Faulkner's Quest for Form," ELH, 37, No. 4 (December 1970), 619-620.

[16]St. Augustine was the first of the temporal philosophers to conceive of an experiential theory based on the minute-to-minute experience of time in tandem with the psychological categories of memory and expectation. In the Confessions he reveals how memory functions in the reconstruction of one's life, and states that the nature of memory is the key to the structure of time and the self. St. Augustine's argument that that which happens is always an experience, idea, or thing in the present, with "past" defined as the present memory experience of a thing in the past, and "future" defined as the present expectation of a future thing, is later developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth century philosophies of Hobbes, Locke, Condillac, Berkeley, and Hume. (See St. Augustine, Confessions, Bk. II, quoted in Meyerhoff, p. 8.)

In his analysis of the problem of personal identity in A Treatise of Human Nature (written in 1739 and 1740), David Hume stated the basic dilemma which has confounded novelists and philosophers who deal with problems of human identity and time, including both Proust and Faulkner. The central paradox of unity versus disunity of the self can be summed up in the question Hume posited:

> How can that [human identity] which is composed of elements characterized by "distinction and difference" be viewed as having some sort of continuous, unitary structure such as is ascribed to a person or a complete human life?

Hume's question, when related to time, may be reworded to read -- How is it possible for the self, which changes constantly in the flux of time, to be regarded as having a constant, static, spatial identity?

In his effort to find an explanation for the human tendency to attribute identity to persons and objects, Hume reached the conclusion that "the unique relations constituting memory structure . . . (are) 'the source of personal identity for human beings.'" (See David Hume, "Of Personal Identity," in A Treatise of Human Nature, ed. L. A. Selby-Bogge, 2nd ed. [1740; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888], Bk. I, Section 6, p. 261, quoted in Meyerhoff, p. 33.)

[17]Meyerhoff, pp. 8-9, 43.

[18]Meyerhoff, pp. 4-10.

[19]Proust, II, 996.

[20]Proust, II, 996.

[21]Meyerhoff, p. 63.

[22]William Faulkner, Light in August, (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1972), p. 69.

[23]William Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury and As I Lay Dying, (New York: Random House, Inc., The Modern Library, 1946), pp. 355-356.

[24]William Faulkner, The Hamlet, (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1964), p. 101.

[25]Margaret Church, Time and Reality: Studies in Contemporary Fiction, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1963), pp. 230-233.

[26]Bouvard, p. 362, quoted in Church, p. 228.

[27]Bouvard, p. 364, quoted in Church, p. 228.

[28]Frederick L. Gwynn and Joseph L. Blotner, eds., Faulkner in the University: Conferences at the University of Virginia 1957-1958, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1959), p. 239..

[29]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 4.

[30]Peter Swiggart, "Time in Faulkner's Novels," Modern Fiction Studies, 1, No. 2, [May 1955], 27.)

[31]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 6.

[32]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 6.

[33]Swiggart, p. 26.

[34]Faulkner, The Hamlet, p. 95.

[35]Faulkner, The Hamlet, pp. 108-109.

[36]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 266.

[37]Faulkner, Light in August, pp. 313-314.

[38]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 321.

[39]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 440.

[40]Jean Defrees Kellogg, Dark Prophets of Hope: Dostoevsky, Sartre, Camus, Faulkner (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1975), p. 134. (Emphasis is mine.)

[41]Olga Vickery, The Novels of William Faulkner (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), p. 265. (Emphasis is mine.)

[42]Jean Pouillon, "Temps et destinée chez Faulkner," in Temps et roman, trans. Jacqueline Merriam (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), pp. 238-260, quoted in Church, p. 229.

[43]Meyerhoff, p. 63.

[44]Jean-Paul Sartre, "On The Sound and the Fury: Time in the Work of Faulkner," reprinted from Literary and Philosophical Essays by Jean-Paul Sartre, 1939, trans. Annette Michelson (London: Rider & Co., 1955), pp. 79-87, in Faulkner: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Robert Penn Warren (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), p. 92.

[45]According to Sartre's Existential belief, each man is filled with unlimited potential, and is free to break with his past to become something else of his own making. In Being and Nothingness Sartre clearly states that while man advances from past to future by choosing between alternative courses of action which give shape to the essence of his life, there is one choice which is denied him, and that is the possibility of making no choice at all. The refusal to choose is a choice itself in Sartre's terms, which emphasizes the fact that man is "condemned to be free." This concept has become a widely accepted paradox in the twentieth century.

To Sartre, the freedom accepted by the committed person entails heroic awareness which makes it possible to advance into the unknown, shaping one's life through choices, with only the standard of freedom itself to serve as a guide. Because all choices exist except the choice not to choose, both freedom and unfreedom co-exist. For Sartre, acceptance of the paradox of "unfreedom-in-freedom" is the cornerstone of existence, from which each authentic person must build himself and his life. (See Kellogg, p. 68, 71.)

[46]Kellogg, p. 56.

[47]Kellogg, p. 56.

[48]Sartre, quoted in Warren, p. 90.

[49]Sartre, quoted in Warren, p. 90.

[50]Sartre, quoted in Warren, p. 91. (Italics are Sartre's.)

[51]Sartre, quoted in Warren, p. 91.

[52]Sartre, quoted in Warren, p. 91.

[53]Given Sartre's fascination with time in his own writing it is interesting to speculate about the reasons for his intense reaction to Faulkner's and Proust's temporal focus, and his incomplete interpretation of their time sense as pointing only toward the past. This failure on Sartre's part to attribute greater flexibility to Faulkner may have been the ultimate result of the influence which Faulkner's early work had on Sartre at the time he was writing La Nausée. Although Sartre never mentioned Sanctuary and As I Lay Dying, which appeared in 1933 and 1934, Simone de Beauvoir describes with what intense interest they both read Faulkner's works at a time when Sartre was searching for a fictional image for an essentially philosophical experience, ultimately symbolized as La Nausee. (See Simone de Beauvoir, La Force de l'age [Paris: 1960], pp. 111-112; and John K. Simon, "Faulkner and Sartre: Metamorphosis and the Obscene," Comparative Literature, 15 [1963], 217.)

Simone de Beauvoir writes: "Avant lui [Faulkner], Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Hemingway, et quelques autres, avaient refusé la fausse objectivité du roman

réaliste pour livrer le monde à travers de subjectivités; cependant, la nouveauté et l'éfficacité de sa technique nous étonna; non seulement il orchestrait adroitement une pluralité de points de vue, mais en chaque conscience il organisait le savoir, les ignorances, la mauvaise foi, les fantasmes, les paroles, le silence, de façon à plonger les évènements dans un clair-obscur d'où ils émergeaient avec un maximum de mystère et de relief. Ses récits nous touchaient a la fois par leur art, et par leurs thèmes." (Beauvoir, pp. 191-192.)

What Sartre seems to embrace from Faulkner's work is a fascination with the process of dying, both literally, in terms of putrefaction of the flesh, and figuratively in the death of rapport between observer and object. Both seem to sense beneath the normal texture of things a grotesque nightmare of physical matter which constantly threatens man's complacency. And Sartre, like other European critics, particularly admired Faulkner's presentation of the modern conventional world as containing a menacing inner (psychological) force of destruction which is coextensive with the apocalyptic force of destruction depicted in much of modern literature. (Simon, p. 223).

In an article that appeared in 1948, Sartre named Faulkner, along with other American authors and Kafka, as having been particularly influential to modern French novelists in providing examples of technique. But, Sartre criticized Faulkner as a "revolutionary who ultimately reveals his basic conservatism, adherence to a preconceived scheme." (See Jean-Paul Sartre, "Qu'est-ce que la litterature?" Situations, II. [Paris, 1948], 254-256, and Sartre, "American Novelists in French Eyes," Atlantic Monthly [August 1946], p. 114, quoted in Simon, pp. 216-217.)

It is thus possible to conclude that Sartre had several reasons to devalue Faulkner, for in addition to a desire to obscure the path of his own artistic development, in which Faulkner's work had played an important role, there was an irreconcilable political difference between Sartre's belief in the need for revoluntionary movement towards change and Faulkner's conservative belief in the need for non-violent evolution to create change almost imperceptibly.

[54]Kellogg, pp. 155-156.

[55]Pouillon, pp. 238-260, quoted in Warren, p. 81.

[56]M. le Breton, "Temps et personne chez William Faulkner," Journal de psychologie normale et pathologique, 44 (January-June 1951), 344-354, quoted in Church, p. 229.

[57]J. -J. Mayoux, "Le temps et la destinée chez Faulkner," dans La Profondeur et le rhythme, Cahiers du College Philosophique, (1948), 306, quoted in Church, p. 306.

[58]Andre Malraux, Preface to Sanctuaire by William Faulkner (Paris: Le Livre de Poche, Gallimard, 1949), pp. 6-9, trans. Richard P. Adams, quoted in Richard P. Adams, Faulkner: Myth and Motion (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1960), p. 133.

[59]Malraux quoted in Adams, p. 133.

[60]Malcolm Cowley, ed., Writers at Work (New York: Viking Press, 1959), pp. 138-139, quoted in Adams, pp. 3-4.

[61]Walter J. Slatoff, Quest for Failure: A Study of William Faulkner (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960), p. 93.

[62]Slatoff, p. 92.

[63]Donald Sutherland, "Time on Our Hands," Yale French Studies, No. 10 (1953), 7, quoted in Slatoff, pp. 92-93.

[64]Sutherland quoted in Slatoff, pp. 92-93.

[65]Sutherland quoted in Slatoff, pp. 92-93.

[66]Peter Swiggart, "Moral and Temporal Order in The Sound and the Fury," The Sewanee Review, 61 (Spring 1953), 221.

[67]Swiggart, "Moral and Temporal Order," p. 221.

[68]Swiggart, "Moral and Temporal Order," p. 221.

[69]Faulkner in the University, p. 54.

[70]Vickery, pp. 263-264.

[71]Faulkner in the University, p. 84.

[72]Adams, pp. 134-135.

[73]Faulkner in the University, pp. 276-277.

[74]Sartre, quoted in Warren, p. 9.

[75]Joseph Frank, "Spatial Form in Modern Literature," The Sewanee Review, 53, No. 2 (Spring 1945), 237.

[76]Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past, trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff (New York: Random House, Inc., 1924), I, 323.

[77]Proust, II, 1043-1045.

[78]Roger Shattuck, Proust's Binoculars: A Study of Memory, Time, and Recognition in A la recherche du temps perdu (New York: Random House, Inc., 1963), p. 109. (Italics are Shattuck's.)

[79]Meyerhoff, p. 37.

[80]Meyerhoff, p. 36.

[81]Meyerhoff, pp. 33-34.

[82]Meyerhoff, n. 25, p. 151.

CHAPTER TWO

THE QUEST TO DISCOVER WHAT ENDURES IN THE SELF AND EXPERIENCE: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN THE TECHNIQUES OF MARCEL AND OF FAULKNER'S INTELLECTUAL FIGURES

> . . . say that the end precedes the beginning,
> And the end and the beginning were always there
> Before the beginning and after the end.
> And all is always now. Words strain,
> Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,
> Under the tension, slip, slide, perish,
> Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,
> Will not stay still.[1]

In their effort to recapture the past and lost time as a means of regaining the identity and continuity of the self, Marcel and Faulkner's intellectual characters are aware of a psychic break that has occurred separating the innocence of their earlier being from their later disillusioned concept of themselves. Their anguish over a sense of personal "interruption," which has created a hiatus dividing their sense of the present from the past, is characterized by a general sense of discontinuity, which manifests itself in their awareness of the evanescence of all human emotion and identity in the passage of time.

Obsessed by the evidences of discontinuity in emotion and identity, Marcel, Quentin, and Faulkner's other intellectual protagonists all attempt to find various temporal and spatial methods with which to confront the future with a feeling of integral wholeness rather than fragmentation. The various methods

that they use, the Bergsonian concept of duration, the Proustian belief in a metaphorical memory method, and the Faulknerian portrayal of spatial juxtaposition in moments of arrested time, will be the subject of this chapter. The fact that all of these techniques end in failure for the intellectual Faulkner characters will be analyzed in terms of a comparison with Marcel's discovery of a successful aesthetic method through which he can achieve a sense of both continuity of time and unity of being.

The Sense of "Interruption" and Loss of Identity

Marcel expresses the sense of loss and discontinuity of identity, which has become characteristic of the modern condition:

> One is no longer a person. How then, seeking for one's mind, one's personality, as one seeks for a thing that is lost, does one recover one's own self rather than any other? . . . What is it that guides us, when there has been an actual interruption . . .?[2]

There is a certain existential distress that accompanies the confusion about one's identity and purpose in life, which applies as much to Faulkner's intellectual characters as to Proust's protagonist. In Studies of Human Time Georges Poulet describes this phenomenon:

> . . . fundamentally this anguish is of a being, who, finding himself in an existence which nothing, it seems, can justify, incapable of discovering for himself a reason for being, incapable at the same time of finding anything which guarantees the continuation of his being, experiences simultaneously horror of a future which changes him, contempt for a present which seems powerless to establish him, and the exclusive need of saving himself, come what may, from his cruel contingency by discovering in the past the basis of this being that he is, and yet that he no longer is.[3]

The anguish of non-being is particularly nightmarish to Marcel, who seems to feel it most keenly in the somnolent state between sleeping and waking, a twilight time when all sense of identity deserts him. He relates his sensation of discontinuity between himself in the past and the present in the opening pages of Swann's Way:

> . . . my sleep was so heavy as completely to relax my consciousness; for then I lost all sense of the place in which I had gone to sleep, and when I awoke at midnight, not knowing where I was, I could not be sure at first who I was; I had only the most rudimentary sense of existence, such as may lurk and flicker in the depths of an animal's consciousness; I was more destitute of human qualities than the cave-dweller; but then the memory . . . of various other places where I had lived, and might now very possibly be, would come like a rope let down from heaven to draw me up out of the abyss of not-being, from which I could never have escaped by myself. . . .[4]

In a remarkably identical manner, Darl Bundren, an idealistic, poetic Faulkner character, who reveals both intellectual and primitive attributes, expresses the same fear of loss of identity in As I Lay Dying. The apprehension of loss of identity in sleep is compounded by the apprehension of strange rooms, a phobia he shares with Marcel. Darl's commentary forms a virtual parallel to Marcel's:

> In a strange room you must empty yourself for sleep. And before you are emptied for sleep, what are you. And when you are emptied for sleep, you are not. And when you are filled with sleep, you never were. I don't know what I am. I don't know if I am or not . . . and then I must be, or I could not empty myself for sleep in a strange room. And so if I am not emptied yet, I am is.[5]

A similar description of Quentin's confusion of identity, which occurs when he is in a trance-like state between sleeping and waking, is found in The Sound and the Fury. He feels lost in his memories of the past, which seem to destroy his sense of existence in the present. He relates:

> I seemed to be lying neither asleep nor awake looking down a long corridor of grey halflight where all stable things had become shadowy paradoxical all I had done shadows all I felt suffered taking visible form antic and perverse mocking without relevance inherent themselves with the denial of the significance they should have affirmed thinking I was I was not who was not was not who.[6]

For Faulkner's intellectual characters, the sense of interruption, which they experience both waking and sleeping, may well be attributed to a psychological hiatus created in the maturation process of many of those in the South in the generation following the Civil War. Faced with a sense of personal insignificance and failure reflecting their loss, many Southerners began to question their own sense of purpose, accomplishment, and the significance of their very existence in the wake of the defeat and disaster that surrounded them. Quentin is conscious of a hopeless psychological division within himself in Absalom, Absalom!

> . . . he would seem to listen to two separate Quentins now -- the Quentin Compson preparing for Harvard in the South, the deep South dead since 1865 and peopled with garrulous outraged baffled ghosts . . . and the Quentin Compson who was still too young to deserve yet to be a ghost, but nevertheless having to be one for all that. . . .[7]

In addition to fearing the interruption in his sense of identity in the present, Quentin also fears that in the future he will be unable to retain the sentiment of emotional horror which he feels following the discovery of his sister's loss of virginity, a loss which reflects in microcosm the loss of the South and its values. Because of the enormity of his pain, and the steadfastness of his adherence to the chivalric code of sexual purity, he wants to believe that Caddy's action is important enough to defy the passage of time and oblivion. He ultimately, however, is converted to his father's cynical belief that

> . . . people cannot do anything that dreadful they cannot do anything very dreadful at all they cannot even remember tomorrow that seemed dreadful today. . . .[8]

Marcel is also aware of the evanescence of personal identity in the future. Like Quentin, he recognizes the power of time and change to obliterate man's fondest loves and sorrows, which he expresses when he considers the winnowing away of human emotion with the coming of the future:

> . . . our dread of a future in which we must forego the sight of faces, the sound of voices that we love, friends from whom we derive today our keenest joys, this dread, far from being dissipated, is intensified, if to the grief of such a privation we reflect that there will be added what seems to us now in anticipation an even more cruel grief; not to feel it as a grief at all -- to remain indifferent; for if that should occur, our ego would have changed, it would then be not merely the attractiveness of our family, our mistresses, our friends that had ceased to environ us, but our affection for them; it would have been so completely eradicated from our heart, in which to-day it is a conspicuous element, that we should be able to enjoy that life apart from them the very thought of which to-day makes us recoil in horror; so that it would be in a real sense the death of ourselves, a death followed, it is true, by resurrection but in a different ego, the life, the love of which are beyond the reach of those elements of the existing ego that are doomed to die.[9]

It is not until The Past Recaptured that Marcel realizes, despite the extinction of individual loves which he has felt for a succession of different women during the course of his life, that it is the human capacity to experience such love which endures. At the Guermantes' reception he recognizes:

> . . . our love is a portion of our soul more lasting than the various selves which die successively in us and which would selfishly like to retain this love -- a portion of our soul which, regardless of the useful suffering this may cause us, must detach itself from its human objects in order to make clear to us and restore its quality of generality and give this love, an understanding of this love, to all the world, to the universal intelligence, and not first to this woman, then to that, in whom this one and that of our successive selves seek to lose their identity.[10]

In direct contrast to Marcel's development of a universal sense of what will endure, Quentin's determination to establish the eternal significance of his

love for Caddy leads him ultimately to the logic of halting time's flow by his own death. In his father's argument against suicide, he finds the rationale for his own extinction. His father warns him:

> ". . . you are still blind to what is in yourself to that part of general truth the sequence of natural events and their causes which shadows every mans brow . . . you are not thinking of finitude you are contemplating an apotheosis in which a temporary state of mind will become symmetrical above the flesh and aware both of itself and of the flesh it will not quite discard you will not even be dead and . . . you cannot bear to think that someday it will no longer hurt you like this. . . ."[11]

Unlike Marcel's all-encompassing realization that "our love is a portion of our soul more lasting than the various selves which die successively in us," with its subsequent conclusion that he must "give . . . an understanding of this love . . . to all the world, to the universal intelligence," Quentin's solution to time's passage is to choose a self- centered form of transcendence in which "a temporary state of mind will become symmetrical above the flesh . . . aware both of itself and of the flesh."

Both Quentin and Marcel are Bergsonian characters who seek to transcend time by experiencing a "fragment of time in its pure state;"[12] both are attempting to elevate a moral truth to eternity, but in completely different ways. With identical awareness of discontinuity, they choose diametrically opposite paths. In order to immortalize the memory of Caddy's promiscuity for eternity, Quentin tries to destroy time itself through his suicide. In order to secure the immortality of human experience in the flow of time, Marcel races against old age and death to write a book containing his memories of transcendent moments. Quentin feels that he must stop the motion of life to eliminate discontinuity of time; whereas Marcel incorporates life's discontinuity into the continuity of his art.

Duration and Transcendence: Inverted Reactions To the Passage of Time

While Marcel comes to be a firm believer in the durational concept that all aspects of past, present, and future time exist as timeless co-presences within each moment of an individual's existence, he also conducts a continuing search for transcendent moments which will lift him above the flow of time. In flashes of involuntary memory which are stimulated by various sensory experiences, he derives a sense of transcendence that seems to defy the threat of death. He explains:

> In truth, the person within me who was at that moment enjoying this impression enjoyed in it the qualities it possessed which were common to both an earlier day and the present moment, qualities which were independent of all considerations of time; and this person came into play only when, by this process of identifying the past with the present, he could find himself in the only environment in which he could live and enjoy the essence of things, that is to say, entirely outside of time.[15]

For both Marcel and Faulkner's intellectuals, there is a similar drive toward timelessness or transcendence in addition to a psychological preoccupation with time or duration, which are simply two identical but inverted reactions to a sense of the passage of time.

In their ultimate choices, however, Marcel distinguishes himself from all of Faulkner's intellectual characters, who follow Quentin's predilection for transcendence rather than an existence trapped in continuing durational time. Marcel grows into maturity using temporal perspectives, intuitively responding to durational time, while simultaneously seeking a means of transcendence of time's passage. The Faulkner characters, on the other hand, are identified according to their capacity to accept the preeminence of either durational or transcendent time, with very few attaining the creativity and harmony with the universe that such a combined perspective would have provided.

Duration and Other Existential Modes of Time As Possible Solutions to Discontinuity for Marcel and Faulkner's Intellectuals

As a basic method in their search for a sense of security in an ever-changing universe, Marcel and Faulkner's intellectuals all develop an ongoing theory of time in which a memory from the past has the power to affect them in the same manner that a present, existent object does. When conceiving of the past as timeless, and believing that man in the present reacts to given situations in the same way he has throughout the centuries, they discover that it is possible to develop an "existential" concept of time's reality, which represents their individualistic concept of it, rather than time's actual, linear, chronological passage.[15] Such a temporal concept becomes existential in the freedom of its interpreta-tion, which depends upon the freedom of the individual interpreting its significance. In an existential mode, time can be perceived as indivisible, ongoing and hence timeless.[16]

The development of a sense of existential time seems to provide a partial cure for the heightened sense of discontinuity experienced by Marcel and by Faulkner's intellectuals, and serves as an antidote for their anguish over the interruption they perceive destroying the continuity of the flow from the past to the present and future. The existential modes of time which direct their thoughts and actions are highly individualistic, and contain elements of theories of cyclical time, "lived myth," and durational time, which are combined in different configurations without their direct analysis or explanation.[17]

Revealing an awareness that it is the quality of time's universality, its duration, and its cyclical return that unite the generations of man by provoking the same reaction to similar circumstances through the centuries, Marcel states:

> . . . throughout the whole duration of Time, great tidal wives dredge up from the depths of the ages the same angers,

> the same sorrows, the same courage, the same eccentricities, across superimposed generations . . . like shadows on a succession of screens. . . .[18]

He also realizes the enduring qualities of inherited titles, which live on in time's duration despite the mortality of the human heirs, proving that

> . . . throughout all time, without interruptions, there would come an unbroken wave of Princesses de Guermantes -- or rather, replaced in her functions by a different woman in each generation, a single Princesse de Guermantes would live for a thousand years, ignorant of death, indifferent to everything . . . and from time to time and name, like a sea, would draw together again over those who sank out of sight its changeless and immemorial placidity.[19]

There is thus the possibility of an interconnection of past and present resulting from such theories of ongoing time, which provide some comfort to those suffering from discontinuity. For all of the intellectual characters, however, a concept of continuity of time, with the possibility of endless identification with figures from past centuries, contains some risk of the loss of self-identity from entrapment in the past. With the development of a heightened sense of durational time and subsequent loss of a sharp sense of human identity, Marcel and a few of Faulkner's intellectual protagonists realize that they may be imprisoned in a kind of ongoing lived myth.[20]

Marcel's first description of a sense of durational time, which occurs as he is falling asleep in the opening pages of Swann's Way, reveals the ease with which identities from the past merge with his sense of himself in the present in his drowsy mind:

> I had been thinking all the time, while I was asleep, of what I had just been reading, but my thoughts had run into a channel of their own, until I myself seemed actually to have become the subject of my book: a church, a quartet, the rivalry between Francois I and Charles V.[21]

Nevertheless, Marcel embraces the comforting aspect of his unbroken consciousness of durational time, as providing at least a minimal solution to the discontinuity from which he suffers. In the ongoing awareness of duration, Marcel realizes that despite mercurial changes in the revelation of his own identity over time, his aesthetic focus has remained relatively the same in the present as it was in the past. With almost childlike gravity he confides the discovery of continuing identity in his uninterrupted consciousness of himself from childhood to the present:

> . . . I remembered with pleasure, because it shewed [sic] me that I was already the same then as now and it was an indication of a fundamental trait of my nature . . . that even when I was at Combray, I used to hold attentively before my mind some object that had forced itself upon my attention -- a cloud, a triangle, a steeple, a flower, a pebble. . . .[22]

Marcel thus comes to believe that duration provides a partial solution to human perception of the multiple and fragmented facets of the self in time. He speaks of his goal of incorporating a sense of time in his writing, which will reflect the vague human consciousness of time's progress while clarifying the individual's awareness of what he can become in the flow of time. He remarks:

> . . . everyone realises that we occupy a steadily growing place in Time and this universality could not fail to rejoice me, since it was truth, the truth vaguely sensed by each, which I must seek to make clear to all. Not only is everyone conscious that we occupy a place in Time, but this place even the most simple-minded person measures approximately, just as he would measure the place we occupy in space. True, the measuring is often incorrect, but the fact that it was considered possible shows that age was thought of as something measurable.[23]

And at several points during The Past Recaptured he comments on the three-dimensional psychology that he feels he will need in writing his book to indicate his awareness of the multiplicity of personality and the complex interrelationship of people in time. He realizes

> . . . every individual -- and I was myself one of these individuals -- measured the duration of time for me by the revolution he had accomplished not only on his own axis, but about other individuals and notably by the successive positions he had occupied with relation to myself.
>
> And in truth, all these different planes on which Time, since I had come to grasp its meaning . . . was arranging the different periods of my life, thereby bringing me to realise that in a book which aimed to recount a human life one would have to use, in contrast to the "plane" psychology ordinarily employed, a sort of three-dimensional, "solid" psychology, added a fresh beauty to the resurrections of the past which my memory had evoked as I sat musing alone in the library. . . .[24]

Although he lacks Marcel's "three-dimensional psychology" with which to attack his temporal dilemma, in Absalom, Absalom! Quentin nevertheless recognizes that the problem is one related to his durational sense of time, which has assumed cyclical proportions. Yet, in verbalizing his concept of ongoing time and its ability to interconnect past and present, Quentin at first hopes that through cyclical time all sense of discontinuity will be eliminated. He muses:

> Maybe we [Shreve and I] are both Father, maybe nothing ever happens once and is finished. Maybe happen is never once but like ripples maybe on water after the pebble sinks, the ripples moving on, spreading, the pool attached by a narrow umbilical water-cord to the next pool which the first feeds, has fed, did feed . . . Yes, we are both Father, or maybe Father and I are both Shreve, maybe it took Father and me both to make Shreve or Shreve and me both to make Father or maybe Thomas Sutpen to make all of us.[25]

In his failure to identify successfully with Thomas Sutpen and the ruthlessness of Sutpen's goals, however, Quentin becomes unwilling to be pulled back into the past. He develops a sense of desperation when he discovers that Miss Rosa Coldfield and his father have selected him to become the modern embodiment of the myths of the pre-Civil War South, which they attempt to leave him as a legacy. For in the process of listening to the tales and becoming overwhelmed by the size

and scope of the almost legendary figures, Quentin feels that he ceases to exist in the present, that he is being drawn back into another life.

> . . . the mere names were interchangeable and almost myriad. His childhood was full of them; his very body was an empty hall echoing with sonorous defeated names; he was not a being, an entity, he was a commonwealth. He was a barracks filled with stubborn back- looking ghosts still recovering, even forty- three years afterward, from the fever which had cured the disease, waking from the fever without even knowing that it had been the fever itself which they had fought against and not the sickness, looking with stubborn recalcitrance backward beyond the fever and into the disease with actual regret, weak from the fever yet free of the disease and not even aware that the freedom was that of impotence.[26]

Realizing that the "fever" of the ghosts was caused by their adherence to the myth of the grandeur of the Old South, and that in freeing himself from belief in the myth, having no creed with which to replace it, he would be filled with a sense of impotence in regard to his future, Quentin dreads a complete loss of identity resulting in a life which becomes simply an exercise of duration-in-isolation.[27]

In addition, other Faulkner intellectuals, Charlotte Rittenmeyer and Harry Wilbourne in The Wild Palms fall into the trap of living a life of endless duration in their isolation in the cabin in the woods, before Wilbourne attempts to extricate himself by a return to an external time sense.

> . . . the days themselves were unchanged -- the same stationary recapitulation of golden interval between dawn and sunset, the long quiet identical days, the immaculate monogomous hierarchy of noons filled with the sun's hot honey, through which the waning year drifted in red-and-yellow retrograde of hardwood leaves sourceless and going nowhere.[28]

He explained to his friend McCord that he had had a sense of duration-in-isolation from the moment he had found the twelve hundred dollars enabling the two of them to leave New Orleans, until the moment in Chicago when Charlotte told him that she could remain employed. Her statement pertaining to the financial reality

of their situation shattered Harry's dream- like state. He described the state of suspended duration that he had experienced for eight months with the words:

> I was outside of time. I was still attached to it, supported by it in space as you have been ever since there was a not-you to become you, and will be until there is an end to the not-you by means of which alone you could once have been -- that's the immortality -- supported by it but that's all, just on it, non-conductive, like the sparrow insulated by its own hard non-conductive dead feet from the high-tension line, the current of time that runs through remembering, that exists only in relation to what little of reality (I have learned that too) we know: I was not. Then I am, and time begins, retroactive, is was and will be. Then I was and so I am not and so time never existed.[29]

In describing himself as "outside of time" like the sparrow whose "non-conductive dead feet" insulate it from the current of time, Wilbourne is aware that in that suspended state of duration-in-isolation which approaches transcendence, the act of remembering (which depends on both an internal and an external sense of time) becomes impossible. When his sense of normal external time resumes, Wilbourne describes the return of his awareness of identity by saying, "Then I am, and time begins retroactive." It is in duration-in-isolation that "time never existed."

Gail Hightower also expresses the problem of immobilization in time, which he believes has created a sense of his life as duration-in-isolation in Light in August, by saying:

> And I know that for fifty years I have not even been clay: I have been a single instant of darkness in which a horse galloped and a gun crashed. And if I am my dead grandfather on the instant of his death, then my wife, his grandson's wife . . . the debaucher and murderer of my grandson's wife, since I would neither let my grandson live or die. . . .[30]

Thus, through a reversal of roles found frequently in Faulkner's work, in which the child becomes the parent of the man, and through personification of himself as his own grandfather, Hightower finally realizes that he is the person responsible for

the debauching and death of his wife, a realization that ultimately helps him escape his state of durational suspension.

The Use of Juxtaposition of Past and Present As a Spatial Solution to Discontinuity For Marcel and Faulkner's Intellectuals

After exploring the possibilities of linkage through durational and cyclical time, Marcel and Faulkner's intellectuals use a second approach in their search for unity of time's fragmented discontinuities, which will be called "spatial" as opposed to temporal. In attempting to analyze the discontinuity of their lives, which they view as studies in fragmentation, these characters are involved in a determined and ongoing quest to have "one fragment . . . move into the life of another, to shatter the private prison and stand at least momentarily in relationship to itself."[31]

In his description of the process of spatialization of form in the twentieth century novel, Joseph Frank defines a modern literary technique which closely resembles the quality of arrested time that Marcel and Faulkner's intellectuals reveal in their efforts to recapture the past. When using a spatial perspective Frank indicates that

> the time-flow of the narrative is halted: attention is fixed on the interplay of relationships within the limited time-area. These relationships are juxtaposed independently of the progress of the narrative; and the full significance of the scene is given only by the reflexive relations among the units of meaning.[32]

Thus the aesthetic representation of this spatial approach to discontinuity is characterized by multiple forms of juxtaposition, which will be described in the following pages.

Marcel's Desire to Arrest Time

With his sense of the discontinuity of past and present, Marcel admits that there is a definite human tendency to arrest time in attempting to formulate a conception of it:

> It does us no good to know that the years go by, that youth gives way to old age, that the most stable thrones and fortunes crumble, that fame is ephemeral, our way of forming a conception -- and, so to speak, taking a photograph -- of this moving universe, hurried along by Time, seeks on the contrary to make it stand still.[33]

Yet he acknowledges the inadequacy of simply arresting time, which flows on despite all delaying efforts. Speaking of searching for the past, he says:

> It is a labour in vain to attempt to recapture it: all the efforts of our intellect must prove futile. 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) which we do not suspect. And as for that object, it depends upon chance whether we come upon it or not before we ourselves must die.[34]

The first such object concealing the past which Marcel chances upon as an adolescent is the famous morsel of a madeleine, which he tastes with his tea. He is both shocked and then stimulated by ensuing sensory experiences, which seem momentarily to have the capacity to unite past and present through a flash of involuntary memory. Although Marcel finds that the time-flow has halted, and his attention is totally focused on the interplay of juxtaposed relationships within the present and the time-area of his memory, yet, paradoxically, he experiences the sensation of transcending time.

To appreciate the dramatic, central position that the episode of the madeleine occupies in A la recherche du temps perdu, it is necessary to quote it at length:

> Many years had elapsed during which nothing of Combray . . . had any existence for me, when one day in winter, as I came home, my mother, seeing that I was cold, offered me some tea. . . . She sent out for one of those short, plump little cakes called "petites madeleines," which look as though they had been moulded in the fluted scallop of a pilgrim's shell. . . . I raised to my lips a spoonful of the tea in which I had soaked a morsel of the cake. No sooner had the warm liquid, and the crumbs with it, touched my palate than a shudder ran through my whole body, and I stopped, intent upon the extraordinary changes that were taking place. An exquisite pleasure had invaded my senses, but individual, detached, with no suggestion of its origin. . . . I had ceased now to feel mediocre, accidental, mortal. Whence could it have come to me, this all-powerful joy? I was conscious that it was connected with the taste of tea and cake, but that it infinitely transcended those savours, could not, indeed, be of the same nature as theirs. Whence did it come? What did it signify? How could I seize upon and define it?
>
> I drink a second mouthful, in which I find nothing more than in the first, a third, which gives me rather less than the second. It is time to stop; the potion is losing its magic. It is plain that the object of my quest, the truth, lies not in the cup but in myself. . . . And suddenly the memory returns. The taste was that of the little crumb of madeleine which on Sunday mornings at Combray . . . when I went to say good day to her in her bedroom, my aunt Léonie used to give me, dipping it first in her own cup of real or of lime-flower tea. . . .But when from a long-distant past nothing subsists, after the people are dead, after the things are broken and scattered, still, alone, more fragile, but with more vitality, more unsubstantial, more persistent, more faithful, the smell and taste of things remain poised a long time, like souls, ready to remind us, waiting and hoping for their moment, amid the ruins of all the rest; and bear unfaltering, in the tiny and almost impalpable drop of their essence, the vast structure of recollection.
>
> And once I had recognized the taste of the crumb of madeleine soaked in her decoction of lime-flowers which my aunt used to give me (although I did not yet know and must long postpone the discovery of why this memory made me so happy) . . . in that moment all the flowers in our garden and in M. Swann's park, and the water-lilies on the Vivonne and the good folk of the village and their little dwellings and the parish church and the whole of Combray and of its surroundings, taking their proper shape and growing solid, sprang into being, town and gardens alike, from my cup of tea.[35]

In the opening pages of A la recherche du temps perdu, Marcel had explained the intensity of feeling invested in his search for lost time in terms of

an ancient Celtic myth, which he has alluded to obliquely in the underlined portion of the madeleine passage quoted above. According to the myth, a human being's ability to recognize the voice of an imprisoned soul serves as a catalyst for the soul's release. This belief then receives confirmation in the madeleine episode. He states:

> I feel that there is much to be said for the Celtic belief that the souls of those whom we have lost are held captive in some inferior being, in an animal, in a plant, in some inanimate object, and so effectively lost to us until the day (which to many never comes) when we happen to pass by the tree or to obtain possession of the object which forms their prison. Then they start and tremble, they call us by our name, and as soon as we have recognized their voice the spell is broken. We have delivered them: they have overcome death and return to share our life.[36]

The taste of the madeleine has therefore functioned as the voice of a lost soul calling to Marcel from the past. The madeleine becomes Marcel's first metaphorical description of recapturing the essence of lost time -- a discovery that he will later put to use in his writing.

Having discovered through the episode of the petite madeleine and through subsequent but infrequent episodes of involuntary memory that the past is lodged deeply within us, needing only a sensation of taste, smell, or touch to revive it in its dazzling richness, Marcel remains unsure of the ultimate significance of such sensations of timelessness, still failing to understand that through them he is freed of the fear of death. The sense of having discovered a means of transcendence of time and hence of immortality is the cause of this incomprehensible happiness. It is many years later during the Guermantes' reception at the end of the novel that he realizes:

> . . . one can be confident in his joy; even though the mere taste of a madeleine does not seem to contain logical justification for this joy, it is easy to understand that the word

> "death" should have no meaning for him; situated outside the scope of time, what could he fear from the future?[37]

From the episode of the petite madeleine and other episodes of involuntary memory that occur through the years, Marcel is at first encouraged to rely on such flashes of recall in order to experience a sudden unity in time. However, with longer and longer intervals between such experiences, driven by the desire to imitate the process of juxtaposition of past and present that occurs in involuntary memory, he attempts to devise various physical and mental techniques of juxtaposition in order to unify his sense of time.

Beginning with the technique of displacement of space through motion, and culminating in the discovery of a metaphorical use of juxtaposed images, Marcel experiments with methods to achieve and explain the sensation of transcendence which he had unwittingly stumbled upon in tasting the petite madeleine. In his recounting of the experiences that both comprise his life and the text of A la recherche du temps perdu, therefore, the events and images of the work frequently seem to appear to be "juxtaposed in space" as well as "unrolling in time," with a sense of chronology that is emotionally directed.[38]

Thus, by the end of the Guermantes' reception, armed with a sense of the possibilities of spatial juxtaposition, which acts as a new psychological and literary tool when combined with psychological and temporal insight, Marcel hopes to uncover the hidden essences of life as well as to measure and analyze man's "steadily growing place in Time." Based on his discovery of the possibilities of juxtaposition from the madeleine episode, as A la recherche du temps perdu unrolls chronologically, Marcel attempts to deal with the temporal and physical isolation separating all entities from one another with a series of innovative techniques.

Marcel's Technique of Juxtaposition by Displacement of Space through Movement: Its Success and Shortcomings

The first technique Marcel devises is the displacement of space by physical movement. Juxtapositions can be perceived in the differing perspectives presented by any sort of travel, from a short walk in the Bois de Boulogne, to carriage or automobile excursions in France or Italy. Marcel found that as he went from one place to another, intent upon a unifying activity, he seemed to transmit to the very places themselves a sense of drawing together, eliminating the distances that separated them.[39] The ultimate intention of this shifting movement is to bring together fragmentary and opposite objects so that they form a totality, a continuity "through the coincidence of contraries."

Marcel attempts to achieve unification not through a process of simplification, but rather through a proliferation of all of the characteristics of the opposing objects. He seems to feel that he can only arrive at an explanation of the essence of the object by an exhaustive description of the variety of detail which it encompasses, which both serves as a source of identification and a source of opposition with its counterpart.[40]

A well-known example of the technique of displacement of space through movement resulting in unification of different perspectives, is found in the incident of the spires of Martinville. This episode primarily describes a movement of conjunction -- on the part of the different components of the landscape towards one another, as well as on the part of Marcel towards the landscape.[41] The Martinville episode reveals the Proustian concept of the unification of forms previously scattered in space:

> At a bend in the road I experienced, suddenly, that special pleasure, which bore no resemblance to any other, when I caught sight of the twin steeples of Martinville . . . while the movement of the carriage and the windings of the road seemed

> to keep them continually changing their position; and then of a third steeple, that of Vieuxvicq, which, although separated from them by a hill and a valley, and rising from rather higher ground in the distance, appeared none the less to be standing by their side.[42]

Marcel's conclusion is that each place and each being offers a variety of possible positions and perspectives, and these can best be perceived through both physical and mental sinuosity of movement, which makes it possible to comprehend the various aspects. Each contemplated object provides a multiplicity of perspectives which ultimately affect space.

Employing displacement of space through movement, Marcel hoped that he had discovered a technique which would dissolve the isolation which he perceived surrounding all individuals, objects, and moments of his universe, and by revealing a series of juxtaposed views, would uncover the common essence unifying them. However, in the Martinville episode he realizes that

> In ascertaining and noting the shape of their spires, the changes of aspect, the sunny warmth of their surfaces, I felt that I was not penetrating to the full depth of my impression, that something more lay behind that mobility, that luminosity, something which they seemed at once to contain and to conceal.[43]

And then, for the first time in his life, Marcel makes a discovery which is quickly forgotten in the onrush of events in his life: he associates the juxtaposition of different views with the need to describe them on paper to attempt to arrest them and capture their essence. He relates:

> . . . presently their [the steeples'] outlines and their sunlit surface, as though they had been a sort of rind, were stripped apart; a little of what they had concealed became apparent; an idea come into my mind which had not existed for me a moment earlier, framed itself in words in my head; and the pleasure with which the first sight of them, just now, had filled me was so much enhanced that, overpowered by a sort of intoxication, I could no longer think of anything but them . . . . Without admitting to myself that what lay buried within the steeples of

> Martinville must be something analogous to a charming phrase, since it was in the form of words which gave me pleasure that it had appeared to me, I borrowed a pencil and some paper . . . and composed . . . the following little fragment. . . .[44]

After quoting his adolescent effort to describe the steeples, which he associates with "three maidens in a legend . . . timidly seeking their way, and . . . drawing closer to one another, slipping one behind the other,"[45] Marcel reveals his sense of accomplishment:

> I never thought again of this page, but at the moment when . . . I had finished writing it, I found such a sense of happiness, felt that it had so entirely relieved my mind of the obsession of the steeples, and of the mystery which they concealed, that, as though I myself were a hen and had just laid an egg, I began to sing at the top of my voice.[46]

In the progression of A la recherche du temps perdu, this early episode of the spires of Martinville and Marcel's reaction to them becomes buried in oblivion, and as he continues through life, attempting to penetrate the isolation existing between all people and objects, using the technique of displacement of space through movement and observing the myriad of aspects of each entity from differing angles, he finds that in the very act of trying to bring things together, in the ensuing proliferation of aspects and appearances, the result is frequently confusion and division rather than unification.

One of Marcel's major goals in the novel, for example, is to achieve a unified perspective of the two paths, the Meseglises and the Guermantes Ways which seem to be opposed and mutually exclusive in his childish imagination. He describes the reason for this separation:

> . . . there were, in the environs of Combray, two "ways" which we used to take for our walks, and so diametrically opposed that we would actually leave the house by a different door, according to the way we had chosen: the way towards Meseglise-la-Vineuse, which we called also "Swann's way,"

> because, to get there, one had to pass along the boundary of M. Swann's estate, and the "Guermantes way." . . .[D]uring the whole of my boyhood, if Méséglise was to me something as inaccessible as the horizon, which remained hidden from sight, however far one went . . . Guermantes, on the other hand, meant no more than the ultimate goal, ideal rather than real, of the "Guermantes way," a sort of abstract geographical term like the North Pole or the Equator. And so to "take the Guermantes way" in order to get to Méséglise, or vice versa, would have seemed to me as nonsensical a proceeding as to turn to the east in order to reach the west.[47]

With this physical separation of the two paths, Marcel describes the mental barriers which he placed between them:

> . . . The habit we had of never going both ways on the same day, or in the course of the same walk, but the "Méséglise way" one time and the "Guermantes way" another, shut them up, so to speak, far apart and unaware of each other's existence, in the sealed vessels -- between which there could be no communication -- of separate afternoons.[48]

And he stresses the symbolic importance which they play in his life over time:

> . . . it is pre-eminently as the deepest layer of my mental soil, as firm sites on which I still may build, that I regard the Méséglise and Guermantes "ways." It is because I used to think of certain things, of certain people, while I was roaming along them, that the things, the people which they taught me to know, and these alone, I still take seriously, still give me joy. . . . The "Méséglise way" with its lilacs, its hawthorns, its cornflowers, its poppies, its apple-trees, the "Guermantes way" with its river full of tadpoles, it water-lilies, and its buttercups have constituted for me for all time the picture of the land in which I fain would pass my life. . . .[49]

The very act of bringing entities and aspects together causing a proliferation of appearances and perspectives, however, frequently results in confusion and division, rather than unification. In a desire to enumerate all of the various views, impressions, sensations (and their opposites) of which he becomes conscious while attempting to employ the technique of sinuous displacement,

Marcel develops an approach which becomes a rambling stream of consciousness leading to no discoveries of truth and few hidden essences.

The following paragraph reveals such a proliferation of appearances that can result from using the displacement of space through movement as a technique of unification. Marcel's response is confusion as he attempts to sort out the symbolic significance which such memories of emotional ambivalence hold for him:

> All day long, during these walks, I had been able to muse upon the pleasure that there would be in the friendship of the Duchesse de Guermantes, in fishing for trout, in drifting by myself in a boat on the Vivonne; and, greedy for happiness, I asked nothing more from life, in such moments, than that it should consist always of a series of joyous afternoons. But when, on our way home, I had caught sight of a farm, on the left of the road, at some distance from two other farms which were themselves close together, and from which, to return to Combray, we need only turn down an avenue of oaks, bordered on one side by a series of orchard-closes, each one planted at regular intervals with apple-trees which cast upon the ground, when they were lighted by the setting sun, the Japanese stencil of their shadows; then, sharply, my heart would begin to beat, I would know that in half an hour we should be at home, and that there, as was the rule on days when we had taken the "Guermantes way" and dinner was, in consequence, served later than usual, I should be sent to bed as soon as I had swallowed my soup, so that my mother, kept at table, just as though there had been company to dinner, would not come upstairs to say good night to me in bed. The zone of melancholy which I then entered was totally distinct from that other zone, in which I had been bounding for joy a moment earlier, just as sometimes in the sky a band of pink is separated, as though by a line invisibly ruled, from a band of green or black. You may see a bird flying across the pink; it draws near the borderline, touches it, enters and is lost upon the black. The longings by which I had just now been absorbed, to go to Guermantes, to travel, to live a life of happiness -- I was now so remote from them that their fulfillment would have afforded me no pleasure. . . . And so it was from the "Guermantes way" that I learned to distinguish between these states which reigned alternately in my mind, . . . going so far as to divide every day between them, each one returning to dispossess the other with the regularity of a fever and ague: contiguous, and yet so foreign to one another, so devoid of means of communication, that I could no longer understand, or even picture to myself, in one state what I had desired or dreaded or even done in the other.[50]

As his mind becomes bewildered by the innumerable aspects and incarnations of the very tools with which it sought to create a comprehensive view of the symbolic significance of the "Guermantes way," the experience of movement as a unifying force ultimately meets with defeat.

Marcel thus expresses his ultimate sense of frustration and failure in his memories of the two ways, which he had at first believed led him to discoveries of symbolic beauty and truth from his past. In his associations of important memories with the two paths, he finds that he projects his desire to experience the past into the people whom he associates with the Guermantes and Méséglise "ways," feigning the desire to rekindle the same emotion in the present, when in fact, what he is really seeking is a means of discovering in the present the phenomenon he had experienced along these two paths: the ability to "feel separate things at the same time" -- to achieve a juxtaposition or confluence of opposing sensations. He confesses:

> No doubt, by virtue of having permanently and indissolubly combined in me groups of different impressions, for no reason save that they had made me feel several separate things at the same time, the Méséglise and Guermantes "ways" left me exposed, in later life, to much disillusionment, and even to many mistakes. For often I have wished to see a person again without realizing that it was simply because that person recalled to me a hedge of hawthorns in blossom; and I have been led to believe, and to make someone else believe in an aftermath of affection, by what was no more than an inclination to travel.[51]

And then, years after Marcel has relinquished the hope of unifying disparate objects and entities by a process of displacement of space through movement, his old friend and first romantic love, Gilberte Swann, points out to him the physical possibility of uniting the different paths. While visiting her on the Swanns' estate of Tasonville, Marcel recounts:

> I remember that, in the course of our conversations while we took these walks, she said things which often surprised me greatly. The first was: "If you were not too hungry and if it was not so late, by taking this road to the left and then turning to the right, in less than a quarter of an hour we should be at Guermantes."[52]

Although Gilberte simply describes the physical linkage that can occur between the two paths by cutting back and forth between them, for Marcel her statements immediately become symbolic of a deeper significance. He interprets:

> It was as though she had said: "Turn to the left, then the first turning on the right and you will touch the intangible, you will reach the inaccessibly remote tracts of which we never upon earth know anything but the direction, but . . . the "way."[53]

From the realization that Gilberte's directions seem somehow to lead towards a sense of the ineffable -- which is what he has been seeking in life -- Marcel is amazed to hear her suggest,

> "If you like, we might go out one afternoon, and then we can go to Guermantes, taking the road by Méséglise, it is the nicest walk," a sentence which upset all . . . [his] childish ideas by informing . . . [him] that the two "ways" were not irreconcilable as . . . [he] had supposed.[54]

The conversation at Tasonville provides Marcel's first inkling that the two ways might ultimately merge, a perception that ultimately occurs for him at the end of the novel during the Guermantes' reception when he meets Gilberte's daughter, Mlle. de Saint-Loup. Progressing beyond a technique of displacement of space through movement, Marcel realizes that in the appearance of Mlle. de Saint-Loup he has found both a physical and a metaphorical unifying link, not only for the memories and diverse impressions of the Méséglise and Guermantes "ways," but for the sense of discontinuity that divided past from present. He is struck by the unification of perspectives which she symbolizes, and asks:

> . . . does she not resemble the star-like crossroads in a forest where paths leading from the most different points converge, also for our life? Many were the paths of my life which met Mlle. de Saint-Loup and radiated outward from her. First of all, there came to an end in her the two principal "ways" where I had taken so many walks and dreamed so many dreams -- through her father, Robert de Saint-Loup, the Guermantes way: through Gilberte, her mother, the Méséglise way, which was Swann's way.[55]

Thus Mlle. de Saint-Loup, in her youth and beauty, is able to serve as the missing metaphorical link in Marcel's life -- through her mother, Gilberte Swann, and her father, a member of the Guermantes clan -- symbolically unifying the Méséglise and Guermantes "ways." In addition, Marcel describes her as the embodiment of time and his own youth, thereby discovering in her form a metaphorical connection between past and present defying all sense of discontinuity. He salutes her image as though it is a work of art, and says:

> Time, colourless and impalpable, had, in order that I might . . . see and touch it, physically embodied itself in her and had moulded her like a work of art . . . Laughing, fashioned of the very years I had lost, she seemed to me like my own youth.
>
> And . . . this idea of time had a final value for me; it was like a goad, reminding me that it was time to begin if I wished to achieve what I had occasionally in the course of my life sensed in brief flashes . . . which had encouraged me to regard life as worth living. How much more so it appeared to me now that I felt it possible to shed light on this life which we live in darkness and to bring back to its former true character this life which we distort unceasingly -- in short, extract the real essence of life in a book.[56]

Thus Mlle. de Saint-Loup acts both as a muse and an inspirational goad for the writing which Marcel is about to begin.

Marcel's Discovery of a Metaphorical Technique To Reveal Juxtaposition

As a mirror image of the desire to juxtapose the past with the present, the creation of metaphorical linkage to unite disparate entities is the ultimate technique Marcel develops in his portrayal of reality. He has learned from the madeleine experience that reality exists in the relation established between a moment of the past and a moment of the present through the discovery of a shared sensation; and in addition, from the Martinville episode he realizes that reality exists in the relationship between two sensations, objects, or memories revealing a common denominator or essence, which may be expressed metaphorically in literature.

It is only in retrospect, however, that Marcel is able to conjure up the experience of Martinville and the happiness he felt as he created a metaphorical description of his impression of the three steeples. The Martinville episode had remained buried in his memory, and the truth it revealed is only rediscovered twenty-five or thirty years later when precipitated by the appearance of Mlle. de Saint-Loup.

Thus, Marcel has finally progressed to the realization that

> What we call reality is a certain relationship between . . . sensations and the memories which surround us at the same time (a relationship that is destroyed by a bare cinematographic presentation, which gets further away from the truth the more closely it claims to adhere to it) the only true relationship, which the writer must recapture so that he may forever link together in his phrase its two distinct elements. One may list in an interminable description the objects that figured in the place described, but truth will begin only when the writer takes two different objects, establishes their relationship -- and . . . makes their essential nature stand out clearly by joining them in a metaphor, in order to remove them from the contingencies of time, and links them together with the indescribable bond of an alliance of words.[57]

And he realizes that the discovery of such metaphorical links, which he calls "spiritual equivalents of reality," are simply the mysterious inner beings of inanimate objects that have so tantalized and mystified him from an early age, which he will endeavor to describe in his own writing. His discovery is all-encompassing:

> . . . whether objective impressions such as I had received from the sight of the spires of Martinville, or subjective memories like . . . the taste of the madeleine, I must try to interpret the sensations as the indications of corresponding laws and ideas; I must try to think, that is to say, bring out of the obscurity what I had felt, and convert it into a spiritual equivalent. Now this method, which seemed to me the only one, what was it other than to create a work of art?[58]

In order to justify his choice of using the abstract technique of juxtaposition in analyzing people and experiences in life, Marcel explains that he feels that descriptions which express immediately visible outward appearances lack the inner verisimilitude with reality that his own metaphorical pictures possess. He comments:

> The reality to be expressed, I now understood was to be found, not in the outward appearance of the subject, but in the extent to which this impression had penetrated to a depth where that appearance was of little importance, as was symbolised by that sound of a spoon against a plate, that starchy stiffness of a napkin, both of . . . priceless value for my spiritual renewal. . . .[59]

Thus, in his desire to explain the beauty of something "through something else," which becomes its "spiritual equivalent," Marcel devises a complex metaphorical technique of spatial juxtaposition of two disparate entities.

To emphasize the centrality of this inner approach to truth not only in his own writing, but in that of others, Marcel declares a metaphorical, poetic perspective of literature to be the only "realism," as opposed to the literary school of that name. He comments:

> The [metaphorical] relationship may be uninteresting, the objects mediocre and the style bad, but without that relationship there is nothing. The literature that is satisfied merely to "describe things," to furnish a miserable listing of their lines and surfaces, is, notwithstanding its pretensions to realism, the farthest removed from reality. . . .[60]

He then progresses automatically and effortlessly from a state of feeling or poetic vision of the object, person, or event into intellectual analysis.[61]

In looking to the past for literary precedents with which to reenforce himself, Marcel names Gérard de Nerval and Baudelaire, who both use a similar method of "transferred sensation," explaining the characteristics of one object metaphorically through another. Of Baudelaire Marcel says:

> Here is the poet himself who, with more variety and more indolence, purposely seeks in the odour of a woman's hair or her breast, for example, inspiring resemblances which shall evoke for him
>
> L'azur du ciel immense et rond
>
> and
>
> Un port rempli de flammes et de mâts.[62]

By refusing to deal with simple surface impressions, and by struggling to reach a more profound awareness of the essence of an impression, Marcel discovers that metaphorical descriptions can link his visual perceptions with those of related people, objects, and events in his memory and imagination. It is then, in drawing interpretive parallels, that his analysis comes into play in the effort to classify, interpret, and explain.

Thus, Marcel's metaphorical theory in which one object or entity may be imaginatively placed beside another when they share a common essence, is simply the literary result and extension of his earlier discovery that a moment of the past may be juxtaposed with that of the present when they are united by a common sensation through involuntary memory.

Examples of Marcel's evolution of a metaphorical method date from his childhood, when he uses a simple, youthful form of linking images which seem to share a common essence. When Marcel envisions his Aunt Léonie's sitting room in Combray, he associates it with the smell of soot, which reminds him of a great open, country hearth or a large, covered mantel in an old castle into which he could retreat from the harshness of the weather outside. He recounts:

> . . . before I went in to wish my aunt good day I would be kept waiting a little time in the outer room, where the sun, a wintry sun still, had crept in to warm itself before the fire, lighted already between its two brick sides and plastering all the room and everything in it with a smell of soot, making the room like one of those great open hearths which one finds in the country, or one of the canopied mantelpieces in old castles under which one sits hoping that in the world outside it is raining or snowing, hoping almost for a catastrophic deluge to add the romance of shelter and security to the comfort of a snug retreat. . . .[63]

Then he goes on to associate the combined fragrances of the cupboard, the chest-of-drawers, the patterned wallpaper, and the flowered quilt -- all in the process of being toasted by the fire -- with the appetizing smell of a pie whose ingredients have been puffed, glazed, fluted, and swelled into a country cake or "immense puff-pastry" by the morning's wintry freshness.

> . . . the fire, baking like a pie the appetising smells with which the air of the room was thickly clotted, which the dewey and sunny freshners of the morning had already "raised" and started to "set," puffed them and glazed them and fluted them and swelled them into an invisible though not impalpable country cake, an immense puff-pastry, in which, barely waiting to savour the crustier, more delicate, more respectable, but also drier smells of the cupboard, the chest-of- drawers, and the patterned wall-paper I always returned with an unconfessed gluttony to bury myself in the nondescript, resinous, dull, indigestible, and fruity smell of the flowered quilt.[64]

In attempting to explain the essence of a setting metaphorically in terms of other entities, Marcel focuses first on the sooty smell, which becomes a

common denominator conjuring up the country hearth and the castle mantel in his imagination. The hearth and mantel are then placed in juxtaposition with the fireplace in his aunt's antechamber. Subsequently, the crusty and fruity smell of the furniture, wallpaper, and quilt evoke the mental image of a pie, cake, or puff-pastry, with the fragrance of baking acting as the metaphorical link. Through the exploration of warmth and fragrance, Marcel has attempted to penetrate the inner essence of comfort and charm that his Aunt Léonie's sitting room holds in his memory.

As an adult listening to Vinteuil's septet being played in Mme. Verdurin's drawingroom, Marcel employs the same poetic metaphorical style, expressing more complex ideas. He attempts to interpret and describe the music in terms of the vibrant colors of sunlight scattering through a prism, which evokes the richness and exoticism of the jewels described in the Arabian Nights, before shifting his focus to the grandeur of the frescoes on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

> A page of symphonic music by Vinteuil, familiar already on the piano, when one heard it rendered by an orchestra, like a ray of summer sunlight which the prism of the window disintegrates before it enters a dark dining-room, revealed like an unsuspected, myriad-hued treasure all the jewels of the Arabian Nights . . . The joy that such chords had aroused in . . . [Vinteuil], the increase of strength that it had given him wherewith to discover others led the listener on also from one discovery to another, or rather it was the composer himself who guided him, deriving from the colours that he had invented a wild joy which they seemed to evoke, enraptured, quivering, as though from the shock of an electric spark, when the sublime came spontaneously to life at the clang of the brass, panting, drunken, maddened, dizzy, while he painted his great musical fresco, like Michelangelo strapped to his scaffold and dashing, from his supine position, tumultuous brush-strokes upon the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.[65]

From describing the joy of the sound of such chords in terms of the dancing sunlight with its rainbow prism, Marcel progresses to a description of the

ecstasy produced through the sense of the music's touch. By metaphorically associating Vinteuil's creation with that of Michelangelo, he conjures up the vision of God's hand touching that of Adam on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel as a parallel moment when "the sublime came spontaneously to life." Through a progression of metaphorical allusions the orchestral sounds are thus translated into the visual perception of vibrant color and the tactile sensation of a life-giving caress.

As the final example of Marcel's use of metaphor, it is necessary to include the famous example of the hawthorn blossoms and the revelation of varying emotions that they communicate over time. From his earliest memories of Combray, Marcel focuses on the hawthorn, whether he sees the blossoms arranged on the altar of the cathedral, or whether he discovers them blooming in profusion on the Méséglise Way. In A la recherche du temps perdu the hawthorn becomes a sort of leitmotif which appears throughout the novel, binding together Marcel's disparate impressions. In his early impressions he describes them in religious terms:

> I found the whole path throbbing with the fragrance of hawthorn-blossom. The hedge resembled a series of chapels, whose walls were no longer visible under the mountains of flowers that were heaped upon their altars; . . . the scent that swept out over me from them was as rich, and as circumscribed in its range, as though I had been standing before the Lady-altar, and the flowers, themselves adorned also, held out each its little bunch of glittering stamens with an air of inattention. . . here spread out into pools of fleshy white. . . .[66]

And then he states his familiar lament over the inability to penetrate the secret essence which the flowers seem to guard within themselves:

> . . . it was in vain that I lingered before the hawthorns, to breathe in, to marshall before my mind (which knew not what to make of it), to lose in order to rediscover their invisible and unchanging odour, to absorb myself in the rhythm which

> disposed their invisible and unchanging odour, to absorb myself in the light-heartedness of youth, and at intervals as unexpected as certain intervals of music; they offered me an indefinite continuation of the same charm, in an inexhaustible profusion, but without letting me delve into it any more deeply, like those melodies which one can play over a hundred times in succession without coming any nearer to their secret.[67]

Marcel then progresses from his early associations of the white hawthorn with a childhood vision of purity to associate them with his desire for Gilberte Swann, whom he first glimpsed as a child among a hybrid variety of pink blossoms. He remembers:

> Suddenly I stood still, unable to move, as happens when something appears that . . . involves a deeper kind of perception and takes possession of the whole of our being. A little girl, with fair, reddish hair, who appeared to be returning from a walk, and held a trowel in her hand, was looking at us, raising toward us a face powdered with pinkish freckles. . . . and her hand, at the same time, sketched in the air an indelicate gesture, for which, when it was addressed in public to a person whom one did not know, the little dictionary of manners which I carried in my mind supplied only one meaning, namely, a deliberate insult. . . . And so was wafted to my ears the name of Gilberte . . . unfolding through the arch of the pink hawthorn . . . the quintessence of their familiarity . . . with her, and with all that unknown world of her existence, into which I should never penetrate.[68]

Later, as an adult when he is a guest at Tasonville long after Gilberte has married his friend, Robert de Saint-Loup, Marcel finds, through a conversation with her, that his impression of her early disdain has been quite mistaken. At this point, the latent sexuality which had been hidden in the image of the pink hawthorns bursts forth, and he realizes that this aspect of the flowers is the essence that he had been aware of subconsciously from the beginning, without consciously making the connection of sexuality and promiscuity in his linkage of Gilberte with the blossoms. Marcel recounts his discovery:

> I said to her: "You were speaking the other day of the little footpath, how I loved you then!" she replied: "Why didn't you

> tell me? I had no idea of it. I was in love with you. Indeed, I flung myself twice at your head." "When?" "The first time at Tasonville, you were taking a walk with your family, I was on my way home, I had never seen such a dear little boy. I was in the habit," she went on with a vague air of modesty, "of going out to play with little boys I knew in the ruins of the keep of Roussainville . . . I can't tell you how I longed for you to come there too, I remember that quite well that, as I had only a moment in which to make you understand what I wanted . . . I signalled to you so vulgarly that I am ashamed of it to this day. But you stared at me so crossly that I saw that you didn't want it."[69]

Thus Marcel realizes, with Gilberte's prompting and in refocusing on his impression of so many years ago, that he had been mistaken in his conclusion of her coldness, and "had ruined everything by . . . [his] clumsiness."[70]

It is only in one of his final encounters with Gilberte at the Guermantes' reception, that Marcel perceives her as a stout, older woman, finally divorced completely from the earlier imagery with which he has associated her. He realizes that because of his love of the mystery that had pervaded the image of Gilberte, he had been able to imbue her with romance and project his own predilection for Romanesque architecture and hawthorn blossoms upon his concept of her.

> Thus it was that the shadow of Gilberte lay, not only before a church in the Ile de France where I had pictured her to myself, but also on the path of a park along the Méséglise way . . . [But] Gilberte was now to me only Mme. de Saint-Loup . . . All the memories that made up the earliest Mlle. Swann were, in fact, eliminated from the Gilberte of the present moment, held very far away by the magnetic forces of another universe . . . saturated with the fragrance of hawthorn blossoms.[71]

Thus, through the coming of self-knowledge, Marcel realizes that the hawthorns are another metaphor produced from his facile imagination and linked to the young girl he had once loved, reflecting his emotions and ideals rather than

hers. In the progressive feelings he associates with the hawthorns, they as much as any other image, act as a source of unification for the novel as a whole.

Marcel's Failure to Find a Spatial Solution to Discontinuity Through Juxtaposition Alone

Georges Poulet describes Marcel's various methods of juxtaposition as the act of "giving up the idea of a vertical representation of the real," in order to

> distribut[e] the different elements of the real on a horizontal plane; that is, on a surface where, the ones situated beside and not above the others, they present themselves isolated, distinct, and nonetheless simultaneously to the gaze.[72]

An analysis of this technique reveals that it is the opposite of a technique involving motion. It is simply an act of assembling fixed images, with the frequent displacement of remembered images from the past, which are placed in instantaneous juxtaposition with images of the present. The result of the juxtaposition is not unification or multiplication of aspects, but simply a static situation which eliminates duration, in which images are isolated and placed in linear relief to create an aura of wholeness, with no literary explanation to unite the disparate traits. Before the movement initiated by involuntary memory, Marcel's vision of the world seemed to be composed of a few scattered places, and between them there seemed to be almost an "absence of space," a dimension that was closed and impenetrable.[73]

Although the process of involuntary memory provides a means of restoration for lost places as well as lost moments, these images of instants and places refound tend to remain inviolate, unable to be incorporated either into external space or into duration. Regained moments and regained places must, it seems, inevitably remain isolated entities, insular and unincorporated.

Thus the miracle of involuntary memory seems only able to evoke isolated images without solving the problem of reconquering lost time and space. Despite Marcel's assertion of the dual goal of recapturing the time and space that he feels he has lost, neither time nor space is completely regained until the end of A la recherche du temps perdu. What is actually regained is not time itself, but only a few moments of time. Affective memory simply does not have the power to extend into duration for a great distance beyond the lived moment. The mind is not able to penetrate into all of the closed pockets of past moments, which stretch out through the long path of past existence like a strand of beads shining in the void of oblivion.[74]

Thus in its composition of distinct episodes constructed on the principles of "intermittence and occlusion," from one perspective, the novel seems to relinquish its claim to have temporal continuity. Nevertheless, the episodes exist side by side in harmony, each adding a distinct element to the whole. Georges Poulet describes the Proustian episodes as vignettes which are

> intact, always similar to themselves, always enclosed, and as if localized in the interior of their frameworks, . . . [they] present themselves in an order which is not temporal, since it is anachronistic, but which cannot be other than spatial, since, like an array of jars of jam in the cupboards of our childhood, it arranges a series of closed vases in the caverns of the mind.[75]

In searching through the distances of time past, and discovering memories that are separated from each other by the emptiness of oblivion -- Marcel has thus established a spatial perspective, combined with three-dimensional psychology, which ultimately transforms negative time, or non-being, into a dimension.[76] He promises:

> This dimension of Time . . . I would try to make continually perceptible in a transcription of human life necessarily very different from that conveyed by our deceptive senses.[77]

Thus, Proustian time is slowly constructed into a tangible entity, which is created of relations of fragmentary and isolated moments, filling the depth of temporal space with their luminous quality. Time assumes a form which is more concrete than simply vacant; it is a diffuse form composed of all the moments the mind remembers. The problem comes in trying to unify the collection of dissimilar moments, which contain modes of feeling which are mutually exclusive.

At first, Marcel's view of time seems, therefore, fundamentally impressionistic -- because to remember one moment does not necessarily mean the possibility of regaining it at another time when it may perhaps be permanently lost and forgotten.[78] It is only at the end of the novel that one realizes that the discontinuous multiplicity of episodes which have been presented as a series of isolated and juxtaposed pictures, resemble a Cubist as well as an Impressionist technique, and can compose themselves into a psychological reality of images relating coherently to each other.[79] The final coherence is achieved through Marcel's consciousness of time's flow and integral sense of artistic identity that embrace all of the disparities and juxtapositions. It is only after the network of interwoven references has been made, therefore, that the novel can conclude by proving its internal unity.

A la recherche du temps perdu ultimately presents a panoramic vision of space set free and transcended when viewed through the perspective of time.[80] And time is finally omnipotent in its capacity to assemble and coalesce the opposed fragments of space, divesting them of their episodic and momentary nature. Marcel concludes The Past Recaptured with the words:

> ...If, at least, there were granted me time enough to complete my work, I would not fail to stamp it with the seal of that Time the understanding of which was this day so forcibly impressing itself upon me, and I would therein describe men -- as occupying in Time a place far more considerable that the so restricted one allotted them in space, a place, on the contrary, extending boundlessly since, giant-like, reaching far

> back into the years, they touch simultaneously epochs of their lives -- with countless intervening days between -- so widely separated from one another in Time.[81]

And then, the final question. With time setting space free from its fragmented nature, what power can achieve the same goal for time? Can time be unified by a supra-temporal action which would permit the possibility of viewing all of its successive aspects simultaneously?

The circular answer has already come in the form of Proustian memory, in the belief that the metamorphic action of memory can ultimately conquer time. Marcel reasons that the mind has become capable of discovering hidden identities through metaphor in the regained moments of its existence. The human mind can thus discover its own essence, which is a common element in each moment that is remembered. Through art the mind is then able to apply its timeless essence to all of existence, and through metaphor the mind can view the temporal horizon as it stretches away, creating a vision of metaphoric memory, which is able to complete the extension of time. Thus it is that the Méséglise and Guermantes "ways" along with all of the episodes of Marcel's life have come together.

Arrested Time in the Lives of Faulkner's Intellectuals

In comparison with Marcel's analytical efforts to comprehend emotional and sensuous impressions, which result in a series of psychological and literary juxtapositions, Faulkner's intellectuals almost all refuse to analyze the events and choices leading to immobility, discontinuity, and fragmentation of the self. In Absalom, Absalom! Quentin is the lone intellectual protagonist who attempts to analyze the past in an effort to discover the source of his discontinuity; and in The Sound and the Fury we learn that his effort was a failure.

As in the case of Marcel's history, however, the events in the lives of Faulkner's intellectual figures are similarly recounted as though they are "juxtaposed in space" as well as "unrolling in time,"[82] with a chronology which is individualistically and emotionally directed. Revealing a variation of "spatial" form created of non-sequential and juxtaposed elements, the histories of these characters are related in terms of their desire to halt the time-flow of the narrative. With attention totally focused on the interplay of relationships within the confines of certain time-areas, the juxtaposition of past and present events in their perception effectively isolates the intellectual characters from the ongoing action of the narrative.[83] The intensity of their outlooks is revealed in the reflexive interaction among the elements of the obsessions which absorb them; but the distortions of their perspectives are best understood when analyzed in comparison with the perspectives of more integral characters in Faulkner's work.

Rather than developing an analytical ability akin to Marcel's three-dimensional psychology in order to reveal the significance of different time planes in the arrangement of different periods of human life, Faulkner's intellectuals all seem to refuse to acknowledge the passage of time. They remain immobilized in a static, abstract outlook, reflecting only the intensity of their emotional impasse. Instead of developing Marcel's successful combination of spatial juxtaposition and psychological insight, these intellectual protagonists focus only on the juxtaposition of elements of their complexes, which imprison them in aberrations far removed from the time-flow of the narrative and from life itself.

Despite the difference in the outcome of their lives, however, there is a remarkable similarity between Marcel's technique of juxtaposition of the planes of time and the tendency of Faulkner's intellectual characters to

> dissociate the planes of an object [or event] . . . and to rearrange them in a picture, so organized that they will give a truer emotional or structural sense than the original "appearance."[84]

Both Marcel and Faulkner's intellectuals manifest an aesthetic view of life generally associated with Cubism; however, the difference in their final techniques is absolute. While Marcel gives a complete cubistic three-dimensional vision of an event or object, revealing a synthesis of views from all sides as well as from within -- which adds a fourth dimension -- Faulkner's intellectuals reveal only one plane of vision, which is both narrow and incomplete.[85] What they perceive, rather than the whole person, emotion, or event, is simply a portion of each, interpreted in an individualistic and temporally dislocated manner.

Attempting to use the process of juxtaposition in a manner paralleling Marcel's, Faulkner's intellectuals arrest images from the present, and place them in instantaneous conjunction with arrested images from the past in the hope of transcending time. But without Marcel's three-dimensional psychology and metaphoric action of memory, the result is a static perspective of life in which the images seem isolated in space, incapacitating the individual who attempts to use them as the basis of his view of reality.

In The Sound and the Fury, Quentin speaks of the arrested moment which exists into eternity as that which he seeks with Caddy.

> That's it if people could only change one another forever that way merge like a flame swirling up for an instant then blown cleanly out along the cool eternal dark. . . .[86]

Quentin's goal is the search for deliverance from the prison of selfhood in order to attain union with Caddy, thereby achieving transcendence of all time.

Perhaps Faulkner's most celebrated example of coexistence of past and present creating an arrested moment occurs in the fusion of imagination which unites Quentin and Shreve with Henry Sutpen, Charles Bon, and the Sutpen story as a whole in Absalom, Absalom!

In the isolation of Quentin's and Shreve's tomb-like room at Harvard, all sense of linear, chronological time disappears. The two roommates' sense of objective, physical time thus merges with that of subjective, psychological time, thereby fusing the experiential with the abstract. Their discussion of the past is predicated upon a desire to attain a spatial sense of time, halting its flow, and thereby creating a merger of identities between figures from the past and present. Thus Quentin and Shreve absorb themselves in recreating the history of Thomas Sutpen by identifying themselves with him.

> . . . it did not matter to either of them which one did the talking, since it was not the talking alone which did it, performed and accomplished the overpassing, but some happy marriage of speaking and hearing wherein each before the demand, the requirement, forgave condoned and forgot the faulting of the other -- faultings both in the creating of this shade [of Thomas Sutpen] whom they discussed (rather, existed in) and in the hearing and sifting and discarding the false and conserving what seemed true, or fit the preconceived. . . .[87]

From their original union of minds and imaginations, they simply step back in history and become absorbed with the characters they are trying to understand. And finally the ultimate union of time and identity takes place:

> They were both in Carolina and the time was forty-six years ago, and it was not even four now but compounded still further, since now both of them were Henry Sutpen and both of them were Bon, compounded each of both yet either neither. . . .[88]

The sense of momentary juxtaposition in space is created as Quentin and Shreve attempt to reconstruct the story of Henry and Bon's departure from "Sutpen's Hundred" together. In their ability to concoct the fictive explanation that Sutpen had refused to acknowledge Bon as his son, Quentin and Shreve find that they have become fused with the histories of Henry and Charles, which they are in the process of imaginatively recreating.

> So that now it was not two but four of them riding the two horses through the dark over the frozen December ruts of that Christmas Eve: four of them and then just two -- Charles-Shreve and Quentin-Henry . . . So it was four of them who rode the two horses through that night and then across the bright frosty North Mississippi Christmas day . . . to the River and the steamboat . . . the two of them (the four of them) held in that probation, that suspension, by Henry who knew but still did not believe, who was going deliberately to look upon and prove to himself that which, so Shreve and Quentin believed, would be like death for him to learn.[89]

Faulkner's creation of the four young men fused into a double image has a dramatic impact upon the reader's sensibility, which is the result, not of pictorial reproduction, but of the unorthodox unification of disparate ideas, emotions, and identities forged into a complex presented (spatially) in an instant of time. Through such intense identification with the historical figures they were analyzing, Quentin and Shreve hoped to be able to leap over the intervening years, and establish a sense of unbroken continuity into the present.

Similarly, in Light in August Gail Hightower's quest is to arrest time in order to achieve deliverance from his sense of discontinuity. The interruption or psychic break in Hightower's life which engendered his sense of fragmentation, dates back to the untimely death of his grandfather, who died before creating an identity for himself that would have provided an adequate legacy for his romantic and idealistic grandson. Hightower wastes his life imaginatively reexperiencing his grandfather's brief moment of reckless bravado before he was killed in the Civil War while raiding a hen house. His recurrent vision of the last cavalry charge of his grandfather's unit, which tried bravely and hopelessly to counter the Yankee incursions near Jefferson, not only obsesses him, but serves as a symbol of tragic and meaningless Southern action resulting in failure. In Light in August the vision of the phantom cavalry charge becomes a recurrent leitmotif of arrested time, simultaneously deriving its strength in Hightower's imagination from the

defeat in the past, and struggling to overwhelm his effectiveness in the present, which it infects with reckless and romantic bravado.

> He hears above his heart the thunder increase, myriad and drumming. Like a long sighing of wind in trees it begins, then they sweep into sight, borne now upon a cloud of phantom dust. They rush past, forwardleaning in the saddles, with brandished arms, beneath whipping ribbons from slanted and eager lances; with tumult and soundless yelling they sweep past like a tide whose crest is jagged with the wild heads of horses and the brandished arms of men like the crater of the world in explosion. They rush past, are gone . . . Yet, leaning forward in the window . . . it seems to him that he still hears them: the wild bugles and the clashing sabres and the dying thunder of hooves.[90]

The moment of arrested motion for him occurs each Wednesday and Sunday nights at the exact time when his former congregation would have been filing into the church for the evening service. In returning constantly to these moments of arrested time, Hightower seems to have developed the ability to see into both the past and the future from a removed and lofty vantage point, and at such times he feels he has reached the "apotheosis of his own history."[91]

> Waiting, watching the street and the gate from the dark study window, Hightower hears the distant music when it first begins. He does not know that he expects it, that on each Wednesday and Sunday night, sitting in the dark window, he waits for it to begin. He knows almost to the second when he should begin to hear it, without recourse to watch or clock. He uses neither, has needed neither for twenty-five years now. He lives disassociated from mechanical time. Yet for that reason he has never lost it. It is as though out of his subconscious he produces without volition the few crystallizations of stated instances by which his dead life in the actual world has been governed and ordered once. Without recourse to clock he could know immediately upon the thought just where, in his old life, he would be and what doing between the two fixed moments which marked the beginning and the end of Sunday morning service and Sunday evening service . . . It has seemed to him always that at that hour man approaches nearest of all to God, nearer than at any other hour of all the seven days. Then alone, of all church gatherings, is there something of that peace which is the promise and the end of the Church. The mind and the heart purged then . . . the week and its whatever disasters finished and summed and expiated by the stern and formal fury of the

> morning service; the next week and its whatever disasters not yet born, the heart quiet now for a little while beneath the cool soft blowing of faith and hope.[92]

Hightower's original choice of the ministry as a vocation reflects his early awareness that it would be a suitable and protective profession for one whose imagination was lost in arrested time. The call that he believed he had heard to enter the ministry symbolizes security and removal from the bruising encounters of real life. He uses the metaphor of a "classic and serene vase" to describe the insulated form that he directs his life toward:

> When he believed that he had heard the call it seemed to him that he could see his future, his life, intact and on all sides complete and inviolable, like a classic and serene vase, where the spirit could be born anew sheltered from the gale of living and die so, peacefully, with only the far sound of the circumvented wind, with scarce even a handful of rotting dust to be disposed of.[93]

In the image of the vase, Faulkner's sensitive, intellectual figures frequently find an all-encompassing symbol with which to halt the time-flow around them, focusing exclusively on their interplay of emotions and juxtapositions of time within its safe confines.[94]

Thus, upon his return from the First World War, Horace Benbow brings with him a glass-blowing outfit with which he attempts to duplicate the glass objects he has seen in Italy and which he describes to his sister, Narcissa, as being "sheerly and tragically beautiful . . . macabre and inviolate; purged and purified as bronze, yet fragile as soap bubbles."[95] After several mishaps he creates one "almost perfect vase of clear amber, larger, more richly and chastely serene," which he believes contains arrested time and which he

> kept always on his night table and called by his sister's name in the intervals of apostrophizing both of them impartially in his moments of rhapsody over the realization of the meaning of peace and the unblemished attainment of it, as "Thou still unravished bride of quietness."[96]

In the case of Gavin Stevens, moments of arrested time occur as a result of his boyhood passion for Eula Varner, whom he conceived of as a type of mythical goddess. He at first fails to believe that it is possible for Eula to have produced a daughter, thinking

> obviously she must not, must not duplicate: very Nature herself would not permit that to occur, permit two of them in a place no larger than Jefferson, Mississippi, in one century, let alone in overlapping succession, within the anguished scope of a single generation.[97]

But then, upon realizing that Linda exists, and that he still loves her mother, as an idealistic intellectual, Gavin begins to fantasize that Linda is actually his child, and becomes emotionally fixated in contemplating the moment when Linda was conceived. He muses:

> Remaining which will always remain, never to be completely empty of that olden anguish. So no matter how much more the blood will slow and remembering grow more lascerant, the blood at least will always remember that once it was that capable, capable at least of anguish. So that girl-child was not Flem Snopes's at all, but mine . . . since the McCarron boy who begot her . . . in that lost time, was Gavin Stevens in that lost time; and, since remaining must remain or quit being remaining, Gavin Stevens is fixed by his own child forever at that one age in that one moment.[98]

Thus, Gavin is forever immobilized in the passage of time, caught in his obsession for a woman he idealizes, yet is never able to touch. Even when Eula later suggests that he marry her daughter, he is unable to detach himself from his unrequited love for Eula. He explains that for him the motion of time is one that he measures by the perennial renewal of his anguish:

> . . . as another poet sings, That Fancy passed me by And nothing will remain; which, praise the gods, is a damned lie since. . . . Nothing cannot remain anywhere since nothing is vacuum and vacuum is paradox and unbearable and we will have none of it even if we would, the damned-fool poet's Nothing steadily and perennially full of perennially new and perennially

> renewed anguishes for me to measure my stature against whenever I need reassure myself that I also am Motion.[99]

Gavin ultimately and ironically deludes himself that while trapped in emotional immobility, he is part of the world's motion.

In a similar fashion, Ike McCaslin's time sense is arrested in his emotional allegiance to an earlier period of history when the wilderness had not been spoiled by subdivision into property for man's exploitation. As a disciple of Sam Fathers, while listening attentively to the myths of several centuries ago, Ike's emotions become fixated on an ideal in the past, which dictates the renunciation of his patrimony. In Go Down, Moses, Faulkner explains:

> . . . gradually to the boy those old times would cease to be old times and would become a part of the boy's present, not only as if they had happened yesterday but as if they were still happening, the men who walked through them actually walking in breath and air and casting an actual shadow on the earth they had not quitted. And more: as if some of them had not happened yet but would occur tomorrow, until at last it would seem to the boy that he himself had not come into existence yet.[100]

In his obsession with the purity of the past, Ike loses his sense of present identity, becoming ultimately an impotent and ineffective figure.

The Failure of Spatial Juxtaposition as a Technique for Faulkner's Intellectuals to Solve the Dilemma of Discontinuity

All of Faulkner's intellectual figures use arrested moments as a psychological device to reveal their sense of static, frozen time, a perspective on time created from an emotional impasse of their idealism and their sense of its outrage. Rather than adapt to the changes and convolutions that time brings, Quentin Compson, Horace Benbow, Gavin Stevens, Ike McCaslin, and Gail Hightower prefer clinging to cherished obsessions. Therefore, for them, the

arrested moments contract time spatially to disguise its passage; whereas for Marcel, reaching an understanding of arrested moments serves to expand them to eternity.[101]

Any unity in the lives of Faulkner's characters, therefore, seems to come purely from intuition and not through the development of intellectual devices, understanding, or knowledge. The fates of the intellectual characters, in fact, seem to reveal their author's predisposition against acquiring knowledge. Although Faulkner presents the inner workings of the consciousness of his protagonists,[102] at no point does he reveal them in the process of intellectual comprehension of their rôle in life. In any case, there seems to be almost a sense of confusion and ambivalence both in these characters and in the authorial perspective, resulting from the absence of clear opposition between feeling and knowing.[103]

Although it is difficult to describe this merging of feeling and knowing, which is best revealed in the absence of logical, analytical exposition in Faulkner's prose, an example of the fusing of the sensual with the intellectual can be seen in The Hamlet in the description of the schoolmaster Labove's passion for Eula Varner. In adoration of Eula's sexuality, the schoolmaster loses his sense of identity and respect for the academic knowledge he has attained with such difficulty. He longs to be absorbed in Eula's sexual primitivism, attributing to her a form of experiential knowledge or wisdom.

> It would not be himself importunate and prostrate before that face which, even though but fourteen years old, postulated a weary knowledge which he would never attain, a surfeit, a glut of all perverse experience. He would be as a child before that knowledge. He would be like a young girl, a maiden, wild distracted and amazed, trapped not by the seducer's maturity and experience but by blind and ruthless forces inside herself which she now realised she had lived with for years without even knowing they were there.[104]

In describing the force of Eula's sexuality in a classroom setting, Faulkner portrays her power to "abrogate . . . human thinking and suffering which is called knowledge and wisdom" through the overpowering instincts which she arouses in those who come into contact with her:

> She was neither at the head nor at the foot of her class . . . not because she declined to study . . . but because the class she was in ceased to have either head or foot twenty-four hours after she entered it. Within the year there even ceased to be any lower class for her to be promoted from, for the reason that she would never be at either end of anything in which blood ran. It would have to be but one point, like a swarm of bees, and she should be that point, that center, swarmed over and importuned yet serene and intact and apparently even oblivious, tranquilly abrogating the whole long sum of human thinking and suffering which is called knowledge, education, wisdom, at once supremely unchaste and inviolable: the queen, the matrix.[105]

Having associated human thinking with suffering (which is feeling rather than thought), Faulkner then links them both to knowledge, education, and wisdom, which become impotent when confronted by the driving power of sexuality.

From this merger of the sensual and emotional with the intellectual, all of Faulkner's intellectual protagonists suffer without being able to conceptualize and analyze the cause of their anguish. Thus, only rarely do most of the intellectual characters manifest the desire to understand their fates in order to deal with them with intelligent understanding. None of these characters, with the possible exception of Quentin and Harry Wilbourne, ever becomes "sufficiently tragic, in the literary sense of the term, to arrive at a self-recognition scene. . . ."[106] In their desire only to remember and to relive the past, the Faulknerian intellectuals are actually failed intellectual figures and emotionally disturbed individuals, incapable of succeeding in their "crisis of knowing," and unable to achieve unity in their lives.

For such protagonists, spatial juxtaposition as a technique for transcendence is thus inadequate as a means of achieving a solution for

discontinuity. Lacking a coherent sense of identity, the intellectual characters are unable to lend a sense of unity to Faulkner's novels in which they appear. Faulkner's efforts at unification are achieved through the interplay of different characters and disparate elements in a cubistic process, which finally coalesces into an aesthetic whole created of fragments held in opposition.[107]

The Failure of Memory as a Method to Solve the Dilemma of Discontinuity For Faulkner's Intellectual Characters

Although memory plays a primary role in the lives of the isolated, intellectual characters, almost all fail to use it as a creative power, which when combined with intellectual analysis, might be capable of freeing them from their obsessions with the past. In Faulkner's work, unlike Proust's, those who remember become entrapped in their emotional falsifications of the past.

In The Sound and the Fury, for example, Quentin associates the fragrance of honeysuckle with Caddy's promiscuity, which the flower's perfume brings constantly back to haunt him. He recounts:

> ...I ran down the hill in that vacuum of crickets like a breath travelling across a mirror she was lying in the water her head on the sand spit the water flowing about her hips there was a little more light in the water her skirt half saturated flopped along her flanks to the waters motion ... I stood on the bank I could smell the honeysuckle on the water gap the air seemed to drizzle with honeysuckle and with the rasping of crickets a substance you could feel on the flesh.... then she talked about him clasping her wet knees her face tilted back in the grey light the smell of honeysuckle.... I could hear her heart going firm and slow ... the water gurgling among the willows in the dark and waves of honeysuckle coming up the air....[108]

From the association of honeysuckle with his sister's sexuality, which he abhors, Quentin is unable to cope with his own overpowering sexual fears, preferring death as a means of transcendence to escape from the torture of the present. Unlike Marcel, who makes the attempt to "marshall before [his] mind" the early

significance of the "invisible and unchanging odour" of the hawthorn from Combray, which he associates with his first love of Gilberte, Quentin refuses to permit himself to analyze the full ramifications and impossibilities of his love for his sister. He prefers to immortalize his emotion through death as a romantic gesture.

Another example of the Faulknerian failure to use memory creatively is found in Absalom, Absalom! in Miss Rosa's dedication of her life to the process of remembering the past and its losses -- the South's loss of the Civil War and her own failure to find a suitable husband. She, too, insists upon remembering without analyzing and comprehending. She asks:

> . . . Do you mark how the wistaria . . . distills and penetrates this room as though . . . by secret and attritive process from mote to mote of obscurity's myriad components? That is the substance of remembering -- sense, sight, smell: the muscles with which we see and hear and feel -- not mind, not thought: there is no such thing as memory: the brain recalls just what the muscles grope for: no more, no less: and its resultant sum is usually incorrect and false and worthy only of the name of dream.[109]

And yet, having said that a life devoted to memory involves no thought and becomes only a dream, Rosa proceeds to entrap herself in a mausoleum of remembered inaction.

And for Ike McCaslin in The Bear, the memory of his ancestors' greed in taking their plantation land from the Indians dictates the choice to renounce his patrimony. Despite his cousin McCaslin Edmonds's efforts to help him analyze and comprehend his responsibility as an legal inheritor as well as his role as a spiritual heir of the land from Sam Fathers, Ike ironically believes himself to be free of the past, when in fact, he sacrifices his life for his obsession with idealistic purity. His cousin tries to persuade him to accept what is rightfully his by saying:

> . . . mark. You said how on that instant when Ikkemotubbe realised that he could sell the land to Grandfather, it ceased forever to have been his. All right; go on: Then it belonged to Sam Fathers, old Ikkemotubbe's son. And who inherited from Sam Fathers, if not you? . . . And he [Ike]
>
> "Yes, Sam Fathers set me free."[110]

Ike's sense of freedom and discontinuity from the past resulting in freedom from responsibility in the present becomes ironic when juxtaposed with the inactivity and impotence which characterize his life.

Harry Wilbourne in The Wild Palms is the only intellectual figure in Faulkner's work for whom memory does ultimately play a creative role. In deciding to choose life in prison rather than death, Harry hopes not only to exist in the memory of his love for Charlotte, but to analyze and comprehend what led to her death. At the end he attempts to analyze his refusal to commit suicide:

> So it wasn't just memory. Memory was just half of it, it wasn't enough. But it must be somewhere, he thought. There's the waste. Not just me. At least I think I dont mean just me. Hope I dont mean just me. Let it be anyone. . . .[111]

In believing that their love had a universal significance, memory for Harry becomes a creative process for which he realizes he must continue to live in order for someone to continue remembering. He realizes:

> . . . if memory exists outside of the flesh it wont be memory because it wont know what it remembers so when she became not then half of memory became not and if I become not then all of remembering will cease to be.[112]

Thus for Harry, Faulkner hints that memory may become a potential springboard to self comprehension and to transcendence of time as it had for Marcel.

"Fecund Works of Art" Versus a "Scrap of Paper:" Two Different Views of Immortality

Despite all the efforts of Faulkner's intellectual protagonists, paradoxically, transcendence of time in Faulkner's fiction can be achieved only through the calm acceptance of its passage. As an intellectual figure who avoids the Prufrockian pitfalls of idealism and isolation, Judith Sutpen in Absalom, Absalom! is a character who seems aware of the need to engage in the process of psychological involvement with humanity in order to achieve a three- dimensional understanding of time that closely resembles Marcel's. Her statement about the need to continue trying to weave one's pattern in life despite all obstacles reflects elements of stoic endurance. She describes all men as "trying to make a rug on the same loom only each one wants to weave his own pattern into the rug."[113]

Marcel expresses almost the identical idea about the constant weaving process that goes on in life, producing the sense of interconnection and simultaneity. He experiences this sense of interconnection with particular intensity at the moments of involuntary memory, observing:

> ...it is even more true that life is ceaselessly weaving other threads between human beings and events, that life crosses these threads with one another and doubles them to make the weft heavier, so that, between the tiniest point in our past life and all the other points, a rich network of memories leaves us only the choice of which road to take.[114]

Thus, perhaps for Faulkner's and Proust's characters the lesson to be learned in confronting the dilemma of discontinuity is simply endurance and continuing the weaving process of life, a process that might be summed up in the stoic formula suggested by Georges Poulet: "To endure is to be present, and to be present is to be present to things distributed in a sort of time-space."[115]

For Marcel and all Faulkner's characters who are determined to survive, however, the act of being present seems inadequate as a goal. Despite differences in philosophical emphasis, driven by an awareness of discontinuity, both Proust and Faulkner attempt through various temporal and aesthetic techniques to reveal many of their characters surmounting the difficulties of discontinuity, intermittence, and oblivion by developing an existential sense of time. It is this ongoing sense of time which the two authors actively incorporate into the texture of their fiction.

In A la recherche du temps perdu Marcel reaches the conclusion that the immortality of the world of art, in its survival from generation to generation, provides the link to eternity for which he has been searching. He eulogizes art as that which is able to endure in the passage of time, by saying

> Thanks to art, instead of seeing only one world, our own, we see it under multiple forms, and as many as there are original artists, just so many worlds have we at our disposal, differing more widely from one another than those that roll through infinite space, and years after the glowing center from which they emanated has been extinguished, be it called Rembrandt or Vermeer, they continue to send us their own rays of light.[116]

Yet he is able to remark with ironic amusement:

> Victor Hugo said,
>
> Il faut que l'herbe pousse et que les enfants meurent.
>
> But I say that it is the cruel law of art, that human beings should die and that we ourselves must die after exhausting the gamut of suffering so that the grass, not of oblivion but of eternal life, may grow, the thick grass of fecund works of art, on which future generations will come and gaily have their "picnic lunch," without a thought for those who sleep beneath.[117]

With less idealism and irony than Proust bequeaths to Marcel, Faulkner ultimately affirms man's chances of immortality in a manner which is both muted and tinged with stoicism. Despite his awareness of the artist's need to arrest

time, he permits no fictional fulfillment for his intellectual characters manifesting signs of aesthetic interest, artistic creativity, or the desire to rise above the inexorability of time. Only in Judith Sutpen's suggested response to life, in her encouragement of active communication between individuals, is there the indication that a "scrap of paper" may possibly endure. As a character who seems to speak for Faulkner's point of view in Absalom, Absalom! she suggests:

> ". . . if you could go to someone, the stranger the better, and give them something -- a scrap of paper -- something, anything, it not to mean anything in itself . . . at least it would be something just because it would have happened. . . ."[118]

Faulkner's real belief in man's endurance, as portrayed in his novels is, however, based more on the possibility of human interaction and communal brotherhood than on any lasting impulses of artistry or surviving scraps of paper.

Although in "Four Quartets" T. S. Eliot laments that "words strain, crack and sometimes break, under the burden" of time -- Proust and Faulkner as authors and creators of complete fictional universes have both made the effort to communicate messages which may yet endure the passage of time.

NOTES

[1]T. S. Eliot, "Four Quartets: Burnt Norton,", in Collected Poems, 1909-1962 (Franklin Center, Pa.: The Franklin Library, 1979), p. 182.

[2]Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past, trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Frederick A. Blossom (New York: Random House, Inc., 1927), II, 776.

[3]Georges Poulet, Studies in Human Time, trans. Elliott Coleman (Baltimore, John Hopkins Press, 1956), p. 297. (Italics are the author's.)

[4]Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past, trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff (New York: Random House, Inc., 1924), I, 5.

[5]William Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury and As I Lay Dying, (New York: Random House, Inc., The Modern Library, 1946), p. 396.

Darl Bundren, like Quentin Compson and Horace Benbow, is sexually attracted to his sister and dominated by a mother, who at the beginning of the novel is bedridden and dying. Poetic and idealistic by nature, Darl's circumstances proscribed him from becoming a true Faulknerian intellectual figure, but the outlines of a sensitive and alienated individual are unmistakably present despite his portrayal as a primitive. (See Noel Polk, ed., Afterword, Sanctuary, The Original Text, by William Faulkner [New York: Random House, 1981], p. 300.)

[6]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 188.

[7]William Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1964), p. 9.

[8]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 99.

[9]Proust, I, 509-510, (Emphasis is mine.)

[10]Proust, II, 1014.

[11]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, pp. 195-196.

[12]Thomas A. Goudge, Introduction, An Introduction to Metaphysics, by Henri Louis Bergson, trans. T. E. Hulme (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1949), pp. 12-13. (See Goudge's description of Bergson's concept of time.)

[13]Proust, II, 995. (Emphasis is mine.)

[14]See Wyndham Lewis's statement that "an intense preoccupation with time or 'duration' is wedded to the theory of timelessness." (Wyndham Lewis, Time and Western Man, II, p. 128, quoted in Adam Abraham Mendilow, Time and the Novel [New York: Humanities Press, 1972], p. 135.)

[15]Arthur L. Scott, "The Myriad Perspectives of Absalom, Absalom!," American Quarterly, 6, No. 3 (Fall 1954), 210. To illustrate that the mode of the past represents reality in the present, thereby creating an existential sense of

time, C. S. Pierce describes "a Nova Stella burst[ing] out in the heavens, . . . act[ing] upon one's eye just as a light struck in the dark by one's own hand . . .; and yet it is an event which happened before the Pyramids were built." (See C. S. Pierce, Collected Papers [Boston: Harvard University Press, 1934], V. p. 311, quoted in Scott, p. 217.)

[16]Time's duration is described in literary terms as a psychological preoccupation with the passage of time. In their representation of the realms of subjective experience farthest removed from the rational requirements of an objective theory of time, drowsiness, dreaminess, and fantasizing are the durational states of mind which are particularly amenable to literary portrayal.

With the continuous flow of durational time, there is no past or future, no before or after; duration merges all of a day, or a lifetime, and includes all of the lasting events in the life of mankind. A day or night with such elasticity in temporal perspective can extend to include a lifetime, and beyond. With such endlessly expanding duration, the "ordinary modalities of time" -- past, present, and future -- become fused. In that perception it is possible to conclude that aspects of past, present, and future time exist as "infinite possibilities within any moment of the line span of an individual" -- "or that they may be viewed under the aspect of a timeless co-presence" -- a conclusion that leads towards the formulation of a literary technique such as "lived myth." (See Hans Meyerhoff, Time in Literature [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1955], p. 25-26.)

[17]In his theory of "lived myth," Thomas Mann viewed individuals and their actions as recurrences of a prototypical pattern. Actions occur in his view not so much because of a personal urge to act in a particular way, but because of a pervasive oral tradition and identification of the individual as part of the living myth in the process of being relived through the individual and his contemporaries. Mann believed that cultural patterns were divinely established, and therefore accepted with unquestioning faith their transmittal from father to son, with an accompanying lack of differentiation between the present and the past.

In his writing the present conforms with the past, and in a sense becomes the past. The pattern thus becomes reflective of an eternal validity, needing only new individuals to embody it in time. With any single manifestation of the myth there stands revealed a serialistic pattern endlessly repeating itself. The term Mann used for this repetitive pattern is "time-coulisse."

In works that contain "lived myth," fictional time is thus double, including both the duration of the current mythic pattern, and the "time-coulisse," or series of patterns endlessly repeating themselves in the background. (See Thomas Mann, Die geschichten Jaakobs [Berlin: S. Fischer, 1933], trans. The Tales of Jacob, 134, p. 13 passim, quoted in Mendilow, p. 140.).

In Faulkner's detailed and nostalgic descriptions of the transmission of cultural myths from generation to generation, he seems to incorporate elements of Thomas Mann's concept of "lived myth" or "time-coulisse" in his work. That he was aware of Mann's work is clear, for both Buddenbrooks (1924), which Faulkner autographed twice and dated 1940, and Stories of Three Decades (1936), autographed and dated June, 1937, were in his library at "Rowan Oak." (See Joseph Blotner, Introduction, William Faulkner's Library -- A Catalogue [Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 1964].)

The cyclical theory of time -- the belief that there is nothing new under the sun -- provides an organic view of time. The changing cycle of birth, growth, decline, and death is theoretically posited as the one permanent, unchanging, and therefore timeless law of history. In the timeless law of the eternal return, temporal values are not relevant to the ongoing cyclical activity; time can therefore be regarded as a source of both good and evil. (See Meyerhoff, p. 79.)

[18]Proust quoted in Harold March, The Two Worlds of Marcel Proust, 2nd ed. (1948; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1968), p. 228.

[19]Proust, II, 1056.

[20]One of the paradoxes of lived myth is that in its repetitiveness, the timeless pattern ultimately assumes the form of the here and now. (See Mendilow, p. 140.) Thomas Mann explains how the past penetrates and actually becomes the present in The Tales of Jacob. His words have a decidedly Faulknerian ring:

> . . . the essence of life is presentness, and only in a mythical sense does its mystery appear in the time-forms of past and future. . . . For it is, always is, however much we may say It was. Thus speaks the myth. (Thomas Mann, The Tales of Jacob, pp. 45-46, quoted in Mendilow, p. 140.)

[21]Proust, I, 3.

[22]Proust, II, 1000.

[23]Proust, II, 1122.

[24]Proust, II, 1111.

[25]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, pp. 261-262. Faulkner metaphorically describes his method of presenting time in Absalom, Absalom! as "the mask in Greek tragedy, interchangeable not only from scene to scene, but from actor to actor and behind which the events and occasions took place without chronology or sequence." (Absalom, Absalom!, p. 62.).

In the creation of a running parallel of present with past time, Faulkner shows a remarkable similarity of thought and expression with Joyce's "mythical method." They both create a constant juxtaposition of present and past in order to strengthen the structural imagery of their works, and to indicate an identification of the present with the past. The interconnection of past and present are reflected in Stephen Daedalus's thoughts: " 'The [navel] cords of all link back, strandentwining cable of all flesh. . . .' " (James Joyce, Ulysses [Franklin Center, Pa.: The Franklin Library, 1978], p. 40. Also see Richard P. Adams, Faulkner: Myth and Motion [Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1960], p. 140.)

[26]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 11-12.

[27]Thomas Mann's concept of "duration-in-isolation" as a particular type of timelessness seems to have some parallels with a temporal attitude of characterization used by Faulkner. In The Magic Mountain Mann describes a number of individuals who are effectively sealed off from a sense of time by

having their perspective of it blunted. This absence of a sense of the passage of time is the theme of his novel. Presenting the story of a group of patients at a sanatorium in the Alps, Mann's emphasis is on their isolation from the outside world, and thus from time itself. Rather than focusing on their thoughts and opinions, he describes the patients' minds as being in a state of suspension in an atmosphere in which change has disappeared.

[28]William Faulkner, The Wild Palms(New York: The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., Signet Modern Classic, 1968), p. 90.

[29]Faulkner, The Wild Palms, p. 107. (Italics are Faulkner's.)

[30]William Faulkner, Light in August (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1972), p. 465.

[31]Donald M. Kartiganer, "The Sound and the Fury and Faulkner's Quest for Form," ELH, 37 No. 4 (December 1970), p. 613.

With recognition of the appearance and sudden predominence of a new aesthetic spatial form in twentieth century literature (which created a major divergence from an earlier literary form that was both temporal and continuous in focus), it is possible to attribute the formal literary changes to shifts in sensibility between the cultural milieux of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. (See Joseph Frank, The Widening Gyre: Crisis and Mastery in Modern Literature [New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1963], pp. 56-57.)

Twentieth century writers have been forced to embrace discontinuity and internalize apparently disparate entities if they are to create sense of the ongoing reality and co-existence of divergent, overlapping and opposite world views. This effort, in turn has generated a feeling of contraction of both space and time. There is, therefore, in their work a concentrated feeling of the mingling of all times and their contents into a transcendent moment -- which is almost tantamount to an abolition of time. This is a major goal of T. S. Eliot's poetry, and is the subject of his quest in "Four Quartets." The search for the mingling of all times into a transcendent moment equally is evident in the work of Proust and Faulkner, as well as in the work of Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and other novelists, who seek to create an "intersection of the timeless with time." (Erich Kahler, The Tower and the Abyss -- An Inquiry into the Transformation of Man [New York: The Viking Press, 1969], p. 132.)

[32]Joseph Frank, "Spatial Form in Modern Literature," The Sewanee Review, 53, No. 2 (Spring 1945), 231. The term, "spatial form" was devised by Joseph Frank to connote the literary equivalent of techniques of abstraction or "non- naturalism" in the world of art. According to his theory, major writers of the twentieth century -- Pound, Eliot, Proust, and Joyce -- reveal evidence of spatial form in their writing, intending their readers to apprehend the work spatially in a moment of time rather than as a sequence.

[33]Proust, II, 1063.

[34]Proust, I, 34.

[35]Proust, I, 34-36. (Emphasis is mine.)

[36]Proust, I, 34.

[37]Proust, II, 996.

[38]Frank, The Widening Gyre, p. 10.

[39]Georges Poulet, Proustian Space, trans. Elliott Coleman (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), p. 76.

[40]Poulet, Proustian Space, p. 80.

[41]Poulet, Proustian Space, p. 77.

[42]Proust, I, 138.

[43]Proust, I, 138.

[44]Proust, I, 139.

[45]Proust, I, 139-140.

[46]Proust, I, 140.

[47]Proust, I, 103.

[48]Proust, I, 104.

[49]Proust, I, 141.

[50]Proust, I, 140-141.

[51]Proust, I, 142. (Emphasis is mine.)

[52]Proust, II, 865.

[53]Proust, II, 865.

[54]Proust, II, 865.

[55]Proust, II, 1110.

[56]Proust, II, 1112.

[57]Proust, II, 1008-1009.

[58]Proust, II, 1000-1001.

[59]Proust, II, 1003.

[60]Proust, II, 1009.

[61]Jean Pouillon comments that:

> Proust chose to know, or rather he chose to go from experiencing to knowing, from pure enjoyment of the past to an intellectual understanding of it. For him, recapturing time meant understanding it just as much as reliving it. (Jean Pouillon, "Time and Destiny in Faulkner," in Faulkner: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Robert Penn Warren [Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice- Hall, Inc., 1966], p. 86.)

[62]Proust, II, 1030.

[63]Proust, I, 38.

[64]Proust, I, 38.

[65]Proust, II, 556-557.

[66]Proust, II, 106.

[67]Proust, I, 106.

[68]Proust, I, 108-109.

[69]Proust, II, 866.

[70]Proust, II, 866.

[71]Proust, II, 1082-1083.

[72]Poulet, Proustian Space, p. 94.

[73]Poulet, Proustian Space, pp. 57-58.

[74]It is misleading to compare Proustian duration to the Bergsonian concept of duration. Whereas Proustian moments are characterized by emptiness and discontinuity, with duration as a plurality of isolated moments removed from one another, Bergsonian duration, on the other hand, is a continuity. Marcel explains:

> . . . we live over our past years not in their continuous sequence, day by day, but in a memory that fastens upon the coolness or sunparched heat of some morning or afternoon, receiving the shadow of some solitary place, enclosed, immovable, arrested, lost, remote from all others . . . (Proust, I, 1003).

In Studies in Human Time, Georges Poulet writes:

> . . . if Proustian time always takes the form of space, it is because it is of a nature that is directly opposed to Bergsonian time. Nothing resembles less the melodic continuity of pure duration; but nothing, in return, more resembles what Bergson denounced as being a false duration, a duration the elements of

> which would be exteriorized, the ones relatively to the others, and aligned, the ones beside the others. Proustian time is time spatialized, juxtaposed . . . (Poulet, Studies in Human Time, pp. 105-106).

The important thing to realize, as Proust himself once remarked, is that durations of such difference must necessarily be explored by the mind in different ways. (Poulet, Studies in Human Time, p. 316). In comparison with the easy and flowing manner in which Bergson conceived of the mind allowing him to merge with the continuity of the past through reverie, for Proust the exploration of the past demanded intense effort and the hope of grace.

[75]Poulet, Studies in Human Time, p. 105.

[76]Poulet, Studies in Human Time. p. 317.

[77]Proust, II, 1121.

[78]Poulet, Studies in Human Time, p. 318.

[79]In his search to find a sense of continuity in time and space, Marcel's literary technique is frequently described as having much in common with the technique of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Impressionist artists and their depiction of the natural appearances of objects with dabs or strokes of pure, unmixed colors to simulate reflected light. Yet, it is also possible to view the Proustian technique as a literary precursor of Cubism, which Apollinaire described as the

> dissociat[ion of] the planes of an object seen, and . . . [the] rearrange[ment of] them in a picture, so organized that they will give a truer emotional or structural sense than the original "appearance." (Lionel Abel, trans., The Cubist Painters, by Guillaume Apollinaire [New York, Wittenborn and Co., 1944], p. 12, quoted in Scott, p. 216.)

Although his writing reveals evidence of both the Impressionistic technique of constructing the novel through dabs and strokes of color and the Cubist principle of abstract structuring based on a mental concept, Proust's comments serve only to link the creative vision of the writer with that of the artist in general:

> . . . the writer realises that, if his dream of being a painter could not come true in a conscious and intentional manner, it has happened to come true anyhow, and the writer finds that he, too, has been making a sketchbook without knowing it. For, impelled by the instinct that was in him, long before he thought he might somehow be a writer, he systematically ignored so many things which caught the attention of others that he was accused of being absent-minded and himself thought he could neither listen nor observe. But all the while he was instructing his eyes and ears to retain forever what seemed to others to be childish trifles -- the tone in which a sentence had been spoken, the facial about whom perhaps he knows nothing else -- all this many years ago and only because he had heard that tone of voice before or felt that he might hear it again, that it was

> something enduring, something which might recur. . . . (Proust, II, 1016.)

[80]Poulet, Studies in Human Time, p. 319.

[81]Proust, II, 1123-1124.

[82]Frank, The Widening Gyre, p. 10.

[83]See definition of spatial form in Frank, "Spatial Form in Modern Literature," p. 231.

[84]See definition of Cubism in Sheldon Cheney, A Primer of Modern Art (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1924), p. 101, quoted in Scott, p. 215.

[85]Although the intellectual characters manifest only a partial vision of their lives, Faulkner himself attempts to provide enough artistic perspective on their inadequacies in the complete vision provided in his novels to permit such a synthesis of views for all sides and aspects. Like Picasso, "moving round an object, he seized several successive appearances which, when fused into a single image, reconstituted it in time." (Thomas Craven, Men of Art [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1936], p. 498, quoted in Scott, p. 215.)

Guillaume Apollinaire called this kind of complete vision "the fourth dimension . . . representing the immensity of space eternalizing itself in all directions at any given moment." (See Apollinaire quoted in Scott, p. 216, as indicated in Note 78.)

[86]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, pp. 194-195.

[87]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom! p. 316.

[88]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 351.

[89]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, pp. 334-335.

[90]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 69.

[91]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 347.

[92]Faulkner, Light in August, pp. 345-347.

[93]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 453. In 1922, in his review of Joseph Hergesheimer's novel, Linda Condon, using a Keatsian image, Faulkner wrote:

> Linda Condon is not a novel. It is more like a lovely frieze: a few unforgettable figures in silent arrested motion, forever beyond the reach of time. (See William Faulkner, "Books and Things: Joseph Hergesheimer," in William Faulkner: Early Prose and Poetry, ed. Carvel Collins [Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1962], p. 101, quoted in David Minter, William Faulkner: His Life and Work [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980], p. 43.)

Faulkner's review of Hergesheimer's book is very revealing in terms of its reflection of his own work in its evocation of the still garden in The Marble Faun. His commentary is as judgmental as it is sympathetic, however, in statements such as: "One can imagine Hergesheimer submerging himself in Linda Condon as in a still harbor where the age cannot hurt him and where rumor of the world reaches him only as a far faint sound of rain." (Faulkner, "Books and Things: Joseph Hergesheimer," quoted in Minter, p. 43.)

[94]The image of the vase is central to Faulkner's art, signifying not only an aesthetic escape from the world of reality, but having erotic and aesthetic connotations as well. For Faulkner, the image of the vase may have originated with Keat's use of it in "Ode to a Grecian Urn" as "Thou still unravished bride of quietness," a phrase which Horace Benbow uses when addressing the amber vase he keeps at his bedside and calls by his sister's name. Whatever its origin, the image of the vase is one in which Faulkner can find solace from the bruising contact of the world, as well as one which can embody love and defy time and death as an aesthetic entity created by the power of his imagination.

In addressing his use of the vase as a pervasive image in his fiction, Faulkner explained:

> There is a story somewhere about an old Roman who kept at his bedside a Tyrrehenian vase which he loved and the rim of which he wore slowly away with kissing it. I had made myself a vase, but I suppose I knew all the time that I could not live forever inside of it, that perhaps to have it so that I too could lie in bed and look at it would be better; surely so when that day should come when not only the ecstasy of writing would be gone, but the unreluctance and the something worth saying too. It's fine to think that you will leave something behind you when you die, but it's better to have made something you can die with. ("An Introduction to The Sound and the Fury," ed. James B. Meriwether, Mississippi Quarterly, 26 [Summer 1973], 410-415, quoted in Minter, p. 102.)

In this statement of 1933, Faulkner is referring to the vase as both Caddy, the beautiful creation of his imagination, and as The Sound and the Fury, the novel he created in which she might dwell in privacy and peace while attaining immortality. The vase is thus an expansive image, "a haven or shelter into which the artist may retreat; a femine ideal to which he can give his devotion; a work of art that he can leave behind when he is dead; and a burial urn that will contain at least one expression of his self as an artist." (Minter, p. 102.)

In addition, the image of the closed vase is important as a Proustian symbol of a classical container holding the distilled essence of magic moments from the past. In The Past Recaptured, Marcel muses:

> An image presented by life brings us in reality at that moment multiple and varying sensations. . . . An hour is not merely a hour. It is a vase filled with perfumes, sounds, plans and climates. What we call reality is a certain relationship between these sensations and the memories which surround us at the same time. . . . (Proust, II, 1008.)

[95]William Faulkner, Sartoris (New York: New American Library of World Literature, Inc., Signet Classic, 1964), p. 147.

[96]Faulkner, Sartoris, p. 154.

[97]William Faulkner, The Town (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1961), p. 133.

[98]Faulkner, The Town, pp. 135-136.

[99]Faulkner, The Town, p. 135.

[100]William Faulkner, Go Down, Moses (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1973), quoted in Mendilow, p. 97.

[101]In The Time of William Faulkner, Maurice Coindreau emphasizes the parallelism and divergence between the Faulknerian and Proustian styles of dealing with time.

> Faulkner's style . . . is not without some obvious analogies with that of Proust. It is a poetic style, loaded and sometimes overloaded with images, interrupted by interminable incidents which follow the slow progress of thought, the meanderings of introspection and the sinuousities of analysis. Proust, however, nourished more on classical disciplines, accepts certain conventional restraints. Chronology, for example, inspires in him a respect that is unknown in Faulkner. (Maurice Edgar Coindreau, The Time of William Faulkner: A French View of Modern American Fiction, trans. and ed. George McMillan Reeves [Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971], pp. 70-71.)

Coindreau might have added that Proust as an intellectual was dedicated to achieving an understanding of the temporal approaches he employed, and making them work successfully in the larger context of life.

[102]Walter Slatoff cogently describes the power of Faulkner's prose to address itself to man's inner being.

> It is the degree to which Faulkner provides this last kind of experience [contact with inner tensions and dynamic process] that most marks him off from other modern novelists who try, as he does, to give their readers an essentially empathetic experience through interior monologues, spiral movement, sensory emphasis, hypnotic repetition, evocative images, and symbols. And it is this which accounts for much of the peculiar force of his work. (Walter J. Slatoff, Quest for Failure: A Study of William Faulkner [Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1960], p. 246.)

[103]In the view of the French critic, Jean Pouillon, it simply is not possible to understand Faulkner's point of view without making a distinction between "consciousness" and "knowledge." Faulkner, he believes,

> places himself on the level of the former. Consciousness is inevitable, knowledge only a possibility. Since one does not necessarily attain knowledge, Faulkner can omit it without deforming human nature, especially in the kind of characters he chooses. (Pouillon, p. 83.)

But Faulkner, Pouillon continues, ultimately involves himself in an "antimony," with confusion resulting from the absence of clear opposition between feeling and knowing. He comments that feeling and knowing even seem to complement and reenforce one another, parallelling Proust's interrelationship of emotion and knowledge. However, the ambivalence revealed in the failure to differentiate clearly between the two ultimately distinguishes Faulkner's art from Proust's.

[104]William Faulkner, The Hamlet (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1964), p. 119.

[105]Faulkner, The Hamlet, p. 110.

[106]Noel Polk, ed., Afterword, Sanctuary, The Original Text, by William Faulkner (New York: Random House, Inc., 1981), p. 312.

[107]See Jean Defrees Kellogg, Dark Prophets of Hope: Dostoevsky, Sartre, Camus, Faulkner (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1975).

[108]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, pp. 168-169, 171. (Italics are Faulkner's.)

[109]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 143 (Italics are Faulkner's.)

[110]Go Down, Moses, p. 300.

[111]The Wild Palms, p. 228. (Italics are Faulkner's.)

[112]Faulkner, The Wild Palms, p. 228. (Italics are Faulkner's.)

[113]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 127.

[114]Proust, II, 1111.

[115]Poulet, Studies in Human Time, p. 37.

[116]Proust, II, 1013.

[117]Proust, II, 1116.

[118]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 127.

CHAPTER THREE

MARCEL'S SEARCH FOR UNITY OF BEING AND CONTINUITY OF TIME IN A LA RECHERCHE DU TEMPS PERDU

> Words move, music moves
> Only in time; but that which is only living
> Can only die. Words, after speech, reach
> Into the silence. Only by the form, the pattern,
> Can words or music reach
> The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
> Moves perpetually in its stillness.[1]

Predicated on a realization that "that which is only living can only die," Marcel devotes his life in the long volumes of A la recherche du temps perdu to search for that which is capable of transcending the passage of time. Believing with the poet that words "reach into the silence," Marcel earnestly seeks "the form, the pattern" by which both his life and art may reach the aesthetic stillpoint, which is eternity.

Marcel's search is, therefore, ultimately the search for a moral and aesthetic design through which to attain both continuity of time and unity of being. An analysis of this search, which the narrator presents in a historiographical framework, provides the major subject matter for this chapter. As "historiography" is the narrative presentation of historical perspectives based on a critical examination, evaluation, and selection of materials which are subjected to various philosophical criteria, Marcel's recounting of the story of his past will be cast into a historiographical framework for analysis of the underlying design.

In his subjective recounting of past actions in the present, with tools ranging from intellect and contemplation to intuition, Marcel investigates his experiences in friendship, aristocratic society, the world of artistic dilettantism, and the realm of romantic love. And rather than a realm of transcendence, he discovers a world of myth in which friendship, society, frivolous artistry, and romance are simply ill-founded beliefs of worldly significance, which are held uncritically by those who have vested interests in them.

In Proust's portrayal of Marcel actively searching for "being, itself," unity of being in all of its mysteriousness,[2] Marcel manages to escape Sartre's definition of the greatest existential sin, that of "being in stasis and taking identity from the past,"[3] a definition which seems more appropriately applied to Faulkner's intellectual protagonists. The difference between Marcel's search and that of Faulkner's isolated intellectuals as they pursue their individual paths towards self definition or unity of being is, however, both subtle and significant.

In an examination of Marcel's initiation into life, it is apparent that he evolves beyond the quality of "innocence" based on a sense of blind trust in rationality which characterizes the philosophical posture of Faulkner's intellectual figures. While maintaining idealism and romanticism as residual elements of his personality, Marcel does not become intransigent in his beliefs as they collide with the resistance of reality. Although he is frequently amazed by his practical discoveries, which differ from the fantasies he has created, he is more fascinated by the discrepancies between his dreams and the reality than he is "outraged" in the Faulknerian sense. Marcel succeeds, therefore, in the effort to grow from innocence to experience, ultimately attaining total vision through affirming his identity as an artist.

The Power of the Will in Attaining Unity of Being

In seeking to attain an integral pattern for his life, Marcel finds that the appearance of Mlle. de Saint-Loup at the Guermantes' reception is instrumental in providing the necessary goad to spur his will to accomplish the literary task he has set for himself. With a renewal of moral dedication, he commits himself to begin writing his oft-postponed book, which will complete the search for a moral design.

Having lived the life of an inactive and ineffective aesthete excusing his laziness with constant ill health, Marcel has never been able to force himself to enter into life or to begin writing. From the "Overture" at the beginning of the book, however, it appears that the only real sickness that afflicts Marcel as a boy is a maladie of will brought on by an overly protective mother. Realizing that he must move towards a disciplined "mastery of [his] life" in order to be able to accomplish his literary purpose, Marcel is determined to replace the capitulation of moral strength which he had suffered as a child with his new-found resolve.[4] Praising the will as "toiling without intermission," Marcel describes it by saying:

> . . . It is as invariable as brain and nerves are fickle, but as it is silent, gives no account of its actions, it seems almost non-existent; it is by its dogged determination that the other constituent parts of our personality are led, but without seeing it, while they distinguish clearly all their own uncertainties.[5]

Marcel's original lack of will power can be attributed to a major event of his early childhood, which was the probable cause of his ensuing loss of self-identity.

As the book opens in Combray, Marcel affirms his sense of childish identity by deciding not to go to sleep without his mother's goodnight kiss, and he is surprised and somewhat confused to discover that his hypersensitivity is being indulged beyond his wildest dreams. When his mother abdicates her parental

resolve and spends the night in his room, he lacks the self control to confess that he would actually prefer to have her not do so after all. He says at the time:

> ... for the first time my unhappiness was regarded no longer as a fault for which I must be punished, but as an involuntary evil which had been officially recognised as a nervous condition for which I was in no way responsible: I had the consolation that I need no longer mingle apprehensive scruples with the bitterness of my tears; I could weep henceforward without sin ... I ought then to have been happy; I was not. It struck me that my mother had just made a first concession which must have been painful to her, that it was a first step down from the ideal she had formed for me, and that for the first time she, with all her courage, had to confess herself beaten. It struck me that if I had just scored a victory it was over her; that I had succeeded, as sickness or sorrow or age might have succeeded, in relaxing her will, in altering her judgment; that this evening opened a new era, must remain a black date in the calendar. And if I had dared now, I should have said to Mamma: "No, I don't want you; you mustn't sleep here."[6]

At the end of the novel Marcel goes through a sequence of symbolic events analogous to those of his childhood, but with a completely different outcome in the appearance of Mlle. de Saint-Loup. This encounter, which is a mirror image of the episode so long ago in Combray, reverses his earlier abdication of will. At the Guermantes' reception he conjures up the memory of that evening long ago and muses:

> It was that evening, when my mother abdicated her authority, which marked the commencement of the waning of my will power and my health.... Everything was predetermined from the moment when, unable any longer to endure the idea of waiting until the morning to press a kiss upon my mother's face, I made up my mind, jumped out of bed and, in my nightshirt, went and sat by the window through which the moonlight came, until I heard M. Swann leave. ... I heard the door open, the bell tinkle and the door shut again.[7]

In her mingling of the blood of the Guermantes and the Swanns, Mlle. de Saint-Loup provides linkage between the disparate fragments of Marcel's life, creating a sense of his unity of being by physically testifying to the continuity of past and present.

> And now Mlle. de Saint-Loup stood before me. She had deep-set, clear-cut, profoundly searching eyes. I was struck with the way in which her nose, modelled on her mother's and her grandmother's, ended sharply at a perfectly horizontal line below it, exquisite albeit not short enough. A single feature as distinctive, even had one seen nothing else, would have made it possible to identify one statue among thousands, and I marvelled how nature had come back in the nick of time for the granddaughter, as she had for the mother and grandmother, to give the mighty, deciding stroke of the chisel, like some great and unique sculptor. That charming nose, slightly prominent like a bird's beak, had the curve, not of Swann's but of Saint-Loup's. The soul of that Guermantes was gone, but the charming head of the departed bird, with its piercing eyes, had come and taken its place on the shoulders of Mlle. de Saint-Loup, to plunge her father's friends into dreamy musings.[8]

It is in the appearance of Mlle. de Saint-Loup and the happiness that Marcel feels upon seeing her, that he recognizes the parallelism of the current sentiment with the earlier feeling of happiness that he had experienced upon tasting the petite madeleine. Rather than existing in the actual person of Mlle. de Saint-Loup, the joy that he feels is completely within his own mind and imagination, and is caused by his ability to envision her as a metaphorical link to the past. From this experience Marcel recognizes the endless possibilities within his imagination to create additional metaphors for the truths and immortal essences which he perceives in life.

Creating a metaphorical bond between "time, colourless and impalpable" and the image of Mlle. de Saint-Loup, he says:

> . . . this [metaphorical] idea of time had a final value for me; it was like a goad, reminding me that it was time to begin if I wished to achieve what I had occasionally in the course of my life sensed in brief flashes, along the Guermantes way or while driving with Mme. de Villeparisis, and which had encouraged me to regard life as worth living. How much more so it appeared to me now that I felt it possible to shed light on this life which we live in darkness and to bring back to its former true character this life which we distort unceasingly, in short, extract the real essence of life in a book.[9]

From his sense of time as incarnate in the form of Mlle. de Saint-Loup, Marcel develops the idea that it is incarnate within each of us, needing only to be

released through involuntary memory or through intuitive awareness of eternal essences which can then be expressed in metaphor. He explains:

> Even at this moment, in the mansion of the Prince de Guermantes, I heard the sound of my parents' footsteps as they accompanied M. Swann and the reverberating, ferruginous, interminable, sharp, jangling tinkle of the little bell. . . . I heard these sounds again, the very identical sounds themselves, although situated so far back in the past. . . . I had to descend again into my own consciousness. It must be, then, that this tinkling was still there and also, between it and the present moment, all the infinitely unrolling past which I had been unconsciously carrying within me. When the bell tinkled, I was already in existence and, since that night, for me to have been able to hear the sound again, there must have been no break of continuity, not a moment of rest for me, no cessation of existence, of thought, of consciousness of myself, since this distant moment still clung to me and I could recapture it, go back to it, merely by descending more deeply within myself. It was this conception of time as incarnate, of past years as still close held within us, which I was now determined to bring out in such bold relief in my book.[10]

Realizing that his experiences themselves thus have a timeless quality in the "infinitely unrolling past" which exists in his subconscious mind, Marcel concludes in The Past Recaptured that his memories can be corporealized in his writing. His hope is that through the act of creative imagination -- the act of recreating the past in literary form -- the continuity of time will be revealed, and his monumental effort to attain unity of being will serve as a model for other men to do likewise. He says:

> I had a . . . modest opinion of my book and it would be incorrect to say even that I was thinking of those who might read it as "my readers." For . . . they would not be my readers but readers of themselves, my book serving merely as a sort of magnifying glass, such as the optician of Combray used to offer to a customer, so that through my book I would give them the means of reading in their own selves.[11]

Having had his metaphorical method validated in the appearance of Mlle. de Saint-Loup, and having discovered his identity as an artist through a long, historiographical search, Marcel feels that he has survived his "crisis of knowing"

in the newly discovered unity of his being. The answer to his "quest for form" is contained in A la recherche du temps perdu, which relates the experiences that comprise the continuity of his life -- the search for eternal essences, the joy of sensing eternity in flashes of involuntary memory, and the disillusionment of the myths in which other human beings invest lasting value.[12]

In attempting to establish a relationship between the attainment of his identity and the achievement of a moral perspective from which to view life, Marcel thus assumes the role of a man of interpretation, who, through an analysis of several failed designs in life, attempts to discover the flawed hypotheses upon which they were based.[13] In examining the lives of Swann and of various members of the Guermantes family, Marcel becomes a kind of intellectual hero playing the role of poet, critic, and spectator of problematical fates that are less successful than his own. With the hope that memory and artistic ability may provide a means of understanding the past and present, he thus devotes many years to reconstructing and translating the significance of the lives of the wealthy and titled people who fascinate him. And Marcel's interpretations are ultimately successful because of his moral growth, which evolves into an understanding of the configuration of the lives of those around him.

Marcel's Search for Unity of Being in Myths of Love: Swann's Love for Odette

Within A la recherche du temps perdu the story of "Swann in Love" functions as a carefully constructed paradigm or model within the whole, containing many of the themes of the larger novel in miniature. It is a unit of the whole, a love story, which it is suggested later may not even be true. Near the end of the book, Swann's friend, the Baron de Charlus, informs Marcel that the version of the story which he had recounted to Marcel is simply fiction, that the events themselves were quite different.[14] Marcel, nevertheless, recounts the

story of Swann's love affair as though it is all historical fact, revealing a use of historiographical imagination not unlike Quentin's and Shreve's in the reiteration of the Sutpen saga. He relates:

> I would often lie until morning, dreaming of the old days at Combray . . . and, by an association of memories, of a story which, many years after I had left the little place, had been told me of a love affair in which Swann had been involved before I was born; with that accuracy of detail which it is easier, often, to obtain when we are studying the lives of people who have been dead for centuries than when we are trying to chronicle those of our most intimate friends. . . .[15]

Although it is presented as a separate microcosm, the story of Swann's love for Odette de Crécy is placed in the midst of Marcel's recounting of his own adolescent love for Swann's daughter, Gilberte, and the parallel placement of the two creates a layered convergence of past and present in an aesthetic attempt to indicate continuity of time and to achieve a sense of order from the past. Thus, in A la recherche du temps perdu, Marcel seems to be using an impressionistic variation of twentieth century mythical methodology to examine Swann's past.

For Marcel Swann's image always represents a fascinating existence in which art and society can relate to one another harmoniously. In his childhood Marcel receives the prints of Giotto and the Venetian scenes that Swann brings him, and later on he learns that Swann knows the novelist Bergotte personally and collects paintings by Corot. By relating the stody of Swann Marcel gives free rein to his belief in the myth of the artistic hero and the myth of romantic love, hoping to have Swann evolve as a heroic figure from his past who can seem real in the present, and therefore worthy of his emulation. Although Marcel hopes to create a bridge to the past through the myths of Swann's life and loves, his discoveries deflate the grandeur of the myths in which he had enveloped them, and he is left with the discovery that Swann was actually a failure as an artist, art critic, and as a lover.

It is only at the very end of the novel that in his imagination Marcel sees the shadowy figure of Swann coming towards him down the garden path of Combray, and intuitively understands the symbolic importance that Swann has had in shaping his life and influencing his work. In retrospect the story of "Swann in Love," which seemed so disconnected at the beginning, takes on new meaning in relationship to Marcel's own life and development of awareness.

Swann's love for Odette de Crécy springs from his admiration of art and his knowledge of late Renaissance form, with which he associates her beauty. In his desire to possess Odette, who reminds him of Jethro's daughter painted by Botticelli in one of the Sistine frescoes, Swann deludes himself into elevating her aesthetic appearance over a pretentious and avaricious bourgeois reality. Marcel observes:

> In the case of Swann's relationship with Odette, it is only when he becomes aware of her striking resemblance to Botticelli's Zipporah, that he is actually able to become attracted to her, with his aesthetic sense predominating over his natural human desire. The words "Florentine painting" were invaluable to Swann. They enabled him (gave him, as it were, a legal title) to introduce the image of Odette into a world of dreams and fancies which, until then, she had been debarred from entering, and where she assumed a new and nobler form. And whereas the mere sight of her in the flesh, by perpetually reviving his misgivings as to the quality of her face, her figure, the whole of her beauty, used to cool the ardour of his love, those misgivings were swept away and that love confirmed now that he could re-erect his estimate of her on the sure foundations of his aesthetic principles; while the kiss, the bodily surrender . . . coming, as now they came, to crown his adoration of a masterpiece in a gallery, must, it seemed, prove as exquisite as they would be supernatural.[16]

Marcel continues to analyze the relationship between Swann and Odette, discovering many parallels with his own predilections in affairs of the heart. Like Swann, Marcel finds that he constantly chooses to love young women who are not of his class and style. He attempts to understand the peculiarity of such passions by focusing on Swann's love for Odette. He comes to understand Swann's suffering because of the passion which Odette inspired:

> To tell the truth, she never was "his kind" even later on. And yet he loved her at that time very deeply and greatly to his sorrow. Later he was surprised at this contradiction; but there is no contradiction in it if we stop to think what a great amount of suffering is caused in men's lives by women who were "not their kind." That may be due to many causes: in the first place, since they are not our kind, we let ourselves be loved at first without loving in return and in that way we allow a habit to get a grip on our life which would not have been the case with a woman of our kind, who, feeling herself desired, would have set up a resistance, granted only an occasional rendezvous and not become so intimately connected with every hour of our life . . . In the second place, the hold they get on our affections is only a sentimental one, because it is not based on deep physical desire and, even if love develops, the mind works still more — instead of a need, we have a romance. We feel no distrust of women who are not our kind; we let them love us and if we then come to love them, we love them a hundred times more than the others but without experiencing with them the contentment of satisfied desire.[17]

Marcel then notes the personality changes that such a love can evoke when one is constantly unsure of the loved one's state of mind and whereabouts. Assuming the tone of an omniscient narrator, he describes Swann's search for Odette along the Parisian boulevards in various cafés one night when he missed seeing her at a party from which he had planned to drive her home. Marcel recounts Swann's subjective sense of time as it approaches a durational frenzy:

> . . . every few yards his carriage was held up by others, or by people crossing the street, loathsome obstacles each of which he would gladly have crushed beneath his wheels, were it not that a policeman fumbling with a note-book would delay him even longer than the actual passage of the pedestrian. He counted the minutes feverishly, adding a few seconds to each so as to be quite certain that he had not given himself short measure, and so, possibly, exaggerated whatever chance there might actually be of his arriving at Prevost's in time, and of finding her still there. . . What! all this disturbance simply because he would not see Odette, now, till to-morrow, exactly that he had been hoping, not an hour before. . . . He was obliged to admit also that now, as he sat in the same carriage and drove to Prevost's, he was no longer the same man, was no longer alone even -- but that a new personality was there beside him, adhering to him, amalgamated with him, a creature from whom he might, perhaps, be unable to liberate himself, towards whom he might have to adopt some such stratagem as one uses to outwit a master or a malady. . . .[18]

Dating almost from the moment of its aesthetic inception, Swann's love for Odette is associated with and realized in a special musical passage from a sonata by the composer Vinteuil. Swann speaks of these musical bars as a "little phrase," with which their love becomes identified:

> . . . the pianist would play to them — for their two selves, and for no one else — that little phrase by Vinteuil which was, so to speak, the national anthem of their love. He began, always, with a sustained tremolo from the violin part, which, for several bars, was unaccompanied, and filled all the foreground; until suddenly it seemed to be drawn aside . . . infinitely remote, in colour quite different, velvety with the radiance of some intervening light, the little phrase appeared, dancing, pastoral, interpolated, episodic, belonging to another world. It passed, with simple and immortal movements, scattering on every side the bounties of its grace, smiling ineffably still . . . he looked upon the sonata less in its own light — as what it might express, had, in fact, expressed to a certain musician, ignorant that any Swann or Odette, anywhere in the world, existed, when he composed it, and would express to all those who should hear it played in centuries to come — than as a pledge, a token of his love, which made even the Verdurins and their little pianist think of Odette and, at the same time, of himself — which bound her to him by a lasting tie.[19]

Confusing art with reality, and the extent to which his own emotional outlook influences his perspective on each, Swann is unable to perceive the truth about Vinteuil's sonata, interpreting it as a reflection of his own sentimental mood. Then, for a single moment in a flash of penetrating awareness, he realizes that strong emotion must not be permitted to shape reality according to his desire, and that in interpreting art, feeling must be sacrificed to a critical assessment of the aesthetic elements involved.[20] But after focusing on the emotional beauty of the "little phrase" in the sonata, Swann sacrifices his artistic awareness of the music itself, to concentrate on the personal pleasures which it can provide.[21]

In his egotistical interpretation of Vinteuil's work, Swann thus assesses the parts of the sonata in terms of his own emotional intensity, believing erronecusly that his love for the "little phrase" and his identification of it with his

love for Odette will create an immortal bond between himself and Odette for all of those listening. Swann vainly hopes that through identification with Vinteuil's music, he and Odette will be immortalized in the manner of the nymph and satyr on Keats's Grecian urn. His error confirms his position as a dilettante who, in the fervor of his admiration, believes that an art work can represent the admirer as well as its creator.

Despite the earlier promises of the "little phrase," upon hearing the same haunting melody later after many disillusionments in his relationship with Odette, Swann ultimately recognizes his own inexorable solitude. Although he had longed to believe in the music's intimations of immortality concerning the passion he had experienced, in the decline of his love he comes to recognize the constantly changing aspect of his existence in time. Despite the sense of communion with Odette he felt while hearing the sonata, in the final analysis Swann clings to the enjoyment of something no one else can share.

> The charm that he had been made to feel by certain evenings in the Bois, a charm of which Vinteuil's sonata served to remind him, he could not have recaptured by questioning Odette, although she, as well as the little phrase, had been his companion there. But Odette had been merely his companion, by his side, not (as the phrase had been) within him, and so had seen nothing -- nor would she, had she been a thousand times as comprehending, have seen anything of that vision which for no one among us . . . can be made externally visible.[13]

Although Swann loves life and loves the arts, he regards them both from within the context of his own ego, which makes it impossible for him to distinguish between the two. He effectively encloses himself inside his own abstraction of life as a collection of artifacts. Swann's choice is thus remarkably parallel to Quentin Compson's decision to exist alone inside his concept of purity in an idealized version of southern life in The Sound and the Fury.

Ultimately all that remains in Swann's relationship with Odette are the efforts of pursuit and imprisonment, which become the major themes in their

love. As he is forced to pursue a thousand Odettes, whom he attempts to reduce and circumscribe into the Odette he has before him, he is never able to force the facts to reveal the single, final truth about her. In his anger and jealousy, Swann engineers the maneuvers, the quarrels, and reconciliations that punctuate their relationship, with the same goal ever-present — to destroy the outer Odette, while carefully resurrecting his image of her inner being.

> . . . by the process of memory, Swann joined the fragments together, abolished the intervals between them, cast, as in molten gold, the image of an Odette compact of kindness and tranquility . . . But how rare these moments were, and how seldom he now saw her! Even in regard to their evening meetings, she would never tell him until the last minute whether she would be able to see him, for, reckoning on his being always free, she wished first to be certain that no one else would offer to come to her. She would plead that she was obliged to wait for an answer which was of the very greatest importance, and if, even after she had made Swann come to her house, any of her friends asked her, half-way through the evening, to join them at some theatre, or at supper afterwards, she would jump for joy and dress herself with all speed . . . and when at length she was ready, and, plunging into her mirror a last glance strained and brightened by her anxiety to look well . . . Swann would be looking so wretched that she would be unable to restrain a gesture of impatience as she flung at him: "So that is how you thank me for keeping you here till the last minute! And I thought I was being so nice to you. . . ." Sometimes, at the risk of annoying her, he made up his mind that he would find out where she had gone, and even dreamed of a defensive alliance with Forcheville [another of her suitors], who might perhaps have been able to tell him.[23]

But Swann's efforts of appropriation through persuasion and seduction, accusation, coercion, and blackmail all fail because his sole purpose is to enclose his beloved in his own image of her. Love as he experiences it is simply a form of "idolatry, an attempt to hold both idol and idolater within a closed timeless space from which change is eliminated."[24]

Marcel's Love for Gilberte

In his search for a moral and aesthetic design through which to attain unity of being, Marcel first investigates his own love relationships as potential

embodiments of immortal thoughts and feelings, through which he can transcend time. And as he analyzes each affair to discover its lasting qualities, he evaluates it with the story of Swann's love for Odette, and the debilitating flaws he believes that reveals. Despite his attempts to penetrate the mysterious essences of each of his great loves, however, Marcel finds that his intellectual analysis fails to reveal that which seems to him to defy the passage of time.

From the very beginning of Marcel's childhood passion for Gilberte Swann, she represents an image of mystery, vitality, and seductiveness with which he wants to identify and become inextricably assimilated. Soon after his arrival in Paris he discovers her playing in the Champs-Elysées where her governess had taken her for an outing. From then on, as though by appointment, Marcel arranges his afternoon walks with Françoise so that he might be able to intercept Gilberte. But these outings are always characterized by intense anxiety, for

> one never knew for certain from what direction Gilberte would appear, whether she would be early or late, and this perpetual tension succeeded in making more impressive not only the Champs-Elysées in their entirety, and the whole span of the afternoon, like a vast expanse of space and time, on every point and at every moment of which it was possible that the form of Gilberte might appear, but also that form itself, since behind its appearance I felt that there lay concealed the reason for which it had shot its arrow into my heart. . . .[25]

And once they were together Marcel discovers that he is unable to experience the happiness he has anticipated; filled with doubts about her affection for him, he is unable to formulate a mental concept of all that she means to him from the juxtaposition of views that she presents. He acknowledges:

> . . . those moments which I spent in her company, for which I had waited with so much impatience all night and morning, for which I had quivered with excitement, to which I would have sacrificed everything else in the world, were by no means happy moments; well did I know it, for they were the only moments in my life on which I concentrated a scrupulous, undistracted attention, and yet I could not discover in them one atom of pleasure. All the time that I was away from Gilberte, I wanted

> to see her, because, having incessantly sought to form a mental picture of her, I was unable, in the end, to do so, and did not know exactly to what my love corresponded.[26]

Even at such an early age Marcel becomes aware that in his fantasies he is creating a vision of Gilberte in his own image. Having received from her a copy of a small book by the novelist Bergotte dealing with Racine's use of myth, Marcel is enraptured by her thoughtfulness, and projects the two of them into a daydream in which Gilberte will play the role of his intellectual disciple and literary collaborator:

> I was touched by my friend's kindness in having procured the book for me; and as everyone is obliged to find some reason for his passion, so much so that he is glad to find in the creature whom he loves qualities which . . . are worthy to excite a man's love, that he assimilates them by imitation and makes out of them fresh reasons for his love, even although these qualities be diametrically opposed to those for which his love would have sought, so long as it was spontaneous -- as Swann, before my day, had sought to establish the aesthetic basis of Odette's beauty -- I, who had at first loved Gilberte, in Combray days, on account of all the unknown element in her life into which I would fain have plunged headlong, have undergone reincarnation, discarding my own separate existence as a thing that no longer mattered, I thought now, as of an inestimable advantage, that of this, my own, my too familiar, my contemptible existence Gilberte might one day become the humble servant, the kindly, the comforting collaborator, who in the evenings . . . would collate for me the texts of rare pamphlets.[27]

Yet, in Gilberte's refusal to avow her feelings of love for Marcel, he is in a constant state of doubt as to the degree of her affection. He describes the emotional state of flux into which his emotions have plunged him, portraying the power of his imagination in terms of a weaving metaphor:

> . . . while my love, incessantly waiting for the morrow to bring a confession of Gilberte's love for me, destroyed, unravelled every evening, the ill-done work of the day, in some shadowed part of my being was an unknown weaver who would not leave where they lay the severed threads, but collected and rearranged them, without any thought of pleasing me, or of toiling for my advantage, in the different order which she gave to all her handiwork.[28]

Shocked by the different aspects of herself which Gilberte revealed, and having as yet no theory of the multiplicity of the self with which to understand either her or himself, Marcel attributes her constant mutability to the different legacies of personality which she has inherited from her parents. He remarks:

> . . . there were, at the least, two Gilbertes. The two natures, her father's and her mother's, did more than just blend themselves in her; they disputed the possession of her -- and yet one cannot exactly say that, which would let it be thought that a third Gilberte was in the meantime suffering by being the prey of the two others. Whereas Gilberte was alternately one and the other, and at any given moment no more than one of the two, that is to say incapable, when she was not being good, of suffering accordingly, the better Gilberte not being able at the time, on account of her momentary absence, to detect the other's lapse from virtue. And so the less good of the two was free to enjoy pleasures of an ignoble kind. . . . Indeed, the disparity was at times so great between these two Gilbertes that you asked yourself, though without finding an answer, what on earth you could have said or done to her, last time, to find her now so different.[29]

After enduring the first phase of their friendship characterized by Gilberte's playful indifference, Marcel decides that it is the superficial foundation of their relationship which is at fault, and attempts to reestablish a deeper emotional involvement as a New Year's resolution, a proposal which he sends to Gilberte in a letter. Waiting in vain for her reply over many weeks, he becomes ill, and it is only then that a note expressing sympathy and inviting him to tea arrives. Still believing that love is best expressed in a straightforward way, Marcel is confused that the lack of response to his emotional overtures was followed by the sympathetic invitation. His sense of the juxtaposition of unhappiness followed by the mysterious fulfillment of his desires is keen:

> . . . when Gilberte once broke out: "Who would ever have said that the little girl you watched playing prisoners' base, without daring to speak to her, would one day be your greatest friend, and you would go to her house whenever you liked?" she spoke of a change the occurrence of which I could verify only by observing it from without, finding no trace of it within myself, for it was composed of two separate states on both of which I

> could not, without their ceasing to be distinct from one another, succeed in keeping my thoughts fixed at one and the same time.[30]

Thus, added to the various glimpses of the multiplicity of visual images and the multiple forms in which the personality can manifest itself, Marcel comes to realize that there is a certain element of chance which interjects its own vicissitudes and rewards for the unsuspecting lover. These variables make no sense to him at all, and lead him into confusing the Swanns' eagerness to have him as their daughter's suitor with Gilberte's own sentiments according to which he is an imposition.

After a year of attending her tea parties and calling constantly upon the Swanns, Marcel finally accepts the reality of Gilberte's indifference despite her protestations of love. Realizing that he must renounce their relationship in order to prevent her from retaining a contemptuous memory of him, Marcel sets himself the arduous task of never seeing her again in order to allow the process of oblivion to begin. His resolve almost gives way several times:

> That future in which I should not love Gilberte, which my sufferings helped me to divine although my imagination was not yet able to form a clear picture of it, certainly there would still have been time to warn Gilberte that it was gradually taking shape, that its coming was, if not imminent, at least inevitable, if she herself, Gilberte, did not come to my rescue and destroy in the germ my nascent indifference. How often was I not on the point of writing, or of going to Gilberte to tell her: "Take care. My mind is made up. What I am doing now is my supreme effort. I am seeing you now for the last time. Very soon I shall have ceased to love you." But to what end? By what authority should I have reproached Gilberte for an indifference which . . . I too manifested towards everything that was not herself?[31]

Marcel's final disillusion arrives at the moment when he feels that perhaps Gilberte has reconsidered the possibilities of their relationship. Receiving an invitation from Mme. Swann to attend a luncheon which Gilberte is having, Marcel feels that his happiness is once again within "arm's length." Devising a plan to send her "the finest flowers that grew" each day for the next year, he goes out to sell a large antique Chinese porcelain bowl, which had been

left to him by his Aunt Léonie. Having received ten thousand francs from the sale, he is in a carriage bound for home when he sights Gilberte walking with another man:

> . . . in the failing light, I thought I saw, close to the Swanns' house but going in the other direction, going away from it, Gilberte, who was walking slowly, though with a firm step, by the side of young man with whom she was conversing, but whose face I could not distinguish. I stood up in the cab, meaning to tell the driver to stop; then hesitated. The strolling couple were already some way away, and the parallel lines which their leisurely progress was quietly drawing were on the verge of disappearing in the Elysian gloom.[32]

Having been told by her mother that Gilberte had said she would be out with a young woman, Marcel returns home with his ten thousand francs, confirmed in his final resolution never to see her again. And as time goes by and he continues to refuse to answer her polite notes, Marcel's main regret is that he had given up an opportunity to enter the diplomatic service in order not to separate himself from Gilberte, and he laments:

> We construct our house of life to suit another person, and when at length it is ready to receive her that person does not come; presently she is dead to us, and we live on, a prisoner within the walls which were intended only for her.[33]

These words will prove to be ironic in his next relationship with Albertine, whom he physically imprisons in his home. But as time goes by Marcel recognizes that although he is still tortured by his memories of Gilberte and his jealousy of her mysterious other suitor, he has finally liberated his imagination to be invested in another romantic encounter. He finally turns his thoughts from the past to the future:

> Meanwhile there was in me another force which was striving with all its might to overpower that unwholesome force which still shewed me, without alteration the figure of Gilberte walking in the dusk: to meet and to break the shock of the renewed assaults of memory, I had, toiling effectively on the other side, imagination. The former force did indeed continue to

> shew me that couple walking in the Champs-Elysées, and offered me other disagreeable pictures drawn from the past. . . . But the other force, working upon the canvas of my hopes, outlined a future far more attractively developed than this poor past which, after all, was so restricted.[34]

It is not until twenty years later that Marcel discovers the mysterious young man was in fact Mlle. de Vinteuil, but by the time of Gilberte's revelation, he is indifferent enough to forget to tell her that in the magnitude of his early love, he had sold his finest possession to buy her flowers. Thus, through the relationship with Gilberte Marcel makes his initial important discoveries of the multiplicity of personality, of the impossibility of possessing the beloved, of passion excited by jealousy, and of the inevitability of oblivion despite intense suffering.

Marcel's Love for Albertine

There are many interesting and ironic parallels existing in the three love stories of Swann and Odette, Marcel and Gilberte, and Marcel and Albertine. Following in Swann's footsteps in falling in love with a woman who is beneath him socially and not of his "genre," Marcel manifests the same jealousy and over-protectiveness in his own affairs as he had discovered in Swann's great passion. It is only in retrospect that Marcel remembers Swann's admonition that "assumes . . . the importance of a prophetic warning, which . . . [he] had not had sense to take."[35] Swann had advised:

> "Nervous men ought always to love, as the lower orders say, 'beneath' them, so that their women have a material inducement to do what they tell them. . . . The danger of that kind of love, however, is that the woman's subjection calms the man's jealousy for a time but also makes it more exciting. After a little he will force his mistress to live like one of those prisoners whose cells they keep lighted day and night, to prevent their escaping. And that generally ends in trouble."[36]

In his love for Albertine, the character which Marcel reveals of his beloved is more a portrait of his own psychological weaknesses than of an actual

woman. Her external reality is gradually incorporated into the inner world of Marcel's fantasies and passions. And as he becomes completely absorbed in his jealous imaginings about Albertine's feelings and conduct, Marcel retreats more and more inside himself, ultimately inhabiting an abstract mental universe in which the real and the imaginary merge.

In his attempts to circumscribe Albertine within the confines of his emotion, Marcel finds the same proliferation of perspectives and aspects of her personality that he had discovered in Gilberte. In the multiplicity of facades which Albertine presents, Marcel finds that his concept of her has become a series of juxtapositions:

> I have said that Albertine had not seemed to me that day to be the same as on previous days and that afterwards, each time I saw her, she was to appear different. But I felt at that moment that certain modifications in the appearance, the importance, the stature of a person may also be due to the variability of certain states of consciousness interposed between that person and us. One of those that play an important part in such transformations is belief; that evening my belief, then the vanishing of my belief, that I was about to know Albertine had, with a few seconds' interval only, rendered her almost insignificant, then infinitely precious in my sight; some years later, the belief, then the disappearance of the belief, that Albertine was faithful to me brought about similar changes.[37]

Thus the mutability of the self, Marcel suggests, has as much to do with the emotional perception of the lover as it has to do with the manifold and varied manifestation of the loved one's physical and spiritual being.

In his first meeting with Albertine in Balbec on the beach, Marcel is less attracted to her than to her friends in the band of girls. It is only upon the discovery of her reputed lesbian interests that he become jealous and obsessed with protecting her from such deviancy. He freely admits:

> My hesitation between the different girls of the little band, all of whom retained something of the collective charm which had

> at first disturbed me . . . allow[ed] me later on . . . a sort of intermittent and very brief liberty to abstain from loving [Albertine]. . . . From having strayed among all her friends before it finally concentrated itself on her, my love kept, now and then, between itself and the image of Albertine a certain "play" of light and shade which enable it, like a badly fitted lamp, to flit over the surface of each of the others before settling its focus upon her; the connection between the pain which I felt in my heart and the memory of Albertine did not seem to me necessary; I might perhaps have managed to co-ordinate it with the image of another person. Which enabled me, in a momentary flash, to banish reality altogether, not only external reality, as in my love for Gilberte (which I had recognised to be an internal state in which I drew from myself alone the particular quality, the special character of the person whom I loved, everything that rendered her indispensable to my happiness), but even the other reality, internal and purely subjective.[38]

Marcel believes that the power of jealousy is such that it can create a kind of love relationship despite the fact that the person is neither one's objective or subjective choice. Thus, he realizes that his love for Gilberte had depended upon his ability to create a concept of her in his imagination; whereas, his love for Albertine is simply a coincidence, an unfortuitous uniting of himself with a young woman for whom he feels neither a strong external or internal attraction. Relying on Albertine's affections simply becomes a habit, which is constantly reenforced by Marcel's jealousy and curiosity to discover her inner truth, which continues to elude him.

The fabrications of Albertine's motives and personality which he creates each day remove him steadily from her. In his obsession to possess Albertine, Marcel becomes a caricature of the impossibility of "penetrating, circumscribing, and appropriating the world of another human being."[39] He realizes belatedly that by trying to control all of Albertine's actions, he has simply created a mobile cat and mouse game.

> . . . I had managed to separate Albertine from her accomplices, and, by so doing, to exorcise my hallucinations; even if it was possible to make her forget people, to cut short her attachments, her sensual inclination was, itself also,

> chronic and was perhaps only waiting for an opportunity to afford itself an outlet. Now Paris provided just as many opportunities as Balbec. . . . In leaving Balbec, I had imagined that I was leaving Gomorrah, plucking Albertine from it; in reality, alas, Gomorrah was dispersed to all the ends of the earth. And partly out of jealousy, partly out of ignorance of such joys . . . I had arranged unawares this game of hide and seek in which Albertine was always to escape me.[40]

In his desire to discover the truth in the myriad of falsehoods with which Albertine disguises her activities, Marcel thus evolves from protector and possible fiancé to detective and jailer, holding her prisoner in his home in Paris:

> . . . my gaze enveloped her still while she passed ahead of me under the arch, and it was still the same inert, domestic calm that I felt as I saw her thus, solid, flushed, opulent and captive, returning home quite naturally with myself, as a woman who was my own property, and, protected by its walls, disappearing into our house. Unfortunately, she seemed to feel herself a prisoner there, and to share the opinion of that Mme. de La Rochefoucauld who, when somebody asked her whether she was not glad to live in so beautiful a home as Liancourt, replied: "There is no such thing as a beautiful prison"; if I was to judge by her miserable, weary expression that evening as we dined together in my room. I did not notice it at first; and it was I that was made wretched by the thought that, if it had not been for Albertine (for with her I should have suffered too acutely from jealousy in an hotel where all day long she would have been exposed to contact with a crowd of strangers), I might at that moment be dining in Venice in one of those little restaurants . . . from which one looks out on the Grand Canal. . . .[41]

Ironically, it is during the week when Marcel makes the decision to tell Albertine that he is not in love with her and prefers to leave alone on a trip to Venice rather than marry her, that she escapes from his home. The agony of having his intimacy with her terminated before he had been able to prepare himself for it emotionally sends Marcel into frenzied arrangements to have her return immediately. Although intellectually bored by Albertine, he is emotionally bereft in her absence. In the The Sweet Cheat Gone, Marcel solaces himself by thinking:

> . . . "It is only a matter of time, by the end of the week she will be here." But this argument did not alter the fact that for my heart, for my body, the action to be performed was the same: living without her, returning home and not finding her in the house, passing the door of her room -- as for opening it, I had not yet the courage to do that -- knowing that she was not inside, going to bed without having said good night to her, such were the tasks that my heart had been obliged to accomplish in their terrible entirety . . .[42]

Immediately after hearing that Albertine is willing to be reunited with him, however, he receives a telegram from her aunt informing him of her death in a riding accident. For a period of time Marcel's grief knows no bounds, and in her very death Albertine seemed more real to him that she had in life.

> And now she no longer existed anywhere, I might scour the earth from pole to pole without finding Albertine. The reality which had closed over her was once more unbroken, had obliterated every trace of the creature who had sunk into its depths. She was no more now than a name. . . . But I was unable to conceive for more than an instant the existence of this reality of which Albertine had no knowledge, for in myself my mistress existed too vividly, in myself in whom every sentiment, every thought bore some reference to her life. Perhaps if she had known, she would have been touched to see that her lover had not forgotten her, now that her own life was finished, and would have been moved by things which in the past had left her indifferent.[43]

He deludes himself into believing that perhaps the accident was a great romantic hoax, and that she might return to him at any minute. His desire to believe that she was alive leads him to read books on table-turning, and his love for her becomes almost mystic.

> My imagination sought for her in the sky, through the nights on which we had gazed at it when still together; beyond that moonlight which she loved, I tried to raise up to her my affection so that it might be a consolation to her for being no longer alive, and this love for a being so remote was like a religion, my thoughts rose to her like prayers.[44]

Yet, despite the fervor of his love, Marcel is simultaneously aware that through his enforced separation from Albertine, he will ultimately arrive at the same indifference that he had created deliberately in his separation from Gilberte. And in Venice only a year or so later, he realizes:

> As soon as oblivion had taken hold of certain dominant points of suffering and pleasure, the resistance offered by my love was overcome, I was no longer in love with Albertine. I tried to recall her image to my mind. I had been right in my presentiment when, a couple of days after Albertine's flight, I was appalled by the discovery that I had been able to live for forty-eight hours without her . . . Death acts only in the same way as absence. The monster at whose apparition my love had trembled, oblivion, had indeed, as I had feared, ended by devouring that love.[45]

Marcel has finally become cognizant of the fact that in a universe which is characterized by alternation, contradiction, and intermittence,[46] any sort of stable emotional relationship involving "possession" of the beloved is impossible. His growing recognition of the elements of time, change, and unpredictability that are stacked against any lover's attempt to find happiness with another lends an air of pathos to his descriptions of even the most ridiculous love affairs, and reveals their inadequacy as a successful vehicle to attain either unity of being or a sense of continuity of time through immortality of emotion.

Marcel's Love for the Duchesse de Guermantes

Soon after Marcel and his family move from Combray to Paris, his infatuation with the Duchesse de Guermantes occurs. Remembering her from his childhood, and discovering the rarefied social position she occupies in Paris, his feelings for her are as much the result of his dazzled view of her ancestry and her social power in the exalted inner circle of the Faubourg Saint-Germain as they are a personal response to her as a woman. She becomes the center of his idealized mythical world, and he worships her as the embodiment of his social fantasies and aspirations. However, from the moment he first glimpsed her in the church at Combray, he had been disappointed in her physical appearance, which he had subsequently enhanced in his imagination. She had at first appeared to be less than he had dreamed. He described her as

> ...a lady with fair hair and a large nose, piercing blue eyes, a billowy scarf of mauve silk, glossy and new and brilliant, and a little spot at the corner of her nose. And because on the surface of her face, which was red, as though she had been very warm, I could make out, diluted and barely perceptible, details which resembled the portrait that had been shewn to me ... there was, indeed, but one woman resembling the portrait of Mme. de Guermantes who on that day, the very day on which she was expected to come there, could be sitting in that chapel: it was she! My disappointment was immense. It arose from my not having borne in mind, when I thought of Mme. de Guermantes, that I was picturing her to myself in the colours of a tapestry or a painted window, as living in another century, as being of another substance than the rest of the human race. Never had I taken into account that she might have a red face, a mauve scarf....[47]

But several years later, when his family had taken up residence in a rented portion of the Guermantes' hôtel particulier in Paris, Marcel has the opportunity to observe her comings and goings, and admire the style of her clothing and manners. He is therefore overwhelmed a few months later when she recognizes him from her balcony at the Opéra-Comique, and smiles directly at him. For Marcel her recognition was equivalent to being named a duke of the realm:

> ... when I turned my eyes to their box, far more than on the ceiling of the theatre, painted with cold and lifeless allegories, it was as though I had seen, thanks to a miraculous rending of the clouds that ordinarily veiled it, the Assembly of the Gods in the act of contemplating the spectacle of mankind, beneath a crimson canopy, in a clear lighted space, between two pillars of Heaven. I gazed on this brief transfiguration with a disturbance which was partly soothed by the feeling that I myself was unknown to these Immortals; the Duchess had indeed seen me once with her husband, but could surely have kept no memory of that, and it gave me no pain that she found herself, owing to the place that she occupied in the box, in a position to gaze down upon the nameless, collective madrepores of the public in the stalls, for I had the happy sense that my own personality had been dissolved in theirs, when ... the Duchess, goddess turned woman, and appearing in that moment a thousand times more lovely, raised, pointed in my direction the white-gloved hand which had been resting on the balustrade of the box, waved it at me in token of friendship; ... [and] remember[ing] me, showered upon me the sparkling and celestial torrent of her smile.[48]

As Marcel allows his memory to dwell on the quality of the Duchess's smile and the warm feeling that it had given him, he begins to consider investing his imagination in romantic feelings about her:

> . . . ever and again, the scintillating smile of Mme. de Guermantes, the pleasant sensation it had given me, returned. And without exactly knowing what I was doing, I tried to find a place for them . . . beside the romantic ideas which I had long held and which Albertine's coldness . . . and . . . my deliberate and too long sustained separation from Gilberte, had set free. . . . Compared with these ideas my memory of Mme. de Guermantes at the Opéra-Comique was a very little thing, a tiny star twinkling beside the long tail of a blazing comet. . . .[49]

As Marcel remembers his feelings on this occasion, he attempts through a process of juxtaposition of similar but different experiences from the past, to reach a clear understanding of his image of the Duchess, to realize exactly what she means to him:

> . . . my memory of her . . . passed gradually into a unique and definite association -- exclusive of every other feminine form -- with those romantic ideas of so much longer standing than itself, it was during those few hours in which I remembered it most clearly that I ought to have taken steps to find out exactly what it was; but I did not then know the importance which it was to assume for me; it was pleasant merely as a first private meeting with Mme. de Guermantes inside myself, it was the first, the only accurate sketch, the only one taken from life, the only one that was really Mme. de Guermantes; during the few hours in which I was fortunate enough to retain it without having the sense to pay it any attention, it must all the same have been charming, that memory, since it was always to it, and quite freely moreover, to that moment, without haste, without strain, without the slightest compulsion or anxiety, that my ideas of love returned. . . .[50]

In the process of crystallization of his love for the Duchesse de Guermantes, Marcel is attempting to discover a spiritual equivalent in his own imagination "to find out exactly" what she signifies in his mind and emotions. The validity of this process, the same one that occurs in each of his romances and each of his movements of metaphorical memory, is subsequently confirmed as a tool through which literature can be created in the symbolism of Mlle. de Saint-Loup, the

great-niece of the Duchesse de Guermantes, who appears at the end of the novel. But at this earlier point Marcel is unsure how to seize and examine the memory in his imagination, saying, "as gradually those ideas fixed . . . [the memory] more definitely, it acquired from them a proportionately greater strength but itself became more vague; presently I could no longer recapture it."[51] This experience thus parallels his other episodes of involuntary memory in becoming vaguer with increasing focus on the sight, sound, smell, taste, or feeling which have inspired the memory.

After this event, Marcel follows the Duchesse de Guermantes during her daily outings, trying to make it seem as though each meeting were by chance:

> . . . now every morning, long before the hour at which she would appear, I went by a devious course to post myself at the corner of the street along which she generally came, and, when the moment of her arrival seemed imminent, strolled homewards with an air of being absorbed in something else, looking the other way and raising my eyes to her face as I drew level with her, but as though I had not in the least expected to see her . . . . For never was devotee of a famous actress whom he did not know . . . never was angry or idolatrous crowd . . . never were these so stirred by their emotion as I was, awaiting the emergence of this great lady who in her simple attire was able, by the grace of her movements . . . to make of her morning walk . . . a whole poem of elegant refinement. . . .[52]

It is during the course of these walks that Marcel realizes the metaphorical associations with which his imagination has imbued the image of the Duchesse. From describing her as "a drawing that was a masterpiece of art,"[53] he also is reminded of "some Saint of the early ages of Christianity."[54] In addition, his frequent dream of a "gothic fortress rising from a sea whose waves were stilled as in a painted window" probably pertains to her as well.[55]

In his imaginary affair with the Duchess, Marcel delights himself by fantasizing that their roles are reversed with himself as the powerful figure and she as the petitioner. His declamatory tone casts a note of irony into his statements, detracting from his insistence on the genuine aspect of his emotions.

> I was genuinely in love with Mme. de Guermantes. The greatest happiness that I could have asked of God would have been that He should overwhelm her under every imaginable calamity, and that ruined, despised, stripped of all the privileges that divided her from me, having no longer any home of her own or people who would condescend to speak to her, she should come to me for refuge. I imagined her doing so. . . . I preferred to plan out in the third person . . . a whole novel crammed with adventure, in which the Duchess, fallen upon misfortune, came to implore assistance from me -- me who had become, by a converse change of circumstances, rich and powerful. . . . I had, alas, in reality, chosen to love the very woman who, in her own person, combined perhaps the greatest number of different advantages; in whose eyes . . . I could not hope, myself, ever to cut any figure; for she was as rich as the richest commoner -- and noble also; without reckoning that personal charm which set her at the pinnacle of fashion, made her among the rest a sort of queen.[56]

It is ultimately the mystery of all that the Guermantes represent that fascinates Marcel and directs his love for the Duchess. He feels that in order to be able to penetrate the myth behind which he may find the true essence of the Duchesse de Guermantes, he will need to enlist the aid of her nephew, his friend, Robert de Saint-Loup.

> What she did during the mysterious daily life of the "Guermantes" that she was -- this was the constant object of my thoughts; and to break through the mystery, even by indirect means, as with a lever, by employing the services of a person to whom were not forbidden the town house of the Duchess, her parties, unrestricted conversation with her, would not that be a contact more distant but at the same time more effective than my contemplation of her every morning in the street?[57]

Having pursued Robert to Doncières, where he is in military training, Marcel ultimately strains their friendship in his efforts to seek access to the Duchess. Although Robert makes the effort to serve as an intermediary when he returns to Paris, his aunt refuses to be introduced to Marcel.

During this period of separation from the Duchess, Marcel wrestles with his ambivalent feelings, both missing her and acknowledging the unreasonableness of his passion. In one mood he can say:

> A fortnight already since I last saw Mme. de Guermantes. A fortnight which did not appear so enormous an interval save to me, who, when Mme. de Guermantes was concerned, reckoned time by minutes.

And yet, only a day or so later, he admits:

> I thought of what might be in store for me; to try to forget Mme. de Guermantes seemed to me a dreadful thing, but reasonable, and for the first time possible, easy perhaps even.[59]

The denouement in Marcel's romance with the Duchess occurs when his mother presents him with a realistic picture of his activities. Although she tries to spare his feelings, she speaks directly enough to bring him to his senses:

> "You really must stop hanging about trying to meet Mme. de Guermantes. All the neighbors are talking about you. Besides, look how ill your grandmother is, you really have something more serious to think about than waylaying a woman who only laughs at you."[60]

Marcel describes his awakening as though it is a return from hypnosis or a dream:

> The rest of the day had been consecrated to a last farewell to this malady which I was renouncing. . . . And then it had finished. I had given up my morning walks, and with so little difficulty that I had thought myself justified in the prophecy . . . that I should easily grow accustomed in the course of my life to ceasing to see a woman.[61]

Thus, a basic theme in Marcel's educational process is the gradual discovery that unknown people who become personal symbols imbued with power and beauty through the process of his romantic imagination may not in reality be compatible with the dream-version. When confronted with the reality, he realizes that the privileged image he has created of Mme. de Guermantes, cannot coexist with the actuality. Concerning the names of the magic people or places for whom he composes imaginary identities, Marcel admits:

> they are like whimsical draughtsmen, giving us of people and places sketches so unlike reality that we often experience a kind of stupor when we have before our eyes, in place of the imagined, the visible world.[62]

Marcel's Discovery of the "Laws" Directing Human Emotion

Love thus becomes an omnipotent force in shaping both character and destiny in the world of Proust's novel. Through his descriptions of love relationships, Proust presents the dilemma of the fragmented self as it searches for a sense of unity vis-a-vis the loved one. The bewilderment in romantic love experienced by Swann, and later by Marcel, is the result of their fallacious assumptions that there can be only one true Odette, and one true Gilberte, Albertine, and Duchesse de Guermantes. Their behavior reveals the human error in believing that for all other people there is only one inner truth, one philosophy by which to live, or one trait that characterizes each personality. Even the seeming unity and continuity inherent in a single passion, such as love or jealousy, Marcel realizes, may be an illusion. He finally comes to understand that

> What we believe to be our love, our jealousy is not one and the same passion, continuous and indivisible. It is composed of an infinity of successive loves, different jealousies which are ephemeral, but which, through their uninterrupted multitude give the impression of continuity, the illusion of unity.[63]

Thus, if such discontinuity is the determining characteristic of a single passion, how much more so must it be of the self, which we would like to believe is characterized by stability, unity, and permanence, "built about a hard and changeless core."[64]

Through introspection Marcel finally becomes aware of the multiple aspects of personality as they show their successive and intermittent characteristics. He reaches the realization that no personality is single, but exists as a cluster of personalities, which each react separately and in different ways to given circumstances, with sometimes one in domination according to the impact of the environment, and sometimes another. Occasionally one personality seems to prevail over the others for a period of time, thereby giving a semblance

of consistent behavior; but ultimately, all are subject to decay and death, with exhausted personalities discarded and new ones arising to take their place.[65]

In the process of making discoveries about the women he loves, Marcel ultimately becomes a cynic, with the simple acknowledgment:

> My increase of knowledge about life . . . brought me for the time being to agnosticism. What can one affirm, when what one believed to be probable in the first place, was shown to be false in the second place, and in the third was proved to be true?[66]

He realizes that in all of his romances he has played the role of an "image-maker," falling in love with an idealized picture conjured up in his own mind. After the image transference has taken place, and an abstraction is transferred from his inner being to surround the loved figure, the passion becomes transformed into a form of idolatry, with Marcel losing his own sense of identity in the intensity of his desire to impose the shape of his abstract image upon the beloved.[67]

As Marcel grows to comprehend the manifold aspects of the self, he realizes the gulf that exists between the emotional and social perspectives that each individual forms of reality. As the emotional self falls in love, it transcends the confines of the social context, and attempts to impose upon the world its own view of the beloved according to the particular emotional frame of reference through which it assesses reality. The discovery that he has been unable to distinguish between the emotional and social frames of reference, placing greater emphasis on the emotional perspective, provides the explanation for Marcel's continuing attraction to a certain "genre" of woman.[68]

> For Albertine, plump and dark, did not resemble Gilberte, tall and ruddy, and yet they were fashioned of the same healthy stuff, and over the same sensual cheeks shone a look in the eyes of both which it was difficult to interpret. . . . A man has almost always the same way of catching cold, and so forth; that is to say, he requires to bring about the event a certain combination

> of circumstances; it is natural that when he falls in love he should love a certain class of woman, a class which for that matter is very numerous. The two first glances from Albertine which set me dreaming were not absolutely different from Gilberte's first glances. I could almost believe that the obscure personality, the sensuality, the forward, cunning nature of Gilberte had returned to tempt me, incarnate this time in Albertine's body, a body quite different and yet not without analogies. . . . Who could tell whether . . . the same qualities of rich blood, of uneasy brooding would return one day to spread havoc in my life, but incarnate this time in what feminine form I could not foresee.[69]

In his constant selection of women who are not of his class, Marcel begins to believe that his desire is directed towards those who are the most opposite of himself, and therefore, the most capable of creating his suffering.[70]

In the gradual evolution of Marcel's awareness of himself in both an emotional and a social context over time, he ultimately derives one of the "laws" that directs the course of all human emotions, that of emotional blindness to reality. He realizes that:

> 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 catches them in its vortex, flings them back upon the idea that we have always had of them, makes them adhere to it, coincide with it.[71]

Marcel has discovered what Swann never comprehended, which becomes the key to the behavior of all Proustian lovers -- that the mind in matters of love and of desire overlooks "all the images that do not assist in the action of the play and retains only those that may help to make its purpose intelligible."[72] Thus, Marcel understands how in each lover's creation of an inner world which seems to have "its own space and its own light," he is reflecting a "superior realm" in which he attempts to exist with his beloved.[73] This insistence on intransigent idealism leads the lover into self-deception, self-delusion, and total frustration of his desires. And it is in the final effort to transcend reality through dedication to his emotional pursuits that he runs the risk of becoming enclosed in his own ego.

Marcel's Search for Unity of Being in Myths of Friendship and Society

In Marcel's search for that which endures the passage of time, friendship parallels love in its illusions and disappointments, with slightly less suffering involved. While slowly outgrowing his early idealization of a perfect human relationship, he discovers that friendship is generally based on erroneous impressions, and is incapable of creating real contact between individuals.

The erroneous impressions that Marcel discovers confirm his belief in the multiplicity of personality which he had first become aware of in his relationships with Gilberte and Albertine. With the fragmentary and frequently opposing glimpses that he has of those around him, he realizes that it is only by reconstituting each character's identity from conflicting data in each new appearance that he is able to comprehend their hidden, inner reality. Thus, Marcel's observations of his friends and those around him become a collage of different perspectives and interpretations, following the aesthetic principle of discontinuity and juxtaposition, which he had devised earlier in his concept of the displacement of space through movement.[74]

In Marcel's search for unity of being for himself and for those around him, it becomes apparent that the moral aspect of such a search must adapt itself to man's fragmented glimpses of truth in life, creating a tension between the desire to attain an identifiable, enduring personality and the awareness that this goal must be achieved despite man's discontinuous perceptions in the continuity of time.

Marcel's Friendship with Robert de Saint-Loup

In Marcel's friendship with Robert de Saint-Loup, genuine emotion seems to be expressed by the latter, which Marcel tolerates and enjoys without analysis or understanding. From his first encounter at Balbec he is struck by Saint-Loup's aristocratic beauty and grace, which link him physically with the Guermantes clan, and give telltale but unsubstantiated signs of the inherent homosexuality peculiar to the family. Marcel recounts his first impression of Robert:

> . . . along the certain gangway leading inland from the beach to the high road I saw, tall, slender, his head held proudly erect upon a springing neck, a young man go past with searching eyes, whose skin was as fair and whose hair as golden as if they had absorbed all the rays of the sun. Dressed in a clinging, almost white material such as I could never have believed that any man would have the audacity to wear, the thinness of which suggested no less vividly than the coolness of the dining-room the heat and brightness of the glorious day outside, he was walking fast. His eyes, from one of which a monocle kept dropping, were of the colour of the sea. . . . Because of his "tone," of his impertinence befitting a young "lion," and especially of his astonishing good looks, some people even thought him effeminate, though without attaching any stigma, for everyone knew how manly he was and that he was a passionate "womaniser." . . . I was overcome with joy at the thought that I was going to know him and to see him for several weeks on end, and confident that he would bestow on me all of his affection.[75]

In addition, Marcel remarks upon Saint-Loup's haughty coldness of demeanor before they were introduced by his great-aunt. With an astounding transformation taking place at the moment of introduction, he is the able to see a warmer and more considerate side of the young marquis, which is the second of many juxtaposed views throughout the novel.

> The first rites of exorcism once performed, as a wicked fairy discards her outer form and endures all the most enchanting graces, I saw this disdainful creature become the most friendly, the most considerate young man that I had ever met. . . . I said to myself, "I've been mistaken about him once already; I was taken in by a mirage; but I have corrected the first only to fall into a second, for he must be a great gentleman who has grown

> sick of his nobility and is trying to hide it." As a matter of fact it was not long before all the exquisite breeding, all the friendliness of Saint-Loup were indeed to let me see another creature but one very different from what I had suspected.[76]

Marcel is indifferent to pursuing the friendship until he realizes that Saint-Loup might be of aid in introducing him to his aunt, the Duchesse de Guermantes, with whom he has fallen in love. This callousness and friendliness feigned only to achieve one's hidden designs is a motivating attribute of all friendships, Marcel quickly realizes. Yet, traveling to Doncières to visit Saint-Loup at his military post, he finds himself greeted warmly by the young officer, whose ulterior motive is not immediately apparent. Saint-Loup confesses:

> ". . . To see you here, in these barracks where I have spent so much time thinking about you, I can scarcely believe my eyes. I must be dreaming."[77]

And Marcel observes that Saint-Loup then turned to

> look at me, coax me with little smiles, with tender though unsymmetrical glances, half of them coming directly from his eye, the other half through his eyeglass, but both sorts alike an allusion to the emotion that he felt on seeing me again, an allusion also to that important matter which I did not always understand, but which concerned me now vitally, our friendship.[78]

With his hypochrondriacal outlook on life, Marcel's friendships and love relationships all depend fundamentally upon the sympathy, understanding, and strength of the person he is with, whom he complements in return with his sensitive knowledge of literature, art, and music. Thus, it is appropriate for Marcel to project the slightly older Saint-Loup into the role of a doctor who is able to assuage all of his nervous fears as though deftly removing a grain of sand from his eye. Marcel feels healed and comforted in his presence, filled with unusual strength, and eager for action.[79] He describes the richness of the feeling that they share:

> . . . we sat talking together almost all evening, leaving our glasses of sauterne untouched on the table before us, isolated, sheltered from the others by the sumptuous curtains of one of those intuitive sympathies between man and man which, when they are not based upon any physical attraction, are the only kind that is altogether mysterious. Of such an enigmatic nature had seemed to me, at Balbec, that feeling which the interest of our conversations, a feeling free from any material association, invisible, intangible, and yet a thing of the presence of which in himself, like a sort of inflammatory gas, [Saint-Loup] had been so far conscious as to refer to it with a smile. And yet there was perhaps something more surprising still in this sympathy born here in a single evening, like a flower that had budded and opened in a few minutes in the warmth of this little room.[80]

Despite the volatile image of "inflammatory gas," with which Marcel associates the feeling that Saint-Loup manifests for him, and the sensuousness of the setting with its intimacy protected by the "sumptuous curtains" of an "intuitive sympathy" existing between the two of them, Marcel insists that the feeling is neither based on physical attraction or on intellectual conversation, but is rather a sort of chemical magnetism. Despite Saint-Loup's thinly disguised overtures, Marcel maintains an obtuse innocence. Yet he relates the conversations which he dismissed at the time as insignificant, conjuring them up in his imagination as early indications of later revelations about his friend.

> "I am jealous, furious," Saint-Loup attacked me, half smiling, half in earnest, alluding to the interminable conversations aside which I had been having with his friend. "Is it because you find him more intelligent that me; do you like him better than me? Well, I suppose he's everything now, and no one else is to have a look in!" Men who are enormously in love with a woman, who live in the society of woman-lovers, allow themselves pleasantries on which others, who would see less innocence in them, would never venture.[81]

While staying with Saint-Loup in his quarters at the barracks, Marcel discovers a picture of the Duchesse de Guermantes, which he longs to have Robert give him so that he might spend hours studying it. If he can possess the Duchess's picture, he feels that the constantly juxtaposed views with which he sees her might coalesce into one. He then remarks on the family resemblance which links

both the Duchess and Saint-Loup with the mythological antecedents of the Guermantes clan:

> . . . when I looked at Robert, I noticed that he too was a little like the photograph of his aunt, and by a mysterious process which I found almost as moving, since, if his face had not been directly created by hers, the two had nevertheless a common origin. The features of the Duchesse de Guermantes . . . the nose like a falcon's beak, the piercing eyes, seemed to have served also as a pattern for the cutting out -- in another copy analogous and slender, with too delicate a skin -- of Robert's face, which might almost be superimposed upon his aunt's. I saw in him, with a keen longing, those features characteristic of the Guermantes, of that race which had remained so individual in the midst of a world with which it was not confounded, in which it remained isolated in the glory of an ornithomorphic divinity, for it seemed to have been the issue, in the age of mythology, of the union of a goddess with a bird.[82]

Marcel is fascinated by the mystery which seems to surround all of the members of the Guermantes clan, which he seeks to penetrate both in his love for the Duchess and in his friendship with her nephew. But he strains his relationship with Robert by ignoring the social code and inquiring if Saint-Loup will give him the picture. Robert's reaction is one of suspicion and evasion.

> "You wouldn't care to give me her photograph, I suppose?" . . . "No; I should have to ask her permission first," was his answer. He blushed as he spoke. I could see that he had a reservation in his mind, that he credited me also with one, that he would give only a partial service to my love, under the restraint of certain moral principles. . . .[83]

But Marcel feels as though his mission has been accomplished in receiving Saint-Loup's pledge that he will mention Marcel's name to the Duchess, and express an interest on his behalf to see the famous collection of Elstir paintings which she has in her home.

Preparing to leave Doncières, Marcel has one last surprising glimpse of Saint-Loup as he goes to say good-bye.

> . . . I had decided to go . . . to the barracks, so as to be there before he arrived, when . . . I noticed, coming behind me in the

> same direction as myself, a tilbury which, as it overtook me, obliged me to jump out of its way; an N.C.O. was driving it, wearing an eyeglass; it was Saint-Loup. By his side was the friend whose guest he had been at luncheon, and whom I had met once before . . . I did not dare shout to Robert since he was not alone, but, in the hope that he would stop and pick me up, I attracted his attention by a sweeping wave of my hat, which might be regarded as due to the presence of a stranger. . . . he did indeed see my salute, and returned it, but without stopping; driving on at full speed, without a smile, without moving a muscle of his face, he confined himself to keeping his hand raised for a minute to the peak of his cap, as though he were acknowledging the salute of a trooper whom he did not know personally.[84]

Completely shocked by Saint-Loup's behavior, Marcel wonders about the reason for that final, curt salute, until he finally seizes an opportunity many months later to inquire the meaning of his actions. Although Saint-Loup apologizes for the wretched way he acted, he excuses himself only by saying that he was running late. Marcel marvels at his dissimulation:

> So he had recognised me! I saw again in my mind the wholly impersonal salute which he had given me, raising his hand to his cap, without a glance to indicate that he knew me, without a gesture to shew that he was sorry he could not stop. Evidently this fiction, which he had adopted at that moment, of not knowing me must have simplified matters for him greatly. But I was amazed to find that he had been able to compose himself to it so swiftly and without any instinctive movement to betray his original impression. I had already observed at Balbec that, side by side with that childlike sincerity of his face, the skin of which by its transparence rendered visible the sudden tide of certain emotions, his body had been admirably trained to perform a certain number of well-bred dissimulations, and that, like a consummate actor, he could, in his regimental and in his social life, play alternately quite different parts.

And so, from this relationship which is his closest friendship, Marcel learns the impossibility of knowing those for whom one feels affection. In the complexity of their personalities, elements of real, inner emotions are constantly revealed and then carefully disguised by the camouflaging techniques of their social training and experiences.

From awareness of the duplicity evident in Robert and from his growing sense of disillusionment with the social pretensions of those around him, Marcel gradually comes to believe that brilliance and goodness exist in most of humanity only as a thin veneer, which while gradually wearing away, reveals the baser intellect and motives underneath. Everywhere he turns in life he feels confronted by evidence of man's inherent selfishness, snobbishness, and occasional depravity, and comments:

> . . . Other people as we get to know them are like a metal dipped in an acid bath, and we see them gradually lose their good qualities. . . .[86]

Marcel's increasingly reclusive existence seems to indicate his belief that the individual exists alone, and that the only real bonds possible in life between oneself and others exist in the imagination. He ultimately expresses the cynical point of view that in friendship or in love

> the bonds that unite another person to ourself exist only in our mind. Memory as it grows fainter relaxes them, and notwithstanding the illusion by which we would fain be cheated and with which, out of love, friendship, politeness, deference, duty, we cheat other people, we exist alone. Man is the creature that cannot emerge from himself, that knows his fellows only in himself; when he asserts the contrary, he is lying.[87]

For, he queries:

> . . . Is not the indication of the unreality of . . . others sufficiently evident either in their inability to satisfy us — as, for example, [in] social pleasures, which at best produce the discomfort caused by partaking of wretched food; or friendship, which is a delusion . . .?[88]

Marcel's Disillusionment in Friendship with the Guermantes

Ulmately, in his examination of friendship as a means of attaining unity of being, Marcel's disillusionment extends to include the Duc and Duchesse de

Guermantes themselves, as he becomes increasingly aware that they use social forms behind which to hide their appalling lack of sincere emotional feeling.

Marcel has gradually realized that although the Duke and Duchess are a masterful team at social repartee, they have no love for one another personally. The exotic and sterile plant in their courtyard seems to be a botanical symbol of their childless marriage, and Marcel describes it as "the Duchess's little tree. . . ."

> . . . the precious plant, exposed in the courtyard with that insistence with which mothers "bring out" their marriageable offspring . . . [to see] whether the unlikely insect would come, by a providential hazard, to visit the offered and neglected pistil.[89]

There is, in addition, a banality which Marcel begins to find in the famous Guermantes' wit, while slowly sensing the debt that the Guermantes' taste owes to the artistic knowledge of the moribund Swann.[90] Despite the fact that the Hôtel Guermantes is filled with art, it is art that was primarily selected for the Duke and Duchess by Swann, who catered to their social snobbery and facade of connoisseurship. Marcel becomes aware of the thin veneer of their artistic knowledge and appreciation at their dinner party, which he had felt honored to attend. He quotes his conversation with the Duke and Duchess as he remembers it later:

> I said that I had been once to Amsterdam and The Hague, but that to avoid confusing my mind . . . I had left out Haarlem. "Ah! The Hague! What a gallery!" cried M. de Guermantes. I said to him that he had doubtless admired Vermeer's Street in Delft. But the Duke was less erudite than arrogant. Accordingly he contented himself with replying in a tone of sufficiency, as was his habit whenever anyone spoke to him of a picture in a gallery, or in the Salon, which he did not remember having seen. "If it's to be seen, I saw it!" "What? You've been to Holland, and you never visited Haarlem!" cried the Duchess [to Marcel]. "Why, even if you had only a quarter of an hour to spend in the place, they're an extraordinary thing to be seen, those Halses. I don't mind saying that a person who only caught a passing glimpse of them from the top of a tramway-car without stopping, supposing they were hung out to view in the street, would open his eyes pretty wide." This utterance

> shocked me as indicating a misconception of the way in which artistic impressions are formed in our minds, and because it seemed to imply that our eye is in that case simply a recording machine which takes instantaneous photographs.[91]

Despite his admiration of the collection of Elstir's paintings housed in the Hotel de Guermantes, Marcel is appalled by the socially superficial way in which the Duchess discusses the quality of Elstir's art. Each of the Duchess's aesthetic comments is circumscribed by her desire to promote her own social image, and not by any artistic sensitivity or critical acumen.

> "I believe you know M. Elstir," the Duchess went on to me, "as a man, he's quite pleasant." "He is intelligent," said the Duke; "one is surprised, when one talks to him, that his painting should be so vulgar." "He is more than intelligent, he is really quite clever," said the Duchess in the confidently critical tone of a person who knew what she was talking about. "Didn't he once start a portrait of you, Oriane?" asked the Princesse de Parme. "Yes, in shrimp pink," replied Mme. de Guermantes . . . "It's a ghastly thing; Basin wanted to have it destroyed." This last statement was one which Mme. de Guermantes often made. But at other times her appreciation of the picture was different: "I do not care for his painting, but he did once do a good portrait of me." The former of these judgments was addressed as a rule to people who spoke to the Duchess of her portrait, the other to those who did not refer to it and whom therefore she was anxious to inform of its existence.[92]

The final step in the disillusionment process occurs on a particular evening when Marcel has dropped by for a chat with the Duke in order to ask a question about social etiquette. There he encounters Swann, who, although ill, has dropped by to bring the Duchess a photograph of the Knights of Rhodes in which she had expressed an interest. The Duke, meanwhile, is involved in fending off members of the family who are arriving to tell him of the impending death of one of his cousins. His sole preoccupation is in maintaining the pretense that the bad news is, in fact, an exaggeration, in order to prevent the obligations of mourning from precluding his enjoyment of a gala evening.

> . . . it was evident that the Duke, while full of pity for his cousin's lot, and repeating ". . . He's such a good fellow!" had formed a favourable prognosis [of his cousin's fate]. The fact was that the dinner at which the Duke was to be present amused him . . . but above all he was to go on at one o'clock in the morning with his wife to a great supper and costume ball, with a view to which a costume of Louis XI for himself, and one of Isabel of Bavaria for his wife were waiting in readiness. And the Duke was determined not to be disturbed amid all these gaieties by the sufferings of the worthy Amanien d'Osmond.[93]

During the social conversation between Swann and the Duchess, she gaily suggests that he should spend the next spring in Italy and Sicily with them. When Swann replies that such a trip will be impossible, the Duchess brushes his excuse aside by saying, "I should like to know . . . how, ten months before the time, you can tell that a thing will be impossible."[94] And Swann replies to her directly

> ". . . my dear friend, it's because I shall then have been dead for several months. According to the doctors I consulted last winter, the thing I've got -- which may, for that matter, carry me off at any moment -- won't in any case leave me more than three or four months to live, and even that is a generous estimate," [he] replied . . . with a smile, while the footman opened the glazed door of the hall to let the Duchess out. "What's that you say?" cried the Duchess, stopping for a moment on her way to the carriage.[95]

The Duchess's uncertainty was caused by the incompatibility of the two obligations confronting her -- going out to dinner or showing compassion for a man who is about to die -- a riddle whose solution she had never learned in the code of social conventions. Deciding that the former of the two choices demanded less effort, the Duchess chose to make light of the second bit of news as though it should not even bear serious consideration. "You're joking," she said to Swann.[96]

And Swann, who for many years had had only one request to make of his longtime friend, begins to phrase his dying wish:

> "I don't know why I am telling you this; I have never said a word to you before about my illness. But as you asked me, and as now I may die at any moment. . . ."[97]

And his voice trails off as he realizes that he is detaining them. Then he says:

> "But whatever I do I mustn't make you late; you're dining out, remember," he added, because he knew that for other people their own social obligations took precedence of the death of a friend, and could put himself in her place by dint of his instinctive politeness.[98]

Much earlier in A la recherche du temps perdu before Swann had made the decision to marry Odette, his hopes were centered on the overwhelming desire to present his mistress to Mme. de Guermantes:

> There had been but one person in all the world whose opinion he took into consideration whenever he thought of his possible marriage to Odette; that was, and from no snobbish motive, the Duchesse de Guermantes. . . . But when Swann in his daydreams saw Odette as already his wife he invariably formed a picture of the moment in which he would take her -- her, and above all her daughter -- to call upon the . . . Duchesse de Guermantes. He had no desire to introduce them anywhere else, but his heart would soften as he invented -- uttering their actual words to himself -- all the things that the Duchess would say of him to Odette, and Odette to the Duchess, the affection that she would shew for Gilberte, spoiling her, making him proud of his child. . . . so it might be said that if Swann married Odette it was in order to present her and Gilberte, without anyon[e] else being present, without, if need be, any on[e] else ever coming to know of it, to the Duchesse de Guermantes.[99]

Yet even as he describes Swann's great hope, Proust as the omniscient narrator acknowledges that this one social ambition that Swann entertains for his wife and daughter is the one forbidden by "a veto so absolute" that Swann will die believing that the Duchess will never come to know them.[100]

Sweeping on to her carriage, but attempting simultaneously to say the socially correct thing to Swann, Mme. de Guermantes prattles, "I expect they [the doctors] gave you a dreadful fright, come to luncheon, whatever day you like . . . you will let me know your day and time. . . ."[101] But at the moment that she climbs into the carriage, the Duke, seeing her foot exposed, shouts in a loud voice:

> "Oriane, what have you been thinking of, you wretch? You've kept on your black shoes! With a red dress! Go upstairs quick and put on red shoes. . . .[102]

The Duchess, embarrassed by the fact that Swann is standing in the drive to let the carriage pass, protests that they are late, but the Duke retorts

> "No, no, we have plenty of time. . . . it won't take us ten minutes to get to the Parc Monceau. And, after all, what would it matter? . . . you can't possibly go there in a red dress and black shoes."[103]

And then while the Duchess goes up to her room, the Duke pushes Marcel and Swann gently away from his door, saying:

> "Good-bye, my children . . . get away, before Oriane comes down again. . . . If she finds you standing here she will start talking again, she is tired out already, she'll reach the dinner-table quite dead. Besides, I tell you frankly, I'm dying of hunger. . . .[104]

The Duke reveals no remorse in speaking of his wife's fatigue and his hunger in front of a dying friend, reflecting the greater significance which he attaches to the former. And as an afterthought, manifesting his "good breeding and good fellowship," he calls from the porch to Swann who is already in the courtyard:

> "You, now, don't let yourself be taken in by the doctors' nonsense, damn them. They're donkeys. You're as strong as the Pont Neuf. You'll live to bury us all!"[105]

From social vignettes such as that of the Duchess's red shoes, Marcel learns of the callousness of those whose lives depend on the dictates of society, according to which even the most human of events, the death of a friend, is submerged into insignificance and relegated to a rung below that of a dinner party and matching shoes. From his original romantic impression of the Duc and Duchesse de Guermantes as denizens of an elite and unattainable realm, Marcel has progressed to a different perspective which is more closely attuned to reality. As he observes them he muses:

> . . . I beheld the pair of them, withdrawn from that name Guermantes in which long ago I had imagined them leading an unimaginable life, now just like other men and other women, lingering, only, behind their contemporaries a little way, and that not evenly, as in so many households of the Faubourg, where the wife has the good taste to stop at the golden, the husband the misfortune to come down to the pinchbeck age of history, she remaining still Louis XV while her partner is pompously Louis-Philippe.[106]

Marcel's Discovery of the Superficiality of Friendship

Marcel thus realizes that all social relationships are basically characterized by a few recognizable patterns. Enclosed within its immediate environment, the social self relates only to its external setting. This is a truth at which he arrives slowly, over time recognizing the parallels between the Swanns, the Guermantes, and the Verdurins, whom he had previously believed to be unique, total beings, characterized by their singular positions in time and space. Marcel ultimately comprehends that all individuals in society are members of a common species that can be understood only superficially through the partial views provided in social intercourse.

Despite the negative answers of self-definition and transcendence of time which Marcel's explorations of the various levels of society yield, he continues, nevertheless, to test his characters within the pressures of the social mold, in order to observe how their social beings respond to the laws and myths regulating the movements and changes of society. Yet, in the final analysis, Marcel himself, as the semi-omniscient narrator, has only a partial view of the reality of the other characters. In relating his narrator's thoughts and impressions through the modern use of the multiple "I," by never presenting Marcel as wholly omniscient, Proust reveals the diversity of the individual, and reserves the total view for himself and his readers.[107]

Thus, in A la recherche du temps perdu the social world is portrayed through stylized behavioral patterns which provide, through revelations of the multiplicity of personality, both a technique of characterization and an important thematic source. In the multiple views of humanity provided through the kaleidoscope of society, through the use of parallelism, repetition, variation, and symmetry of shifting behavioral patterns providing characterization, the panorama of the novel is constructed thematically around Marcel's search for the underlying unity of the social self, which he finds as an inner core hidden beneath the social masks. The laws and myths of society thereby provide the common denominator for the social equations presented, linking the process of characterization, the narrative techniques, and the controlling themes of A la recherche du temps perdu.

Marcel's Search for the Permanent Self in the World of the Artist

As Marcel recounts the history of his long search to find immortal elements in man's existence, his descriptions of encounters with the work of a handful of fictional artists begin to create an important pattern. Through his descriptions of Elstir's paintings, Vinteuil's music, Bergotte's writing, and La Berma's acting, the gap that existed between the narrator's inner experience and his intellectual understanding of it becomes smaller and smaller, until the two unite in the epiphany at the end of The Past Recaptured. The all-encompassing vision of the relationship of art to life at the end of the book has been prepared for by earlier fragmentary insights into the significance of each artist's creative and realistic accomplishments, which Marcel has described and analyzed.

For Marcel, the world of art acts as a magnet throughout his adolescence, both enticing and disappointing him as a possible means of

discovering his identity through artistic creativity. After his early experiences of reading on long afternoons in Combray, Marcel finds himself rather easily led into the superficial and idolatrous social attitudes toward art which are exemplified in Swann and the Guermantes. As a young man Marcel later finds an echo of his own aesthetic interests in the examples of Swann and the Baron de Charlus, the brother of the Duc de Guermantes, who esteem the value of artistic expression in its ability to communicate human feelings more meaningfully than they can be expressed in social conversation. In their failure to engage in any creative activity of their own, however, these two early mentors are finally judged as inadequate aesthetic models. Despite Swann's connoisseurship of art, he ends his life as a sterile dilettante, who has devoted his time to being a collector rather than a creator. Marcel realizes that

> . . . the beauty of life, a phrase that has to some extent lost its meaning, a stage beyond the boundaries of art at which I had already seen Swann come to rest, was that also which, by a slackening of the creative ardour, idolatry of the forms which had inspired it, desire to avoid effort, must ultimately arrest an . . . [artist's] progress.[108]

The seducements of the beautiful life, the worship of aesthetic forms without the creative spark to invent them, and the beguiling desire to live a graceful, effortless existence, Marcel now comprehends are the enemy which he must confront in order to achieve his vocation.

In his analysis of Swann through the years, Marcel ultimately concludes that the real flaw in Swann's personality is the force of his ego which circumscribes the boundaries of his artistic world. In his insistence on interpreting the meaning of his experience of joy and sadness during Vinteuil's sonata only within the context of his own sentimental life, he slowly becomes a "collector" of emotions, savoring his feelings without being able to share them. Marcel observes this egocentric approach in Swann's remarks to him shortly before Swann's death, when he comments:

> "Even when one is no longer interested in things, it is still something to have been interested in them; because it was always for reasons which other people did not grasp. The memory of those sentiments is, we feel, to be found only in ourselves; we must go back into ourselves to study it. Don't take this idealistic jargon too lightly; what I mean to say is that I have loved life a great deal and I have also loved the arts. Well, now that I am a little too weary to live with other people, those old feelings of mine, so personal and individual, seem to me -- it is the mania of all collectors -- very precious. I open my heart to myself like a sort of showcase, and examine one by one ever so many love affairs unknown to anyone else. And of this collection, to which I am now more attached than to any other, I say to myself, rather as Mazarin said of his library, but still without any anguish, that it will be too bad to leave all that."[109]

One of Marcel's greatest insights in understanding the significance of an artistic creation comes when he realizes that he, like Swann, has conceived of art and reality as operating only within his own shallow frame of reference. The projection of personal emotions in assessing the value of a work of art becomes for Marcel the mark of sentimentality and dilettantism. He begins to understand that a work of art cannot be judged by its conformity to each critics's everyday perception of the reality it seems to be representing. He realizes that although the artist may first be inspired by the substance of his emotions or experience, ultimately inspiration becomes simply a tool through which he can express something which is beyond personal joy or sadness, representing rather his individual artistic vision.[110]

It is only when Marcel recognizes the essential subjectivity of his vision of the multi-layered nature of reality that it is possible for him to become involved in meaningful artistic creation himself.[111] He, as well as Swann, realizes that through self-recognition, art provides communication with our inner emotional life. However, the difference between Swann's and Marcel's reactions to art is found in Marcel's insistence that each individual must make the "return trip to [his] own reality,"[112] or otherwise run the risk of becoming what he calls

"one of those connoisseurs, 'celibates of art,' who go through life useless and unsatisfied."[113] If one admires art as a dilettante or a collector, the admiration will not be sufficient to create a dynamic relationship between art and one's own life.[114] Only by living fully and creating one's own sense of reality is it then possible to translate it creatively into art.

Thus, to counterbalance his participation in and analysis of the world of society, Marcel simultaneously engages in an intense exploration of the artistic world, meeting as many writers and artists as possible in order to understand how they deal with the dual dilemmas of multiplicity of personality and discontinuity of temporal perspectives in their art. His personal goal to attain unity of being and continuity of time has not wavered; yet in his long search for an immortal truth in life, he has become disheartened in investigating the myths of love, friendship, and society, in which nothing endures oblivion.

Marcel's Admiration for and Disillusionment with Bergotte

From his very earliest days in Combray Marcel discovered and became enamoured with the novels of Bergotte, identifying with the style and phraseology to such a degree that he felt he had found a sort of spiritual father figure. He describes Bergotte's style in terms of what his own will later evolve into:

> Whenever he spoke of something whose beauty had until then remained hidden from me, of pine-forests or hailstorms . . . by some piece of imagery he would make their beauty explode and drench me with its essence. . . .dimly realising that the universe contained innumerable elements which my feeble senses would be powerless to discern, did he not bring them within my reach, I wished that I might have his opinion, some metaphor of his, upon everything in the world. . . . And so, when I came suddenly upon similar phrases [to my own] in the writings of another, that is to say stripped of their familiar accompaniment of scruples and repressions and self-tormentings . . . then it was suddenly revealed to me that my own humble existence and the Realms of Truth were less widely separated than I had supposed, that at certain points they were actually in contact; and in my

> new-found confidence and joy I wept upon his printed page, as in the arms of a long-lost father.[115]

Marcel forms a mental image of Bergotte as a "frail and disappointed old man," whose children have all died leaving him without consolation. He then pledges himself to lifelong devotion to Bergotte's writing and philosophy.

Later in Paris in the company of M. de Norpois, a diplomat and friend of his father's who comes for dinner, Marcel expresses admiration for his literary idol, only to learn that Bergotte is not as widely respected as he had previously thought. In the disparaging remarks of M. de Norpois, Marcel feels that his own writing and intellect are also being judged as inadequate. As though his critique is the final judgment on Bergotte, M. de Norpois states:

> "Bergotte is what I call a flute-player: one must admit that he plays on it very agreeably, although with a great deal of mannerism, of affectation. But when all is said, it is no more than that, and that is nothing very great. Nowhere does one find in his enervated writings anything that could be called construction. No action -- or very little -- but above all no range. His books fail at the foundation, or rather they have no foundation at all."[116]

And then, as though his criticism of Bergotte's style were not enough, M. de Norpois goes on to condemn the personality of the author whom Marcel has revered.

> " . . . with him, the work is infinitely superior to the author. Ah! there is a man who justifies the wit who insisted that one ought never to know an author except through his books. It would be impossible to imagine an individual who corresponded less to his -- more pretentious, more pompous, less fitted for human society. Vulgar at some moments, at others talking like a book, and not even like one of his own, but like a boring book . . . -- such is your Bergotte.[117]

Marcel's immediate response is of his own "intellectual nullity," and he concludes that he was not born for the literary life.[118] It is only many years later that he is able to confront M. de Norpois's criticisms, which are as applicable to his own mind-set and writing as they are to Bergotte's. By the time Marcel attends the

Guermantes' reception at the end of A la recherche du temps perdu, he has armed himself with his theory of the power of involuntary memory and belief in the transcendent power of the imagination to summon metaphorical language with which to explore reality. It is only then that he feels he can counter the arguments of M. de Norpois and those of the school of realism.[119]

After this early warning by M. de Norpois, Marcel should have felt forewarned about Bergotte's appearance differing from the ideal he has maintained in his mind. Nonetheless, when he finally meets the artist at a luncheon given by Mme. Swann, he is strangely disappointed by his looks and social manner, which seem to belie the existence of a superior moral character. He relates:

> The name Bergotte made me jump like the sound of a revolver fired at me point blank, but instinctively, for appearance's sake, I bowed; there, straight in front of me ... my salute was returned by a young common little thick-set peering person, with a red nose curled like a snail-shell and a black tuft on his chin. I was cruelly disappointed, for what had just vanished in the dust ... was not only the feeble old man, of whom no vestige now remained; there was also the beauty of an immense work which I had contrived to enshrine in the frail and hallowed organism that I had constructed, like a temple, expressly for itself, but for which no room was to be found in the squat figure, packed tight with blood-vessels, bones, muscles, sinews, of the little man with the snub nose and black beard who stood before me.[120]

And indeed, over time Marcel discovers that the Bergotte he has come to know through his reading has another personality that is almost the opposite of his literary rendering, which is manifested in his daily life. Marcel finds it almost impossible to allow the two images to coexist, such is their disparity. Yet his naivete has been banished, and he realizes that

> ... the man with the little beard and snail-shell nose knew and used all the tricks of the gentleman who pockets your spoons, in his efforts to reach the coveted academic chair, or some duchess or other who could dispose of several votes at the election, but while on his way to them he would endeavour to

> make sure that no one who would consider the pursuit of such an object a vice in him should see what he was doing. He was only half-successful; one could hear, alternating with the speech of the true Bergotte, that of the other Bergotte, ambitious, utterly selfish, who thought it not worth his while to speak of any but his powerful, rich or noble friends, so as to enhance his own position, he who in his books, when he was really himself, had so well portrayed the charm, pure as a mountain spring, of poverty.[121]

This new realization of Bergotte's moral failings pushes Marcel to reach another conclusion, which plays a large role in his novel. He begins to believe that perhaps it is only in "vicious" lives that moral scruples can be presented with all of their strength. The artistic creation does not then reflect the artist's own personality, but rather depicts what is for him the "true life" represented in a literary solution. This discovery about the distance between art and real life for one artist, however, is not necessarily true in the case of other artists, Marcel learns. Each is a world within himself, with creative suffering alone serving as a common denominator.

By the time that Bergotte's literary reputation is established and he is a well-known figure, Marcel admits that his admiration for him has diminished and almost vanished. Criticizing his limpidity as "insufficient," Marcel has moved on to admire the work of a new writer. Thus, when he hears of Bergotte's death, it is as though it had occurred years before. Yet Marcel observes that the artist in Bergotte's soul had triumphed at the last. There is a certain aesthetic appropriateness that Bergotte should die while going to look at Vermeer's Street in Delft, to check on a certain tiny patch of yellow wall that he had read about but failed to notice himself.

The description of Bergotte's aesthetic concern which, despite his illness, prompted him to go and peer once again at Vermeer's painting creates a wonderful irony when set against the Duc de Guermantes's ignorance as to whether he had seen the Street in Delft when he had visited The Hague for the first time.

> . . . [Bergotte] fixed his eyes, like a child upon a yellow butterfly which it is trying to catch, upon the precious little patch of wall. "That is how I ought to have written," he said. "My last books are too dry, I ought to have gone over them with several coats of paint, made my language exquisite in itself, like this little patch of yellow wall." Meanwhile he was not unconscious of the gravity of his condition. In a celestial balance there appeared to him, upon one of its scales, his own life, while the other contained the little patch of wall so beautifully painted in yellow. He felt that he had rashly surrendered the former for the latter.[122]

Thus, for the real artist, life and the creation of art are in a relationship of juxtaposition, with attention to one involving a sacrifice for the other. Yet, it is in this "celestial balance," in the creation of a symbiotic relationship in which the two may nurture one another, that great art is produced.

And so Marcel describes Bergotte's death, and suggests that after all he has sacrificed for his art, perhaps he will transcend time through it "like the patch of yellow wall painted with so much knowledge and skill by an artist who must for ever remain unknown and is barely identified under the name of Vermeer."[123] Marcel's aspiration for his own transcendence through his writing can be seen in his final symbolic statement about Bergotte, with whom, despite his shortcomings, he finds he can identify:

> They buried him, but all through the night of mourning, in the lighted windows, his books arranged three by three kept watch like angels with outspread wings and seemed, for him who was no more, the symbol of his resurrection.[124]

Marcel's Disappointment in and Admiration for La Berma

Having developed a love of Racine's plays, Marcel had anticipated seeing a production of Phèdre with La Berma in the lead role as one of the major events of his boyhood. But upon attending the play, he was shocked to find Berma's style more of a natural phenomenon than he had anticipated, and was hence disappointed.

> I listened to her as though I were reading Phèdre, or as though Phaedra herself had at that moment uttered the words that I was now hearing, without it appearing that Berma's talent had added anything at all to them. I could have wished, so as to be able to explore them fully, so as to attempt to discover what it was in them that was beautiful, to arrest, to immobilise for a time before my senses every intonation of the artist's voice, every expression of her features. . . . But how short their duration was![125]

What Marcel fails to understand is the greatness of style in one who is able to deliver the lines of the play as though they are life itself. In wanting only to arrest the flow of words and movement in order to relish them in retrospect, Marcel reveals that as a boy he resembled Quentin in his focus on arresting time to savor his love for Caddy. By the time that Marcel sees La Berma perform on a second occasion when he is older, however, he has realized that the art of the theatre is based on its temporal becoming, on its life in the flow of time.

> I had no longer any desire, as on the former occasion, to be able to arrest and perpetuate Berma's attitudes . . . I realised . . . that that charm which floated over a line as it was spoken, those unstable poses perpetually transformed into others, those successive pictures were the transient result, the momentary object, the changing masterpiece which the art of the theatre undertook to create and which would perish were an attempt made to fix it for all time by a too much enraptured listener.[126]

In La Berma's performance, Marcel recognizes that he has been able to "enter a world existing outside the limits of contingent reality, yet capable of being experienced directly."[127] In other words, through an art form which imitates life in its changing juxtaposition of images, he has discovered the secret of simultaneously experiencing both the transcendent and durational aspects of time. And it is ultimately through the distancing and the inclusive perspective provided by art as a form of transcendence that Marcel learns that he can perceive the "successive pictures" of reality that create a total picture of life. Hence he makes the greatest discovery of his life: "The work of art is our only means of recapturing the past."[128]

The Importance of Elstir in Marcel's Life

By the time that Marcel encounters the artist Elstir in Balbec, he has studied his paintings and hopes to have the opportunity to admire the collection owned by the Guermantes. Although Marcel is young and equally as interested in becoming acquainted with the young girls on the beach as he is in talking to Elstir about his art, he nonetheless goes to Elstir's studio, and discovers links between the man of the present who is devoted to his art and his seclusion, and the man of a more social frivolous past.

Having recognized an early portrait of Odette de Crécy as a beautiful, young courtesan, which Elstir hides from his wife, Marcel suddenly associates him with the Swanns' and Verdurins' circle of friends in Paris, and inquires if he could perhaps have been the painter, M. Biche, whom he had heard them refer to disparagingly.

> Could it possibly be that this man of genius, this sage, this eremite, this philosopher with his marvellous flow of conversation, who towered over everyone and everything, was the foolish, corrupt little painter who had at one time been "taken up" by the Verdurins? I asked him if he had known them, whether by any chance it was he that they used to call M. Biche. He answered me in the affirmative, with no trace of embarrassment, as if my question referred to a period in his life that was ended and already somewhat remote.[129]

Marcel's feeling of disillusionment is immense, and upon seeing his expression, like a true master, Elstir tries to impart his philosophy of a varied life to Marcel, so that he might understand that art is produced in different ways and from different perspectives.

> "There is no man," [Elstir] began, "however wise, who has not at some period of his youth said things, or lived in a way the consciousness of which is so unpleasant to him in later life that he would gladly, if he could, expunge it from his memory. And yet he ought not entirely to regret it, because he cannot be

> certain that he has indeed become a wise man -- unless he has passed through all the fatuous or unwholesome incarnations by which that ultimate state must be preceded."[130]

Thus, having progressed beyond an empty social existence, Elstir in his later life of seclusion becomes a model for Marcel, personifying his belief that "an artist if he is to live the true life of the spirit in its full extent, must be alone and not bestow himself with profusion, even upon his disciples."[131] In such an existence he is able to seek the elements of truth from the circumstances of a rich and varied life of experience. This discovery of the need for complete solitude in which to be creative dictates the course of Marcel's later life.

In describing the style of Elstir's paintings, Marcel reveals that Elstir paints in the style of Whistler and the early Impressionists, attempting to catch the movement of light and shadow, and render an illusion of what he sees. Marcel relates:

> . . . the effort made by Elstir to reproduce things not as he knew them to be but according to the optical illusions of which our first sight of them is composed, had led him exactly to this point; he gave special emphasis to certain of these laws of perspective, which were thus all the more striking, since his art had been their first interpreter. . . . A river running beneath the bridges of a town was caught from a certain point of view so that it appeared entirely dislocated, now broadened into a lake, now narrowed into a rivulet, broken elsewhere by the interruption of a hill crowned with trees . . . and the rhythm of this disintegrated town was assured only by the inflexible uprightness of the steeples which . . . seemed to hold in suspense beneath them all the confused mass of houses that rose vaguely in the mist along the banks of the crushed, disjointed stream. . . .[132]

This style of painting which so closely resembles Proust's own writing gives a pictorial description of the way in which unity can be attained from chaotic fragments and perspectives, which are ultimately united symbolically in the artist's metaphorical image.

Although most of the paintings in Elstir's studio in Balbec are seascapes and not the paintings of his "first and second manners," which are described as

mythological and revealing Japanese influence, nonetheless Marcel is impressed by their impressionistic quality and finds a link between Elstir's goal and that of the writer he hopes to become:

> . . . I was able to discern from these that the charm of each of them lay in a sort of metamorphosis of the things represented in it, 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.[133]

Thus Marcel delineates the role of the artist in his own mind, reaching the realization that in order to attain one's true impressions, it is necessary to penetrate the subconscious and go beyond the intellectual notion which is alien to their essence, in order to come face to face with reality, which can then be presented in one's own metaphorical interpretation.

Having partaken of Elstir's memories, experienced his paintings, and listened to his philosophy, Marcel is ultimately awed by the quality of the friendship which he has been offered. He realizes that only one who has lived fully and knows himself is capable of such an offering.

> [Elstir] lavished on me a friendliness which was as far above that of Saint-Loup as that was above the affability of a mere tradesman. Compared with that of a great artist, the friendliness of a great gentleman, charming as it may be, has the effect of an actor's playing a part, or being feigned. Saint-Loup sought to please; Elstir loved to give, to give himself. Everything he possessed, ideas, work, and the rest which he counted for far less, he would have gladly given to anyone who could understand him. But, failing society that was endurable, he lived in an isolation, with a savagery which fashionable people called pose and ill-breeding, public authorities a recalcitrant spirit, his neighbours madness, his family selfishness and pride.[134]

Thus, Marcel finds in Elstir an example of renunciation of frivolous pleasures, which he admires no matter what the cause. He realizes that Elstir's motivating force may have originally been to elevate himself and his art in the eyes of those who regarded them disparagingly. Nevertheless, Marcel is aware that

> in producing he had lived for himself, remote from the society to which he had become indifferent; the practice of solitude had given him a love for it. . . .[135]

And so, finally, Marcel feels that he has found a worthy mentor who has aided him in his search for unity of being by pointing out how continuity can be created from discontinuity and unity of the self attained through multiplicity of experience.

Marcel realizes that for all artists and for the novelist he hopes to become, the path of art is the path to transcendence; it is

> . . . a formula eternally true, forever fecund with an unknown joy, a mystic hope [that] something else exist[s] . . . besides the void which I had found in all my pleasures and even in love . . . something from beyond life, not sharing its vanity and nothingness.[136]

He goes further and makes the definitive statement: "It is true, I believ[e] that the supreme truth of life is in art."[137] In his exaltation of artistic creativity, Marcel demonstrates that he has transcended the choices in life offered by both "Swann's way," the path of the dilettante, and the "Guermantes way," the route of social frivolity, and has selected a third path leading to real artistic creation. Marcel's chosen path in life is his own individual "way," first discovered en route to Martinville.

After the years engaged in his arduous search for identity and continuity, in later discoveries concerning the lives and perspectives of the artists whose lives he has analyzed, Marcel reaffirms the original technique of juxtaposition that he found en route to Martinville. Thus, Mlle. de Saint-Loup's appearance at the Guermantes' reception serves as the final, convincing, symbolic proof of the continuity of time despite the constant juxtaposition and fragmentation of the elements of time and the self.

For Marcel the long quest for form has been answered in the realization that his book will relate the historiographical discoveries that have occurred

during the course of his life. The form it will take will be guided by the principle of intermittency of being, revealing the discontinuous and multifaceted appearances of the characters in the duration of time. This literary representation of life as a mosaic is possible because within the unity of Marcel's identity and the transcendence of his artistic imagination aided by memory, there is a sense of the ongoing and continuous aspect of time in all of its juxtapositions.[138]

Through his process of self discovery and the creation of A la recherche du temps perdu, Marcel presents the belief that unity of the self can be achieved through spatial or simultaneous vision, and that simultaneity is the key to the spatial configuration of his work. Marcel arrives at the conclusion that "all the memories following one after another . . . [can be] condensed into a single substance."[139] The flowing, sequential aspect of memory is, therefore, the answer to the problem of the disunity of the self.

Establishing a linkage between recollection and the act of creative imagination Marcel realizes that memories of unique events in their original qualitative strength -- his mother's goodnight kiss, the tinkle of the bell at the gate, the blooming hawthorn, the petit madeleine, the sound of a fork or spoon in contact with a teacup -- transmit a sense of selfhood which cannot be gained from immediate experience. And at the end of A la recherche du temps perdu, the importance of Swann as a symbolic figure unifying his life becomes apparent through his recollections. Marcel explains his recognition of Swann's significance in molding the form of his life at some length.

> After all, as I thought it over, the substance of my experience of life came to me from Swann . . . It was he who, away back in the Combray days, gave me the desire to go to Balbec, where my parents would otherwise never have had the idea of sending me, and but for that I would never had met Albertine . . . if it had not been for Swann, I would not even have known the Guermantes, since my grandmother would not then have renewed

> her acquaintance with Mme. de Villeparisis and I would not have met Saint-Loup and M. de Charlus, which led to my meeting the Duchesse de Guermantes . . . so that it was also through Swann that I happened at this moment to be in the house of the Prince de Guermantes, where the idea of the book I was to write had just come to me suddenly -- which meant that I should be indebted to Swann, not only for its subject but also for the decision to undertake it. A rather slender stem, perhaps, to support in this way the entire expanse of my life! (In that sense "Swann's way" had led by chance to this "Guermantes way.")[140]

Marcel's Final Vision: Universal Linkage of the Processes of Memory and the Transcendent Imagination

One of the central questions every reader of Proust must answer is how it is possible at the end of the novel for Marcel to discover linkages among memory, the continuity of time, and artistic creation in The Past Recaptured, when earlier he seemed to have given up all hope of understanding their interconnection. What could produce such a change of events?

The answer has a basic simplicity. Marcel has finally comprehended the crucial interrelationship among his impressions, reminiscences, and artistic creativity. Previously, although meditating constantly on the importance of these elements of his experience, Marcel only rarely associated them. Impressions seemed to fade rapidly; reminiscences sometimes but not always led him back to their source in forgotten impressions, and did not point toward artistic creation. And his pursuit of art and artists seemed at first to lead toward the pitfalls of prestige and idolatry.

The only example of Marcel breaking down the barriers of compartmentalization, which occurred en route to Martinville, was found in his decision to scribble down a description of his impressions of the juxtaposed steeples at that moment. Although this passage is meticuously described, the reader is not told

that Marcel's product was a work of art, and Marcel himself downplayed the whole affair in a nonchalant way.

In the final two hundred pages, however, the tone of nonchalance has vanished. During the five successive resurrections of involuntary memory that he experiences at the Guermantes' reception, Marcel is compelled to reevaluate the thoughts and experiences of his life in a final meditation. At this point his philosophical/poetic discourse is not only reflecting on the action — its movement of thought is the action. Every theme in the novel is revivified in it.[141]

The basic argument of Marcel's thought in the final section can be broken down into the following discoveries, which tie together the various strands he has been attempting to weave throughout the long work.

First, while recognizing the sense of the "essence" of things and of the real self imparted by involuntary resurrections of memory, such as those of the madeleine and and the touch of the starched, white napkin, Marcel labels these discoveries as ephemeral in effect. Secondly, from the Martinville experience he discovers that a work of art is the only way to capture and explain the inspirational impulse of these resurrections of memory. Thirdly, through the works of Bergotte, Elstir, and Vinteuil he realizes that the artist is able to accomplish this translation of the inspirational impulses of memory by creating a metaphorical link between lived "reality" and the "vision" of an art work. This metaphorical link must encompass the past impression and its resurrection in the present. And finally, having reached an understanding of art as a creative process through its metaphorical linkage personified in Mlle. de Saint-Loup, Marcel is then able to assume his literary vocation. He has finally understood the role that suffering can play as a stimulus to creativity, as well as the interpretive role that intelligence can assume in analyzing and translating intuitive, metaphysical insights.[142]

Having discovered the necessary rapport between art and life from Elstir, Marcel realizes that to create literature, he may translate his varied experiences in life into art; and through such artistic translation, the reality, focused in reminiscences and impressions, can live through the work of art.[143] Thus, Marcel recognizes that he has not made a mistake in acclaiming the artistic significance of various images he had seen in his youth: Gilberte glimpsed among the beauty of the hawthorn blossoms, Oriane de Guermantes flooded in light from the stained glass windows of St.-Hilaire, and Albertine silhouetted against the sea on the beach at Balbec. And as a young man observing the psychological makeup of those in social settings, his perceptions of the intricate mixture of biological laws and social rituals that dictate each individual's thoughts and actions had not been in error. His confusion had been the result of his intensive and deluded focus on himself, which had distorted his interpretation of the signs and images.

The psychic and spiritual significance of the impressions and reminiscences with which he had lived from an early age could not be related to art and literature in their full potency and psychic force until Marcel symbolically withdraws from the world to reassess his philosophical position. And it is at the Guermantes' reception in The Past Recaptured, that he realizes that through his encounters with life itself, with people and places, he is ultimately capable of achieving his reality as an artist.[144]

The final lesson in Marcel's education concerns the significant role that literature and the other arts can play as a source of communication between one person's reality and that of another. Marcel comes to believe that the work of art not only holds the secret of communication, but provides the antidote to the solitary confinement of the human condition as well.[145] Through self-recognition, art provides communication with our own inner being. Marcel recommends:

> Only by art can we get outside ourselves, know what another sees of his universe, which is not the same as ours and the different views of which would otherwise have remained as unknown to us as those there may be on the moon. Thanks to art, instead of seeing only one world, our own, we see it under multiple forms, and as many as there are original artists. . . .[146]

Each work of art symbolizes the exaltation of the artist's sense of communication, which Swann, who wanted only to hoard and cherish his collection of unshared memories, was unable to understand.

Each artist's feeling for his own creation expresses itself in a burst of ecstasy that is resistant to any obstacles of the real world. Thus, the sheer joy of communication is the "form of discourse particular to art," which is reenacted by each artist in his own way.[147] The unique individualization of each work of art creates a different "optical instrument" through which one can view life from the artist's perspective,[148] and discover

> the qualitative difference there is in the way the world appears to us, a difference that, if there were no art, would remain the eternal secret of each one of us.[149]

But, a small final question must remain in the reader's mind: What chance of salvation is there for the non-artist in the Proustian universe?

Although Marcel's major focus is on the hard path towards attainment of an artist's vocation, he yet permits some hope for the ordinary individual. He points out that impressions and reminiscences, the basic materials of artistic creation, exist in all of us and can be translated into art. Life itself is the true text, and we must learn how to approach it. Art is simply a process of vision and revision of life itself, an idea with which Marcel closes the loops between life and literature, by commenting:

> The grandeur of real art . . . is to rediscover, grasp again and lay before us that reality from which we live so far removed and from which we become more and more separated as the formal knowledge which we substitute for it grows in thickness and

> imperviousness -- that reality which there is grave danger we might die without ever having known and yet which is simply our life, life as it really is, life disclosed at last and made clear, consequently the only life that is really lived, that life which in one sense is to be found at every moment in every man, as well as in the artist.[150]

Marcel, as Proust's spokesman, is saying that material for literature is there for all to find and take, although few decide to do so and translate it into a work of art. But, he suggests, it is through relating oneself and one's life to those portrayed in literature, that those who are less gifted as artists may find the true significance of their lives.[151] There is a strong implication that all men have the capacity through the linked processes of memory and artistry to be the creators of their own existence.

Thus, Marcel's mature aesthetic expresses his moral perspective of life. He believes that the literary process can become the artistic product when the writer employs memories and impressions and relates them with logical and imaginative insight to the creation of a work of art. At the end the fragments of time have ultimately come together to create Marcel's great vision of time regained as time transcended. In recapturing his past, he has proved the continuity of time and the possibility of unity of being.

Notes

[1]T. S. Eliot, "Four Quartets: Burnt Norton," in Collected Poems, 1909-1962 (Franklin Center, Pa.: The Franklin Library, 1979), p. 182.

[2]Cleanth Brooks, Toward Yoknapatawpha and Beyond (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1978), p. 296.

[3]Jean Defrees Kellogg, Dark Prophets of Hope: Dostoevsky, Sartre, Camus, Faulkner (Chicago, Loyola University Press, 1975), pp. 83-84.

[4]Roger Shattuck, Marcel Proust (New York: The Viking Press, 1974), p. 124.

[5]Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past, trans. C. K. Scott Mancrieff (New York: Random House, Inc., 1924), I, 653-654.

[6]Proust, I, 29.

[7]Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past, trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Frederick A. Blossom (New York: Random House, Inc., 1927), II, 1122.

[8]Proust, II, 1112.

[9]Proust, II, 1112.

[10]Proust, II, 1122-1123. (Emphasis is mine.)

[11]Proust, II, 1113.

[12]Donald M. Kartiganer, "The Sound and the Fury" and Faulkner's Quest for Form," ELH, 37, No. 4 (December 1970).

[13]David L. Minter, The Interpreted Design as A Structural Principle (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969).

[14]Germaine Brée, The World of Marcel Proust (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), p. 203.

[15]Proust, I, 143.

[16]Proust, I, 172.

[17]Proust, II, 1105.

[18]Proust, I, 175.

[19]Proust, I, 167.

[20]Brée, p. 217.

[21]Brée, p. 214.

[22]Proust, I, 407.

[23]Proust, I, 241-242.

[24]Brée, pp. 202-203.

[25]Proust, I, 310.

[26]Proust, I, 305.

[27]Proust, I, 312-313.

[28]Proust, I, 313.

[29]Proust, I, 431.

[30]Proust, I, 410-411.

[31]Proust, I, 465.

[32]Proust, I, 474.

[33]Proust, I, 481-482.

[34]Proust, I, 475-476.

[35]Proust, I, 429.

[36]Proust, I, 429.

[37]Proust, I, 644.

[38]Proust, I, 636.

[39]Brée, p. 241.

[40]Proust, II, 392-393.

[41]Proust, II, 501-502. Whether Faulkner became aware of the literary possibility of expressing the desire to enclose the beloved in one's own image through his reading of Proust, one can never know for sure; but the resemblances of Swann and Marcel with Quentin Compson, Horace Benbow, Ike McCaslin, Gavin Stevens, and Labove, who attempt to project their abstractions upon the focus of their affections, are undeniable.

[42]Proust, II, 697.

[43]Proust, II, 741.

[44]Proust, II, 742.

[45]Proust, II, 834.

[46]Brée, p. 207.

[47]Proust, I, 134.

[48]Proust, I, 754-755.

[49]Proust, I, 750.

[50]Proust, I, 756-757.

[51]Proust, I, 757.

[52]Proust, I, 755.

[53]Proust, I, 818.

[54]Proust, I, 818.

[55]Proust, I, 819.

[56]Proust, I, 762.

[57]Proust, I, 763.

[58]Proust, I, 800.

[59]Proust, I, 783.

[60]Proust, I, 983.

[61]Proust, I, 983-984.

[62]Proust, I, 418.

[63]Proust quoted by Georges Poulet, Studies in Human Time, trans. Elliott Coleman (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956), pp. 396-397.

[64]Proust, Unpublished Letters and Notes, quoted by Andre Maurois, Proust: Portrait of a Genius (New York: Harper, 1951), p. 158.

[65]Harold March, The Two Worlds of Marcel Proust (New York: Russell & Russell, 1968), p. 197.

[66]Proust, quoted by March, p. 197.

[67]Brée, p. 213.

[68]It is through the depiction of couples in love that Proust perhaps attains his greatest originality as a novelist. The Proustian literary and psychological focus, however, is never dedicated to descriptions of love affairs that are generally acceptable according to the norms of society, either in the form of marriage, or in the form of liaisons considered proper within the sophisticated social framework that he describes.

Proust thus seems to prefer to portray love situations in which the discrepancy of the social and romantic selves is extreme in order to reveal more dramatically how incompatible the outer assumptions and values of society are with the inner assumptions and values of the self in love. Thus the great love affairs of Proust's novel are all subconscious rebellions against the prescribed norms of society and, paradoxically, occur in characters strongly dominated by social mores.

[69]Proust, II, 735.

[70]Another of the Proustian laws which Marcel discovers governs human behavior in romantic love is man's belief that he should attempt to complete his nature by absorbing his opposite. The choice of a lover is not simply a matter of logical selection for each individual, for each has his type or "genre." Thus "desire always goes out to what is the most opposite to ourselves, and forces us to love what will make us suffer." (See Proust, quoted by March, p. 200.)

Proust even hints that there is a subconscious human recognition that love is created from suffering, and that painful non-fulfillment is the basis of love's existence, dictating that the selection of the person to be loved will be he or she who can best cause our anguish. (See March, pp. 200-201.)

[71]Proust, I, 815.

[72]Proust, quoted by March, p. 197.

[73]Bree, p. 212.

[74]In writing to his friend, René Blum, in early November, 1913, Proust explained his technique of characterization in A la recherche du temps perdu:

> There are many characters; they are "prepared" from the first volume, that is they will do in the second exactly the opposite of what one expected from the first . . . And as for composition, it is so complex that it doesn't appear until late when all the "Themes" have begun to combine. (See Proust, Letter to René Blum, "Comment parut," Correspondence générale de Marcel Proust, vol. VI, pp. 44-45, quoted in March, pp. 109-110.)

In addition, he revealed that his sense of the changes of one's perspective in the process of time governs the portrayal of character when he said:

> "There is plane geometry, and there is solid geometry. Well, for me, the novel is not only plane psychology, but psychology in time . . . Like a city, which, while the train pursues its winding way, appears now on our right, now on our left, the different aspects which the same character has assumed in the eyes of another -- to the point of being like successive and different characters . . . will give the sensation of time elapsed." (See Elie-Joseph Bois, Interview with Proust in Le Temps [13 November 1913], quoted in March, p. 109.

In his unpublished letters and notes, Proust is unequivocal in his inability to believe in a unified self:

> My life, as I saw it, presented me with the spectacle of a succession of periods, so occurring that, but for the space of time, nothing of that which had been the sustaining force of one continued to exist at all in that which followed it. I saw human life as a complex form which the support of an individual, identical, and permanent "self" was so conspicuously absent, was something so useless for the future, so far extended into the past, that death might just as well intervene at this point or that, because it could never mark a conclusion that was other than arbitrary. . . . The disintegration of the self is a continuous death . . . the natural stability which we assume to exist in others is an unreal as our own. (See Proust, Unpublished Letters and Notes, quoted by André Maurois, Proust: Portrait of a Genius p. 158.)

These empirical statements and conclusions seem to echo Hume's arguments against the possibility of attaining a permanent personal identity. From his statements it is evident that Proust was a precursor of the modern novelist's theme of the disintegration of the self, and its significance when confronted by the inevitability of death, ideas which determine modern man's concept of time.

Yet, in defiance of his logical conclusions about the absence of a permanent self, because Proust had an "intuition of himself an an absolute entity," he began to search in the non-logical symbolism of art for the meaning of continuity and unity of time and the self which could not be justified on the basis of empirical skeptical ideas. (See Proust, Unpublished Letters and Notes, quoted by Maurois, p. 159.)

[75] Proust, I, 552.

[76] Proust, I, 554-555.

[77] Proust, I, 765.

[78] Proust, I, 764.

[79] Proust, I, 778.

[80] Proust, I, 788.

[81] Proust, I, 798-799.

[82] Proust, I, 770-771.

[83] Proust, I, 797.

[84] Proust, I, 813.

[85] Proust, I, 841.

[86] Proust, II, 139.

[87] Proust, II, 698.

[88]Proust, II, 998.

[89]Proust, II, 3.

[90]Harry Levin, The Gates of Horn: A Study of Five French Realists (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 404.

[91]Proust, I, 1090.

[92]Proust, I, 1075.

[93]Proust, I, 1126.

[94]Proust, I, 1139.

[95]Proust, I, 1139.

[96]Proust, I, 1139.

[97]Proust, I, 1139.

[98]Proust, I, 1139.

[99]Proust, I, 361.

[100]It was only after Swann's death that the meeting between the Duchesse du Guermantes, Odette and Gilberte occurred. Subsequently Gilberte married Robert de Saint-Loup, and Odette, in her old age, became the companion of the Duc de Guermantes!

[101]Proust, I, 1140.

[102]Proust, I, 1140.

[103]Proust, I, 1140.

[104]Proust, I, 1140.

[105]Proust, I, 1141.

[106]Proust, I, 1090.

[107]Proust's own experience with the allure, the limitations, and the deception of social life serves as the foundry in which he forges the tools that he uses to construct his literary world. His mastery of character portrayal is enhanced by the device of a narrator who is both semi-omniscient and able to shift his point of view according to his age and degree of enlightenment.

[108]Proust, I, 640.

[109]Proust, II, 76.

[110]As Proust explained in an interview with Elie-Joseph Bois, which appeared in Le Temps in 1913, his concept of style is based on the perception of

the possibilities of countless individual differences in vision, which dictate the different forms in which art is created. He is quoted as having said:

> "Style is by no means an adornment as some people think, it is not even a question of technique, it is -- like color for painters -- a quality of vision, the revelation of the particular universe which each of us sees, and which is not seen by others." (Elie-Joseph Bois, Interview with Proust in Le Temps [13 November 1913], quoted in March, p. 109.)

In her book entitled, Time and Reality: Studies in Contemporary Fiction, Margaret Church writes: "There are three basic sources for Proust's aesthetic doctrine: The last chapter of The Past Recaptured (Le temps retrouvé), a letter of early November, 1913, to Rene Blum, and an interview accorded to Elie-Joseph Bois, an account of which appeared in Le Temps in November, 1913. Proust makes it clear that only literature dominated by involuntary memory is realistic, for it is the only device that enables us to experience a sensation simultaneously in past and present. He was aware, as can be seen in The Past Recaptured, that Chateaubriand . . . Gérard de Nerval . . . and Baudelaire had already employed the device of spontaneous memory. He is, in a sense, their heir. . . ." (See Margaret Church, Time and Reality: Studies in Contemporary Fiction [Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1963], pp. 9-10.)

[111]Milton Hindus, The Proustian Vision (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), p. 66.

[112]Roger Shattuck, Marcel Proust (New York: The Viking Press, 1974), pp. 160-161.

[113]Proust, II, 1042.

[114]As a translator and fond critic of Ruskin, Proust refused to allow his appreciation of Ruskin's art to substitute for his own active involvement in social life or for his own intellectual efforts: he embraced art only as a form of communication which transcends time, but which ultimately should lead the individual back to involvement in life itself. (See Shattuck, pp. 160-161.)

[115]Proust, I, 72-73.

[116]Proust, I, 362-363.

[117]Proust, I, 363.

[118]Proust, I, 364.

[119]Realism became a conscious literary movement in late nineteenth century France in the works of Balzac and Flaubert, who described the trivial and sordid aspects of life as well as the nobler and more dramatic. In an effort to counteract romanticism and to give the reader an objective presentation of life, Flaubert believed that the writer should banish any evidence of his own feelings and attitudes from the story. Characters and incidents should be described as they are in life without idealization.

In the twentieth century many novelists have reacted against the confining dictates of the theories of realism, which they believe focused too much on facts for their own sake. Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, James Joyce, and Marcel Proust have attempted to create a different form of "realism," which involves penetrating beneath the surface to the underlying meaning of the facts, rather than presenting them objectively.

Throughout A la recherche du temps perdu Proust makes a point of comparing the virtues of his form of realism to that of the objective school, attempting to marshal as many persuasive arguments as possible to support his subjective rendering of reality.

[120]Proust, I, 417.

[121]Proust, I, 425.

[122]Proust, II, 509.

[123]Proust, II, 510.

[124]Proust, II, 510. Marcel meditates on the meaning of "genius," the quality which he had at first attributed to Bergotte, and concludes that it is derived less from intelligence and social grace, than from the ability to transpose and transform these elements into art. To Marcel, genius seems to be akin to the quality manifested in Keats's "negative capability," for Marcel conceives of it as that which allows a great artist to make his personality into a mirror that has the power to reflect the intrinsic quality of what concerns him, rather than trying to convey it directly. Marcel concludes that genius of this type is applicable to art and music as well, and can be found in the work of the artist, Elstir, and the composer, Vinteuil.

[125]Proust, I, 344.

[126]Proust, I, 750.

[127]George Stambolian, Marcel Proust and the Creative Encounter (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 104.

[128]Proust, II, 1015.

[129]Proust, I, 648.

[130]Proust, I, 649.

[131]Proust, I, 131.

[132]Proust, I, 132.

[133]Proust, I, 628.

[134]Proust, I, 623.

[135]Proust, I, 623.

[136]Proust, II, 996.

[137]Proust, II, 1018.

[138]Within Proust's creation of A la recherche du temps perdu the reader encounters a hall of mirrors while participating with Marcel as he makes his discoveries throughout the novel's duration. Ultimately, the reader becomes aware that he too has attained a sense of unity of being and continuity of time through identification with Marcel, who feels that his great work is still to begin. The reader and Marcel emerge at the same point at the end, with their creative endeavor yet ahead, while Proust, through an artistic sleight of hand, has already created his literary universe.

[139]Proust, I, 143. Although Marcel's solution to discontinuity falls only within the aesthetic sphere, he believed that he had demonstrated in the novel how the fragmentary perceptions of our senses can be condensed into a kind of philosophical unity. The Proustian self that emerges is not a "substantial self," which some of his descriptions erroneously imply, but a "single substance," a view of the self as a unified structure with identity and continuity as legitimate attributes. (See Meyerhoff, pp. 46-50.)

[140]Proust, II, 1027.

[141]A parallel can be seen between Marcel's philosophical/poetic discourse, which becomes the action in A la recherche de temps perdu, and Molly Bloom's affirmation in monologue form at the end of Ulysses. Joyce was seeking the same effect that Proust had already achieved, revealing meditation as action. (See Shattuck, pp. 155-156).

[142]Shattuck, pp. 156-157.

[143]Shattuck, pp. 157-158.

[144]Bree, p. 177.

[145]Shattuck, p. 158.

[146]Proust, II, 1013.

[147]Bree, p. 229.

[148]Bree, p. 232.

[149]Proust, II, 1013.

[150]Proust, II, 1013, In reading this statement of Proust's, one is reminded of Henry James's portrayal of the scene in Gloriani's garden in which Lambert Strether engages in an intense discussion with little Bilham in The Ambassadors. The "carpe diem" theme is emphasized by Strether in a manner reminiscent of Proust's statement concerning the "reality which we run the risk of dying without having known . . . which is quite simply our own life."

In The Ambassadors, Strether admonishes Bilham:

> "It's not too late for you . . . All the same don't forget that you're young -- blessedly young; be glad of it on the contrary and live up to it. Live all you can; it's a mistake not to. It doesn't so much matter what you do in particular, so long as you have your life. If you haven't had that what have you had? . . . Do what you like so long as you don't make my mistake. For it was a mistake. Live!" . . .

There seems to be an unmistakable similarity of cadence in both the Proustian and the Jamesian passages. (See Henry James, The Ambassadors [Franklin Center, Pa.: The Franklin Library, 1979], pp. 153-154).

[151] Shattuck, p. 164.

CHAPTER FOUR

QUENTIN'S SEARCH FOR UNITY OF BEING AND CONTINUITY OF TIME IN ABSALOM, ABSALOM! and THE SOUND AND THE FURY

> Time past and time future
> Allow but a little consciousness.
> To be conscious is not to be in time
> But only in time can the moment in the rose-garden,
> The moment in the arbour where the rain beat,
> The moment in the draughty church at smokefall
> Be remembered. . . .[1]

In his effort to understand the world outside of himself in terms of the world inside his mind in Absalom, Absalom!, Quentin Compson is a romantic idealist who stands at the center of his creation. Attempting to assume romantic stances, he adopts a series of masks which become evasions of the self. Enacting a drama of self in order to escape from time into an abstraction, he concludes by forced reentry into the reality of the present, only to discover that he finds living in a dream more important than life itself.[2]

Additionally, in his eagerness to reconstruct the fragmented pieces of his existence, Quentin plays the role of the man of interpretation, who analyzes a failed design of life in order to discover and avoid the flaw it manifests.[3] As a poet, critic, and spectator of a problematical fate other than his own, Quentin becomes a type of intellectual hero. Because of his hope that narrative technique may be a mode of understanding the past and the present, he devotes his time in Absalom, Absalom! to the reconstruction and translation of Thomas Sutpen's life.

Faulkner thus presents Quentin's search for unity of being in Absalom, Absalom! in a moral pattern in which he seeks certain idealistic truths from the past, which can serve as a bridge to affirm his compulsion to cast life into an abstract mold in the present. The ultimate inadequacy of his interpretation must be attributed to a moral failing which prevents him from attaining the necessary authorial attitude with which to comprehend the history, and a related technique with which to provide a distanced frame for the narrative.

In the following discussions of Absalom, Absalom! and The Sound and the Fury, Quentin's moral design for his life and his failure to attain unity of being and continuity of time will be described and analyzed in terms of his aesthetic technique of dislocated and arrested time. These double quests for unity of being and continuity of time reveal that the effort to heal the wound caused by the separation of past from present can be approached simultaneously as both a moral and an aesthetic problem, the one reflected in the other. The failure of Quentin's moral design ultimately becomes apparent in the failure of his aesthetic goals in both Absalom, Absalom! and The Sound and the Fury, creating in microcosm a reverse image of Faulkner's accomplishments as the author of both novels.

In his search to achieve an ordered form in which to present his fragmented vision of the world and of the human community, Quentin as a potential artist is not interested in imposing order from an outside perspective, but rather is seeking an order than can emerge from fragmentation, a form reality may take when stimulated by the imagination.[4] He is attempting to formulate a personal perspective both on life in the South and life as a Southerner living in the twentieth century.

In his quest for form, however, Quentin is unable to find a principle within himself to create order out of the fragments of his past and present. Having first relied on the principle of movement as central to the creation of

order, he then attempts to impose the principle of stasis to unify the paradoxical pieces by arresting time. In the midst of the ongoing rush of life, his static principles are simply swept aside.[5]

The Historiographical Approach to Unity of Being

In Faulkner's portrayal of Quentin's efforts to understand Thomas Sutpen's life by recounting it in Absalom, Absalom!, we find an artistic effort to reunite the broken fragments of an existence and a design. With the help of Shreve McCannon, Quentin is able through imaginative sympathy almost to succeed in recreating the missing elements of Thomas Sutpen's story. Through the power of his imagination, Quentin participates in an act of sympathetic comprehension and love, enfusing meaning into the actions of the Sutpen family, in which otherwise there would have been only meaninglessness. These actions would have remained unknown and insignificant unless they were given life by the power of the imaginative word.[6]

As Quentin attempts to reintegrate the missing fragments of his personality, the essential characteristics which he believes are necessary for a sense of self-completion are anchored in the past. Through the use of the historiographical approach, which involves a subjective recounting of past actions in the present, Faulkner portrays Quentin in the process of exploring not the past itself, but fictitious myths about the past. The imaginative creation of myths thus becomes a tool which he tries to use to explain himself in the present as well as the past. The mythological fabrications which he creates in his search for unity of being include dreams and fantasies of ceremonial codes of behavior, idealistic concepts through which he hopes to arrest moments of time, and dramatizations of the stoicism which he feels is necessary to endure the pain of reality.

Through the attainment of unity of being Quentin hopes to achieve continuity of time by creating his own version of a mythical method, through which he attempts to conflate the past with the present by imaginatively reconstructing a series of events which have become arrested in his imagination.[7] In Absalom, Absalom! Quentin uses the mythical method to examine Thomas Sutpen's past as though it is present; and in The Sound and the Fury he uses the myth of incest to refabricate the reality of Caddy's promiscuity. In one novel, he hopes through myth to make a hero from the past seem real in the present; in the other, he hopes through myth to elevate a past misdemeanor into an all-consuming sin capable of arresting time in the present and future. In both instances Quentin is attempting to discover a way to unite past and present. But like the speaker in The Waste Land, he is unable to connect the past with the present through the myths that he invents in either Absalom, Absalom! or The Sound and the Fury.[8]

Failure to Attain Unity of Being and Continuity of Time In Absalom, Absalom!

Quentin's passivity, which identifies him as an appropriate recipient of the legacy of Sutpen's history in Absalom, Absalom!, makes him appeal to both Miss Rosa and Mr. Compson as the designated heir of a legend which they recognize bears some essential, symbolic relationship to the whole Southern experience. As a young, intelligent Southerner, and the eldest son of his family preparing to leave for college in the foreign environment of the North, in their estimation he is the ideal instrument to perpetuate the tragic inheritance of the Southern past.[9]

With his youthful character evolving in the process of self-identification, and while wrestling with the moral decision of adherence to Southern social norms versus personal responsibility to mankind, Quentin is

fascinated with the Sutpen story as an instructive parable and possible source of personal identification. Because of his desire to protect his sister Caddy's virtue, which he equates with Compson honor, the incestuous angle of the Sutpen saga contains special significance for him. Through promiscuous behavior, Caddy has placed an almost unbearable strain on Quentin's fragile, idealistic identification of her feminine purity with the family's honor, and through her immersion in life, she challenges his abstraction and preoccupation with the past.

By preserving the precepts of the chivalric code and living by his principles, Quentin hopes to create a twentieth century behavioral standard that harmonizes with the ideas in his romantic imagination. With the adoption of a narrow moralistic code as a defense mechanism against his family's disintegration, through chivalric conduct Quentin believes it may be possible to inspire the family to follow more idealistic rules of behavior, and to imbue the decadence of the Compsons with more stoic and heroic proportions.[10]

Despite all efforts to evolve beyond an abstraction of virginal purity, Quentin remains trapped in his "innocence," a manifestation of a static concept of morality, which creates an imperviousness to life's motion and experience. As a character who follows in a long tradition of romantic idealists, he, unlike Marcel never discovers that the concept of the immutable self can be an illusion, that we each have a series of changing selves as we act out our lives. He is unaware that romantic illusions frequently delude the idealist into believing that man again stands at the center of the world he represents, and can culminate in a forced, rude awakening when it becomes evident that the real self must be differentiated from the idealized self to cope with the vicissitudes of ordinary life.[11]

As characters who prefer their dream of reality to life itself, both Quentin and Thomas Sutpen seem to fit rather easily in the category of romantic idealists. Because of Sutpen's complex innocence he believes that he can

ultimately realize his design, and give purpose and meaning to his life. He is convinced that all he needs to succeed are "courage and shrewdness and the one he knew he had and the other he believed he could learn if it were to be taught. . . ."[12] Quentin's Grandfather Compson describes the principal quality of Sutpen's personality by saying:

> ". . . it was that innocence again, that innocence which believed that the ingredients of morality were like the ingredients of pie or cake and once you had measured them and balanced them and put them into the oven it was all finished and nothing but pie or cake could come out."[13]

Based on his innocence, Sutpen has an absurd sense of non-involvement in the human network which composes reality; he actually believes that he can do what he wishes without disturbing the actions and dreams of others enough to trigger failure. His design for his life is constructed on the model of the Southern planter, which he embraces as an abstract ideal, complete with all of its trappings, its possession of land, its focus on tradition and genealogical purity, and its dependence on the institution of slavery. Through Sutpen's personal courage and determination he attempts to establish a dynasty according to the Southern pattern and its own peculiar ethical code, which he never questions.[14]

He explains to Grandfather Compson himself:

> "You see, I had a design in my mind. Whether it was a good or a bad design is beside the point; the question is, Where did I make the mistake in it, what did I do or misdo in it, whom or what injure by it to the extent which this would indicate. I had a design. To accomplish it I should require money, a house, a plantation, slaves, a family -- incidentally of course, a wife. I set out to acquire these, asking no favor of any man . . . suffice that I had the wife, accepted her in good faith, with no reservations about myself, and I expected as much from them . . . I accepted them at their own valuation while insisting on my part upon explaining fully about myself and my progenitors; yet they deliberately withheld from me the one fact which I have reason to know they were aware would have caused me to decline the entire matter, otherwise they would not have withheld it from me -- a fact which I did not learn until after my son was born. And even then I did not act hastily. I could

> have reminded them of these wasted years, these years which would now leave me behind with my schedule . . . But I did not. I merely explained how this new fact rendered it impossible that this woman and child be incorporated into my design, and following which . . . I made no attempt to keep not only that which I might consider myself to have earned at the risk of my life but which had been given to me by signed testimonials, but on the contrary I declined and resigned all right and claim to this in order that I might repair whatever injustice I might be considered to have done by so providing for the two persons whom I might be considered to have deprived of anything I might later possess: and this was agreed to, mind; agreed to between the two parties!"[15]

From this statement, it is evident that Sutpen's inherent innocence springs from a naive belief in his own ability to realize his dream, a doctrinaire fixation that has a long history as an American aberration.[16] In a pattern that is symptomatic of romantic idealism, he shares the belief of all American innocents that it is possible to remodel the world according to his own dreams; by sheer will power Sutpen thinks he can make the world conform to an individual "design," by tireless dedication to an ideal which he can work on a "schedule" to achieve.[17]

Thus, Sutpen's fatal flaw is manifested in the affronts which he makes to counter the human expectations of the other human beings who are close to him. His former wife, Eulalia, and his son, Charles, are the ones who are first wronged in having Sutpen believe that he can dispose of them as though they are outworn gardening tools for which he has no further use. In addition, his sister-in-law and intended fiancee, Rosa Coldfield, his children, Judith and Henry, and finally Milly, who bears his female child -- all are rejected for not embodying Sutpen's idea of an abstract contractual arrangement he has made with them to fulfill certain of his needs.

Quentin's grandfather is astounded at Sutpen's revelation that his conscience no longer bothers him because of the fairness and straightforwardness with which he cast off his first wife and child. Mr. Compson responds to Sutpen's question about the cause for the failure of his design by asking him in turn:

> ". . . What kind of abysmal and purblind innocence could that have been which someone told you to call virginity? what conscience to trade with which would have warranted you in the belief that you could have bought immunity from her for no other coin but justice?"[18]

The "abysmal and purblind innocence" which Sutpen maintains into adulthood can be traced back to his sense of childish surprise and outrage over his rejection at the front door of a plantation where his father worked. When he was told to go to the back door by the Negro servant, his mode of vengeance assumed the form of imitation, as he determined simply to become as wealthy and powerful as the man at whose door he had received the affront. In all of the effort which he devotes to the creation of his defensive "design", Sutpen has no thought of varying his own behavior by attempting to reveal compassion or understanding for those who love and depend on him. With desires that are cerebral rather than emotional, Sutpen's dream-like fixations result in obsessions which distort his view of reality. By accepting Southern society's abstractions regarding material success and racial distinctions, and by the uncritical acceptance of Southern values concerning proper regard for humanity, he orchestrates his own destruction.[19]

In his total acceptance of Southern values concerning racial categories, however, Sutpen again manifests social innocence rather than acceptance of unequal social distinctions. Without questioning, he simply accepts the South's code of behavior based upon rigid concepts negating human value because he refuses to analyze its moral base. The manner in which he reacts to Charles Bon's arrival at "Sutpen's Hundred" reveals the evolution of his obsession with the purity of the Sutpen dynasty in accordance with the Southern social code.

Sutpen refuses to acknowledge Charles Bon as his son, a recognition which Bon craves, and with which he would have been content. Such an acknowledgment from Sutpen would have been successful in unraveling the

inextricably knotted skeins of his family's history, enlightening Judith concerning the real identity of her suitor, and satisfying Charles with a sense of fulfilling the father/son linkage needed to attain the unity of being he sought. Bon's fixation on the need for paternal recognition is made evident in the thoughts attributed to him by Quentin and Shreve, revealed as his stream of consciousness:

> So at last I shall see him [Sutpen], whom it seems I was bred up never to expect to see, whom I had even learned to live without, thinking maybe how he [Charles] would walk into the house and see the man who made him and then he would know; there would be that flash, that instant of indisputable recognition between them and he would know for sure and forever -- thinking maybe That's all I want. He need not even acknowledge me; I will let him understand just as quickly that he need not do that, that I do not expect that, will not be hurt by that, just as he will let me know that quickly that I am his son.[20]

Returning to school with Henry after that first Christmas vacation at "Sutpen's Hundred," after Charles has realized that his father refuses to give him any sign or flicker of recognition, he is decribed as questioning his own conscience, thinking

> But why? Why? Since he wanted so little, could have understood if the other had wanted the signal to be in secret even if he could not have understood why . . . feeling that same despair and shame like when you have to watch your father fail in physical courage, thinking It should have been me that failed; me, I, not he who stemmed from that blood which we both bear before it could have become corrupt and tainted by whatever it was in mother's that he could not brook.[21]

And Charles continues to hope that perhaps the recognition will come in a letter which he eagerly awaits:

> Maybe he will write it then. he would just have to write "I am your father. Burn this" and I would do it. Or if not that, a sheet, a scrap of paper with the one word "Charles" in his hand, and I would know what he meant and he would not even have to ask me to burn it. Or a lock of his hair or a paring of his finger nail and I would know them because I believe now that I have known what his hair and his finger nails would look like all my life, could choose that lock and that paring out of a thousand.[22]

Instead of the recognition which Charles so desperately seeks, however, Sutpen proceeds to incite Henry to murder his half brother, thereby destroying his own personal design by his willingness to sacrifice both of his sons in adherence to the South's code of racial purity.[23]

Thus, the central moment which the action leads towards in Absalom, Absalom! is Henry's murder of Charles Bon. In the novel as a whole it is at this moment that Shreve progresses beyond Quentin in reconstructing Sutpen's story, because of Quentin's refusal to accept the murder and its symbolic implications in terms of his own life. Through the fictional device of merging the two young men in the process of telling the story at Harvard in 1910 with the other two themes of Henry's ultimatum to Bon and Bon's to Henry in Carolina in 1865, Faulkner arrests and transcends the sense of historical time, plunging the story and the reader into timelessness.[24]

In the sense of identification which Quentin feels with Henry, and through the compassion and understanding which Shreve develops for Bon during their historiographic reconstruction of the events leading to Bon's murder, it ultimately becomes possible for the merger of the four, Quentin, Henry, Shreve, and Bon, to occur through arrested time: "The four of them there, in that room in New Orleans in 1860, just as in a sense there were four of them here in this tomblike room in Massachusetts in 1910."[25] Faulkner describes this imaginative phenomenon in terms of a mythical suspension in time:

> . . . the two of them (the four of them) held in that probation, that suspension, by Henry who knew but still did not believe, who was going deliberately to look upon and prove to himself that which, so Shreve and Quentin believed, would be like death for him to learn.[26]

By jumbling the chronology and suspending one plot while another asserts itself, Faulkner is ultimately able to compress and dramatize Quentin's and Shreve's identification with Henry and Charles as the four become one. Past

and present become conflated in a second artificially arrested moment in South Carolina in 1865, a scene in which Faulkner is able to concentrate the drama of both past and present, creating a timeless, mythical situation. He writes:

> . . . They were both in Carolina and the time was forty-six years ago, and it was not even four now but compounded still further, since now both of them were Henry Sutpen and both of them were Bon, compounded each of both yet either neither, smelling the very smoke which had blown and faded away forty-six years ago from the bivouac fires burning in a pine grove, the gaunt and ragged men sitting or lying about them, talking not about the war yet all curiously enough . . . facing the South where further on in the darkness the pickets stood . . . the picket lines so close that each could hear the challenge of the other's officers passing from post to post and dying away. . . .[27]

In keeping with Faulkner's belief that one must understand life through experience, through involvement, empathy, and identity, rather than through detached intellectualization, Quentin and Shreve are both involved in the attempt to understand Sutpen's story by imaginatively reexperiencing the events themselves. But it is Quentin who says that he feels he has completely absorbed the story "without the medium of speech somehow from having been born and living beside it, with it, as children will and do."[28]

This sort of comprehension from within is what Faulkner concentrates on creating for his readers. The reader's understanding is not to be a detached contemplative or evaluative act; rather than acting as an observer and judge, he is to feel what the character feels, and as nearly as possible become the character. Like Quentin, the reader is to understand the South through the process of absorption, and like Quentin and Shreve, he is to come to understand the essence of Henry and Charles through the process of dynamic identification. Faulkner describes the process of imaginative identification in which Quentin and Shreve attain a sense of total unity by saying:

> . . . it did not matter to either of them which one did the talking, since it was not the talking alone which did it,

> performed and accomplished the overpassing, but some happy marriage of speaking and hearing wherein each before the demand, the requirement, forgave condoned and forgot the faulting of the other -- faultings both in the creating of this shade whom they discussed (rather, existed in) and in the hearing and sifting and discarding the false and conserving what seemed true, or fit the preconceived -- in order to overpass to love, where there might be paradox and inconsistency but nothing fault nor false.[29]

During the time that Quentin and Shreve are in the process of reconstructing the motives for the killing, there is thus a durational blurring of the time frames and the identities of the participants and interpreters while Henry and Charles each tries to decide what he will do. It is in Henry's encounter with Bon's mother, conjured up as the "Haiti-born daughter of the French sugar planter and the woman whom Sutpen's first father-in-law had told him was a Spaniard," that finally Henry is believed to accept the tragic irony that Charles is his brother.[30]

In their telling of the tale with historical and imaginative insight, Shreve and Quentin identify with the strain that such a discovery creates for Henry. Shreve points out to Quentin

> "Jesus, think of the load he [Henry] had to carry, born of two Methodists (or of one long invincible line of Methodists) and raised in provincial North Mississippi, faced with incest, incest of all things that might have been reserved for him, that all his heredity and training had to rebel against on principle, and in a situation where he knew that neither incest or training was going to help him solve it."[31]

And in Quentin's description of Henry's effort to reach his own emotional and ethical conclusion about what Charles should do, he portrays Henry's attempt to search for precedents, which will make the burden of incest more acceptable.

> ". . . then Henry said suddenly, cried suddenly: 'But kings have done it! Even dukes! There was that Lorraine duke named John something that married his sister. The Pope excommunicated him but it didn't hurt! It didn't hurt! They were still husband and wife. They were still alive. They still loved!' "[32]

By attempting to see life with the eyes of Henry Sutpen, Quentin finds that in manifesting the same idealism, the same love of abstraction, he has discovered a person from another century with whom he shares the myth of incest as an expression of that passionate idealism. Thus Quentin and Shreve reconstruct the story during the years of the Civil War, with Henry as an enlisted soldier and Bon as an officer fighting and retreating together without the latter having concluded what action he will take. But finally, in 1865 with the Confederate army in its final retreat, Charles decides in favor of marrying Judith, and with Henry's permission, writes her a letter. At this point Henry feels a sense of apotheosis, as though Judith and Charles will be united with him and his father in eternal damnation. The narrative that Quentin and Shreve concoct proceeds:

> ". . . when he [Charles] finally knew what he was going to do at last and told Henry and Henry said 'Thank God. Thank God!' not for the incest of course but because at last they were going to do something, at last he could be something even though that something was the irrevocable repudiation of the old heredity and training and the acceptance of eternal damnation. Maybe he [Henry] could even quit talking about his Lorraine duke then, because he could say now, 'It isn't yours nor his nor the Pope's hell that we are all going to: it's my mother's and her mother's and father's and their mother's and father's hell, and it isn't you who are going there, but we, the three -- no, four of us. And so at least we will all be together where we belong, since even if only he [Sutpen] went there we would still have to be there too since the three of us [Charles, Henry, and Judith] are just illusions that he begot. . . ."[29]

In portraying Henry Sutpen's search for transcendence of time through eternal damnation, Quentin casts him in the role of a moral standard bearer and antecedent for himself, as he gropes towards his own incestuous fantasy with Caddy in the clean flame of Hell.

And so, according to Shreve's and Quentin's recounting, Henry confirms his acceptance of Bon's choice to marry his sister, and is thus ill-prepared to confront his father, who appears it seems almost at the self-same moment.

> "To him [Henry] it is logical and natural that their father should know of his and Bon's decision; that rapport of blood which should bring Bon to decide to write, himself to agree to it and their father to know of it at the same identical instant, after a period of four years, out of all time."[34]

Sutpen seeks Henry out in the midst of the Southern retreat, and in a borrowed Confederate tent Quentin and Shreve surmise that he instructs his son concerning Judith's future:

> "He [Charles] must not marry her, Henry. His mother's father told me that her mother had been a Spanish woman. I believed him; it was not until after he was born that I found out that his mother was part negro."[35]

As though by mental telepathy, Bon's response to Henry's return from the interview with his father is:

> "So it's the miscegenation, not the incest, which you can't bear? . . . And he sent me no word? He did not ask you to send me to him? No word to me, no word at all? That was all he had to do, now, today; four years ago or at any time during the four years. That was all. He would not have needed to ask it, require it, of me. I would have offered it. I would have said, I will never see her again before he could have asked it of me. He did not have to do this, Henry. He didn't need to tell you I am a nigger to stop me. He could have stopped me without that. . . ."[36]

And Henry's final, reluctant response to his father's revelation is, "he [Henry] knew what he would do; it now depended on what Bon would do, would force him to do, since he knew that he would do it."[37]

After the revelation of Bon's mixed blood, Quentin and Shreve picture the dialogue and action between Henry and Charles as this new information thrusts the two brothers into the role of deadly adversaries.

> Henry looks at the pistol; now he is not only panting, he is trembling; when he speaks now his voice is not even the exhalation, it is the suffused and suffocating inbreath itself:
> — You are my brother.
> — No I'm not. I'm the nigger that's going to sleep with your sister. Unless you stop me, Henry. . . .
> — Do it now, Henry, he says.

> Henry whirls; in the same motion he hurls the pistol from him and stoops again, gripping Bon by both shoulders, panting.
> — You shall not! he says. — You shall not! Do you hear me?
> Bon does not move beneath the gripping hands; he sits motionless, with his faint fixed grimace; his voice is gentler than that first breath in which the pine branches began to move a little:
> — You will have to stop me, Henry.[38]

And Shreve and Quentin marvel over the fact that Bon did not simply slip away, knowing then what Henry felt his duty to be. But instead, according to their surmise, the two soldiers returned from the army together, arriving at the front gate of "Sutpen's Hundred" before Henry could bring himself to kill his brother. According to the reconstructed story

> ". . . maybe he [Charles] even went to Henry and said, 'I'm going, Henry' and maybe they left together and rode side by side dodging Yankee patrols all the way back to Mississippi and right up to that gate; side by side and it was only then that one of them ever rode ahead or dropped behind and that only then Henry spurred ahead and turned his horse to face Bon and took out the pistol; and Judith and Clytie heard the shot. . . ."[39]

And ultimately identifying with Bon's sorrow and sensitivity, Quentin and Shreve attribute an ironic but compassionate last gesture to him, the young man who has gambled and lost everything in his search for paternal recognition. In the metal case which Judith had given him to enclose her picture, the picture of Bon's octoroon mistress and child was found. Shreve believes and Quentin agrees that:

> ". . . It was because he [Charles] said to himself, 'If Henry dont mean what he said, it will be all right; I can take it [the octoroon's picture] out and destroy it. But if he does mean what he said, it will be the only way I will have to say to her [Judith], I was no good; do not grieve for me.' Aint that right? Aint it? By God, aint it?"
>
> "Yes," Quentin said.[40]

In analyzing Henry's choices, Quentin as a Southerner who lives by the same racial code, cannot overlook the miscegenation block any more easily than Henry had been able to. Rather than focusing on Henry's concept of racial purity,

however, Quentin fixates on his sister's sexual purity as symbolic of the Southern code of proper etiquette. Because of his desire to protect his sister's tarnished purity, a desire linking him with Henry and the action of the murder to guard Judith's purity, Quentin finds himself arrested in past time with an inherent conflict created between the Southern moral imperative to preserve the purity of race and the Biblical injunction against murder. Quentin is thus unable to form an independent moral judgment on Henry's decision to murder his half brother.

In his interview with Miss Rosa in September, 1909, Quentin finds that both he and she have balked in comprehending the story at exactly the same point. For both of them time has stopped at the moment of Charles Bon's death -- for Rosa, the death deprived Judith of a marriage in which Rosa felt she was imaginatively participating; for Quentin the death is symbolic in terms of setting a moral and ethical standard of action which he will incorporate into his own life.

As Miss Rosa attempts to describe the moment of Bon's death, which stopped time for the rest of her life, she says that she was

> able to learn nothing save this: a shot heard, faint and far away and even direction and source indeterminate, by two women . . . [Judith and Clytie] alone in a rotting house where no man's footstep had sounded in two years -- a shot, then an interval of aghast surmise above the cloth and needles which engaged them, then feet, in the hall and then on the stairs, running, hurrying, the feet of a man: and Judith with just time to snatch up the unfinished dress and hold it before her as the door burst open upon her brother, the wild murderer whom she had not seen in four years and whom she believed to be . . . a thousand miles away: and then the two of them, the two accursed children on whom the first blow of their devil's heritage had but that moment fallen, looking at one another across the up-raised and un-finished wedding dress.[41]

And in the midst of Rosa's narrative, Quentin identifies with Rosa's "aghast surmise," and time for him too has become arrested at the moment of Bon's murder. Faulkner's narrative voice describes Quentin's amazement and inability to continue digesting Rosa's narrative:

> ...Quentin was not listening, because there was also something which he too could not pass -- that door, the running feet on the stairs beyond it almost a continuation of the faint shot, two women, the negress and the white girl in her underthings ... pausing, looking at the door, the yellowed creamy mass of old intricate satin and lace spread carefully on the bed and then caught swiftly up by the white girl and held before her as the door crashed in and the brother stood there, hatless, with his shaggy bayonet-trimmed hair, his gaunt worn unshaven face, his patched and faded gray tunic, the pistol still hanging against his flank: the two of them, brother and sister, curiously alike as if the difference in sex had merely sharpened the common blood to a terrific, and almost unbearable, similarity, speaking to one another in short brief staccato sentences like slaps, as if they stood breast to breast striking one another in turn neither making any attempt to guard against the blows.
>
> Now you cant marry him.
> Why cant I marry him?
> Because he's dead.
> Dead?
> Yes. I killed him.
> He [Quentin] couldn't pass that.[42]

With his ambivalence of moral values concerning Henry's action, Quentin's mind thus becomes fixated on this imaginary scene. Quentin believes that if he can situate such a highly problematical scene properly within a historical and moral context, it will be possible for him to comprehend it, integrate his life around it, and become active in life himself. He would have to attain a perspective independent of the fixed precepts which have been instilled in him as a Southerner in order to be able to reenter the moving stream of life.

Quentin realizes, therefore, that it is essential for him to determine his own moral stance in regard to Henry's decision to murder Charles. In so doing he will thereby formulate a perspective on the ethical norm underlying the Southern social code, which dictates separation of the races. But Quentin is able to identify not only with Henry's acceptance of incest in permitting the marriage of Judith and Bon, but with Henry's refusal to condone the impurity of miscegenation as well. Thus, in the actions of both Henry and Quentin there is a reflection of the pre-Civil War ethical system of the South, with its absolute

distinction between black and white, the acceptance of which dictates a stoic posture based on principle, rather than a loving Christian response to humanity.

Without Quentin's momentary encounter with the wasted form of Henry Sutpen at "Sutpen's Hundred," he could never have learned the essential bit of information about Charles Bon's racial heritage, to which Faulkner had previously alluded, but never factually stated. By allowing the information of Bon's mixed blood to be directly imparted from Henry to Quentin, Faulkner dramatically constructs a psychological impasse in Quentin's mind, which results in moral ambivalence concerning the proper course of action for a gentleman to take to defend his sister's honor against the taint of racial impurity. This ambivalence helps explain the final anguished cry, "I dont hate it! I dont hate it!," referring to the South, because Quentin both loves his region for its chivalric ideals, and hates it for elevating ideals of form over the moral substance of human life or death.[43]

In trying to understand Quentin's identification with Henry's dilemma, Shreve hopes to unravel the legacy of the South's code of values, and the feeling of allegiance that it inspires despite logical analysis and moral judgment. He pleads with Quentin:

> ". . . I just want to understand it [the South] if I can . . . What is it? something you live and breathe in like air? a kind of vacuum filled with wraithlike and indomitable anger and pride and glory at and in happenings that occurred and ceased fifty years ago? a kind of entailed birthright father and son and father and son of never forgiving General Sherman . . .?"[44]

As Quentin's interlocutor and partner in dialogue, Shreve not only creates the hypothesis that it was the color bar which precipitated the murder and the subsequent disintegration of the Sutpen dynasty, but through a process of dynamic logic untainted with Southern moral prejudices, he is able to emerge with an image of the future, which completely transcends Quentin's time-block. "I think," Shreve says, " that in time the Jim Bonds are going to conquer the Western

hemisphere. . . . And so in a few thousand years, I who regard you will also have sprung from the loins of African kings."[45] Despite Shreve's aid, and the imaginative creation of the missing portions of the story that they concoct together, however, Quentin is not able to accede to the vision of a future which is completely unacceptable in terms of Southern values and expectations. He is therefore unable to progress beyond the moral and intellectual confusion and despair he feels concerning Henry's action.[46]

It is later in The Sound and the Fury that Quentin ultimately makes his choice and opts for the safety and security of the Southern traditions of the past, repudiating the Quentin preparing to enter Harvard, and embracing the Quentin "who was still too young to deserve yet to be a ghost, but nevertheless having to be one for all that."[47] Renouncing his former efforts to reconstruct the reality of Sutpen's life historiographically in Absalom, Absalom!, in The Sound and the Fury Quentin finds himself living in the midst of a distorted and neurotic fantasy of incest with his sister. Rather than formulating words that can reflect life and action in art, Quentin attempts to remove himself from reality and the anguish it causes by creating ideas that might forever rest "symmetrical above the flesh" through his death.[48] When he finds it impossible in his own life to protect Caddy's virtue by rising to the final tragic and chivalric heights that Henry attained in defending Judith's honor through murder, he decides to commit suicide to validate his idealistic beliefs and the codes of past behavior.[49]

The Quentin Compson of The Sound and the Fury would thus agree with the speaker in Eliot's "Four Quartets" that in order to achieve transcendent consciousness one must not be in time. To soar beyond time he is willing to sacrifice himself and all of the moments of his past in order to erase them from memory. Faulkner portrays him as a self-conscious and impotent Prufrock figure, attempting to achieve immortality through sin rather than through heroic virtue, manifesting an inverted form of the malady that possessed Don Quixote.

In the ambivalence which develops between the vision of an idealized existence in the South, in which Quentin would like to believe, and the dismal realities in the lives of those around him that he cannot forget or change, he becomes immobilized. In attempting to identify with the aristocratic ideals which have been imparted to him as a representative of Southern culture, his imagination merges with the static element of Southern aristocratic life, which remained fixed and unchanging despite the rapid and chaotic changes in the world of reality. His inability to emerge with a moral explanation for Sutpen's failure to establish a dynasty in the Southern tradition in Absalom, Absalom! can be attributed partly to his ethical confusion concerning the manner in which his ideal view of Southern life is constantly counteracted by his realistic knowledge of what it is and has been.[50]

Thus in Absalom, Absalom! Quentin serves two aesthetic purposes. In addition to being the narrator through whose insight the story is related, he is also the chief impediment to the ongoing motion of life in the book, which he artificially arrests, because he refuses to accept the inevitable realities of life. And ultimately the reader is left with the same moral interpretations that confront Quentin and Shreve.[51]

In analyzing Quentin's effort to use the Sutpen saga to attempt to find his own unity of being, it is evident that he progresses from an idealization of Thomas Sutpen as exemplary of the vision and material values characterizing the outstanding members of Southern society, to a conception of him as an egomaniac attempting to realize his "design" through the destruction of other human beings. Ultimately, although he had grown up being taught to consider Sutpen as "trash,"[52] Quentin becomes aware that Sutpen far surpassed the dreams and accomplishments of the generations of his own family. In a letter to Malcolm Cowley, Faulkner elaborated on Quentin's view of Sutpen:

> He [Quentin] grieved and regretted the passing of an order the dispossessor of which he was not tough enough to withstand. But more he grieved the fact (because he hated and feared the portentous symptom) that a man like Sutpen, who to Quentin was trash, originless, could not only have dreamed so high, but have had the force and strength to have failed so grandly.[53]

Quentin, however, ultimately becomes aware that Sutpen's fatal flaw of inhumanity is a form of moral blindness similar to the Southern social code of inequality manifested in the institution of slavery and social prejudice.[54]

As Quentin gradually reaches an understanding of Sutpen's perspective on life and on human beings, who simply serve as tools to help achieve his design, he also comprehends how all Southerners might find it possible to identify with the Sutpen objectives, which are derived from the plantation model of Southern material success. Quentin describes the admirable side of Sutpen's character as revealing

> "that morality which would not permit him to malign or traduce the memory of his first wife, or at least the memory of the marriage even though he felt that he had been tricked by it, not even to an acquaintance in whose confidence and discretion he trusted enough to wish to justify himself, not even to his son by another marriage in order to preserve the status of his life's attainment and desire, except as a last resort. Not that he would hesitate then, Grandfather said: but not until then."[55]

And Quentin recognizes the doggedly determined aspect of Sutpen's will, which directed him to act slowly and deliberately:

> "he did not give up. He never did give up; Grandfather said that his subsequent actions (the fact that for a time he did nothing and so perhaps helped to bring about the very situation [Charles Bon's marriage to Judith] which he dreaded) were not the result of any failing of courage or shrewdness or ruthlessness, but were the result of his conviction that it had all come from a mistake and until he discovered what that mistake had been he did not intend to risk making another one."[56]

Thus, Quentin ultimately finds it impossible to act as Sutpen's judge, and his empathy is dearly bought at the cost of his unity of being in the future.

His final statement of love and hatred for the South at the end of the novel reflects his realization of the terrible consequences of man's inhumanity to man, a fatal sin found at the base of Sutpen's fall and underlying the defeat of the entire South.

The Absence of Transcendent Insight in Absalom, Absalom!

The choices presented in Absalom, Absalom! -- the decision that must be made between the existing Southern social tradition and man's responsibility to man -- are the ones that affect not only Sutpen as the man of action, and Quentin as the man of interpretation, but the two other narrators, Miss Rosa and Mr. Compson, as well. Each of them is free to interpret the lesson of the past, and either to accept it or to revise it according to his or her emotional needs and the requirements of the present. And all of the narrators sequentially reveal their lack of appreciation of the need for responsibility to mankind.

Miss Rosa formulates moral judgements on events long before they occur, then in her self-delusion, turns to the past to justify her static pose. Although she may be discounted as simply another romantic idealist indulging herself in the dream of art, because the dream she selects is that of aestheticism, she is able to achieve the artist's aim of arresting and freezing the motion of life. Although she seems to be a shrill and brittle figure possessed by the demons of the past, her message is of central significance to the method and the theme of Absalom, Absalom! Not only does her particular situation and her evaluation of it symbolize the goal of the artist, but in her arrested state, she serves as a foil against which the energy and motion of life can be silhouetted. And most importantly, she becomes the mouthpiece for Quentin when she acknowledges the fact that she has not been able to progress beyond the outrage she feels concerning the murder of Charles Bon. She explains:

> "There are some things which happen to us which the intelligence and the senses refuse just as the stomach sometimes refuses what the palate has accepted but which digestion cannot compass -- occurrences which stop us dead as though by some impalpable intervention, like a sheet of glass through which we watch all subsequent events transpire as though in a soundless vacuum, and fade, vanish; are gone, leaving us immobile, impotent, helpless; fixed, until we can die."[57]

Quentin is described perfectly in Miss Rosa's analysis of herself and her own feeling of outrage. Together they are ghosts who are forced to stare at the action of life through a "sheet of glass" separating them from "events [that] transpire . . . in a soundless vacuum," leaving them "immobile . . . until [they] can die." Although Quentin never explains or confides the reason for his perspective on life to the reader, Miss Rosa's point of view, and her compulsive memories and meditations provide the insights needed to describe him and his potentially artistic role.[58]

In a highly complex passage in which Faulkner uses both stylistic and structural antitheses, Rosa attempts to articulate her concept of the unreality of life as it is actively lived versus the central significance of the dream which she conjures up of the past and to which she has devoted her life. In expressing the centrality of the dream, Rosa characterizes not only herself, but Quentin, Sutpen, and all of Faulkner's other isolated figures whose lives are subsumed in abstraction and unreality. In a passage with many Proustian parallels, Miss Rosa states:

> ". . . living is one constant and perpetual instant when the arras-veil before what-is-to-be hangs docile and even glad to the lightest naked thrust if we had dared, were brave enough . . . to make the rending gash . . . but is that true wisdom which can comprehend that there is a might-have-been which is more true than truth, from which the dreamer, waking, says not 'Did I but dream?' but rather says, indicts high heaven's very self with: 'Why did I wake since waking I shall never sleep again?' "[60]

Although Marcel comes to have faith in the necessity of relying on his dreams to provide him with rich subconscious images with which to create artistic metaphors, Miss Rosa and Quentin are both unable to analyze their dreams and take the next step of relating them to reality through the creation of art. They are arrested in a form of transcendent time in their imaginations, without being able to complete the loop and confront reality creatively.

In contrast with Quentin's and Miss Rosa's preference for arrested time in the past, Mr. Compson has a clear but cynical view of the necessity for an active human struggle against the passage of time, comprehending the difference between man's basic instincts and the various forms of abstractions with which he can delude himself. But Mr. Compson sidesteps involvement in life by choosing to play the role of ironic commentator, thereby allowing the social reality to continue existing as a status quo. Although he follows the forms of the Southern social code, he fails to invest the code with lasting symbolic significance — an attitude he reveals in The Sound and the Fury, when he talks about the ultimate irrelevance of virginity:

> Because [virginity] means less to women, Father said . . . It's like death: only a state in which the others are left and I said, But to believe it doesn't matter and he said, That's what's so sad about anything: not only virginity.[60]

Thus, Mr. Compson discounts any enduring significance in the code of chivalry underlying the Southern tradition, while at the same time making no effort to replace his nihilism with a sense of man's responsibility to man. If he had been capable of devising a philosophy stressing the importance of human communion in the reality of time, it might have had some impact upon Quentin's final decision to end his life.

Failure to Attain Unity of Being and Continuity of Time In The Sound and the Fury

During Quentin's revery that continues throughout his last hours in the pages of The Sound and the Fury it becomes apparent that he has failed in attempting to attain unity of being through his historiographical rendering of the Sutpen story in Absalom, Absalom! Like all of the other members of the Compson family, he has retreated into his separate world, directed by selfish identification with the ideals of the past. In his sense of outrage over Caddy's promiscuous behavior, Quentin has become totally focused on his sister's loss of sexual purity. Because virginity is a concept that he associates with virtue and honor, and he believes it is also physically present in Caddy, the symbolic significance of virginity creates a fragile link between his idealistic, verbal world and the world of actual experience.

As one of Faulkner's poets manqués, Quentin first attempts to seek refuge in the "frail vessel" of Caddy, only to realize that her sexuality, which links her with time and maturation, repels him. He asks her bitterly, "Why must you do like nigger women do in the pasture the dark wood hot hidden furious. . ."[61] The smell of honeysuckle, which he at first associates with youth and innocence is later associated with sex, and its fragrance overwhelms him with nausea. Thus in his embodiment of antipathy for the material, physical world, Quentin manifests the moral sensibility which Faulkner associates with the fastidious aesthete.[62]

With his emotional responses triggered by idealistic concepts, however, Quentin is actually incapable of loving any human being, including Caddy. His desire to transform her promiscuous sexuality into their act of incest is not to serve as a symbol of love shared illicitly, but rather an attempt to coerce experience into conforming with his mode of thought. Instead of having Caddy

serve as the symbol of Compson honor, together they might sin and symbolize the inversion of family honor. Having thus established Caddy as symbolic of both Compson and Southern honor, the loss of her virginity (unless he can elevate it to great mythical significance) presages the complete destruction of the precarious ethical structure through which he had hoped to unite the past with the present.

In conjuring up the concept of incest as a means of explaining Caddy's promiscuity, Quentin again reveals his role as the artist in relying on the grandeur of myths from the past to explain and ennoble his present anguish. Unable to change his memory of past events, or to forget them, he attempts by sheer force of will to alter the facts. Inventing an act that would intensify their identity as members of the Compson family, rather than discarding the family association, Quentin attempts to persuade his father that Caddy's promiscuous acts have been with him.

> ". . . If things just finished themselves. Nobody else there but her and me. If we could just have done something so dreadful that they would have fled hell except us. I have committed incest I said Father it was I it was not Dalton Ames."[63]

Obsessed with the perverted beauty of an incestuous relationship with Caddy, a sinful liaison capable of stopping time for eternity and enabling him to escape from his sense of its passage, Quentin muses while watching the river and contemplating his suicide:

> If it could just be a hell beyond that: the clean flame the two of us more than dead. Then you will have only me then only me then the two of us amid the pointing and the horror beyond the clean flame. . . .[64]

If a sin of this magnitude could be projected upon the past, Caddy's promiscuity would be transformed into an evil of such proportions that the "moral failure would be exorcised, and an unbreakable bond created between brother and sister."[65] Quentin's efforts are thus to find a wicked act capable of bequeathing a

kind of moral significance, if only a negative one, to the meaninglessness of the past. But when Mr. Compson refuses to believe in the validity of his myth of incest, Quentin fails in his effort to recreate the past in a credible, aesthetic form he can bear to live with. His father understands that his real intention is "to sublimate a piece of natural human folly into a horror and then exorcise it with the truth."[66]

In defiance of his father's cynicism, Quentin's efforts are devoted to forcing those around him to embody his romantic conceptions. Attempting to cast himself in the role of the chivalric knight protecting Caddy's virtue, Quentin remembers his ignominious defeat at the hands of Dalton Ames:

> I hit him I was still trying to hit him long after he was holding my wrists but I still tried then it was like I was looking at him through a piece of coloured glass I could hear my blood and then I could see the sky again and branches against it and the sun slanting through them and he holding me on my feet. . . .
>
> . . . I felt almost good . . . even when after a while I knew that he hadnt hit me that he had lied about that for her sake too and that I had just passed out like a girl. . . .[67]

Quentin's effort to live up to heroic and chivalric role is strikingly contrasted with Dalton Ames's judgment on women following his confrontation with Quentin. "Theyre all bitches," Ames said.[68]

Having no ability to transform the principles of his code of conduct into significant action, Quentin is therefore able to operate only on the verbal level. At the time of Caddy's engagement to Herbert Head, he expresses his sense of anger and frustration in an imaginary duel, in which he imagines himself shooting her fiance's voice rather than the man himself. In his memory he hears himself explaining, "Quentin has shot Herbert he shot his voice through the floor of Caddy's room. . . ."[69] Realization of the link between mature sexuality and life ultimately drives him to suicide.[70]

In The Sound and the Fury Quentin's first two viable options are to accept the passage of time and the loss of innocence it entails in an existential

spirit of faith, or to dwell in the childhood reality he remembers from the past, by which he feels disillusioned and baffled. Resembling his father in finding no meaning in the future, and declining to retreat into the pain of the past, Quentin realizes that in order to escape his anguish at the prospect of prolonging existence, his third option is to transcend time altogether through death.

On the morning of his last day, Quentin sees a schooner followed by three gulls, and contemplates the relation of time to space. He notices that the gulls are "hovering above the stern like toys on invisible wires,"[71] and feels that if he can just escape chronological time, he can avoid being like the gulls in their static relation to the schooner, and be both free and eternally outside of time and space.[72] The alternative is remaining alive and consciously in time, and thus living out his father's cynical prophecy that

> . . . a man is the sum of his misfortunes. One day you'd think misfortune would get tired, but then time is your misfortune. . . .[73]

And again --

> Man is the sum of his climactic experiences Father said. Man is the sum of what have you. A problem in impure properties carried tediously to an unvarying nil: statement of dust and desire.[74]

Mr. Compson's philosophy is based on the premise that rather than being what he is, man is what he was; thus, logically, if the past becomes unbearable, life itself becomes impossible to continue.[75]

A sense of self-conscious despair is the inheritance Quentin receives from his father's cynical outlook on life. Mr. Compson's suggestion is that Quentin should completely surrender to time, to the mechanical sequence of events, which is symbolized by the ticking of his grandfather's watch. In giving Quentin the watch, Mr. Compson makes the point of passing on a legacy:

> "Quentin, I give you the mausoleum of all hope and desire; it's rather excruciating-ly apt that you will use it to gain the reducto absurdum of all human experience which can fit your individual needs no better than it fitted his or his father's I give it to you not that you may remember time, but that you might forget it now and then for a moment and not spend all your breath trying to conquer it. Because no battle is ever won he said. They are not even fought. The field only reveals to man his own folly and despair, and victory is an illusion of philosophers and fools."[76]

In saying "no battle is ever won," Mr. Compson reveals the source of his cynicism, which is based on the sense of defeat, both individually and as a member of a society whose values were defeated and overruled. According to his perspective a renewal of effort is discounted as hopeless. Absorption in the past seems to come as a natural development for him and for all who belong to a society which has lost touch with its original set of values, without having been able to replace them with others that are meaningful. For the members of such decadent societies the past becomes romanticized, and although there may still be concern for moral value, it finds no focus for application, and in its frustration, becomes self-destructive.[77]

Believing that life will only reveal his own "folly and despair," Quentin begins to conceive of linear time in terms of the mechanics of clocks and watches, which become the symbols of his obsession with chronology. He comments sorrowfully, reflecting his final inability to come to terms with time in his personal life:

> Father says clocks slay time. He said time is dead as long as it is being clicked off by little wheels; only when the clock stops does time come to life.[78]

Quentin then muses: "A gull on an invisible wire attached through space dragged. You carry the symbol of your frustrations into eternity", which creates an image of eternal entrapment in time.[80] Thus he comes to believe that the only solution to his current unhappiness may be to escape consciousness of linear and durational time through suicide, thereby entering the transcendent realm.[81]

Quentin's immediate temporal goal, therefore, is to transcend and escape the sense of time, either temporarily through sleep or permanently in death. Success in escaping from time would accomplish two objectives. The passage of time would thereby be prevented from diminishing his pain over Caddy's promiscuity through oblivion; and paradoxically, he could avoid the time that he has set for his suicide, an action he knows will eternally remove him from consciousness of the passage of time. He unrealistically hopes that he can successfully forget time before the appointed hour approaches, so that he can remain alive and nurture his sorrow forever. Otherwise the hour will arrive, and he will have to kill himself in order to transcend time. This is the cause of Quentin's efforts throughout his section not to find out what time it is. As in the case of most suicides, the logic Quentin uses in approaching his is inverted.[81]

All through the day the reader follows Quentin as he attempts to forget time by escaping the evidence provided by clocks and watches. First he breaks the watch passed down in his family, but when the watch continues to tick, he realizes that time continues, and he can neither escape the passage of it or the approach of his own doom. The basic opposition in Quentin's mind is between the "temporal" and the "eternal," and his real obsession is a wish to be removed from the temporal to enter eternity. In the "eternal" state, space, time, motion and change are transcended, and the result in "an infinitely prolonged specious present,"[82] or a mystical experience of the Absolute, which is beyond the contradictions of time and space. With the dominance of idealism in Quentin's mind, the intense desire for mystical union with the Absolute is understandable, as is the concept of frozen or "Eternal" time in which to enjoy his perfect bliss.[83]

The episode of Quentin in the jeweler's shop reveals all of the conflicting emotions in his reaction to time. Although he is able to pass by the shop at first by glancing away, he soon calculates the time "high up in the sun,"

forcing him to think of time again, and he returns to the shop. Using his own watch as an excuse, Quentin inquires if "any of those watches in the window are right?" He wants to believe that the watches only measure apparent (abstract) time, and therefore lie by showing the opposite of real (inner) time. His hope is that if there is only apparent time in the world, he may be able to get into real time without having to commit suicide. But he realizes that ultimately he cannot escape, that the jeweler's shop is a microcosm of the world which is filled with false time. The only escape from false time is to leave the shop. "I went out," he says, "shutting the door upon the ticking." Since his constant reference is to death as a door, the symbolism is evident -- going out the door to stop the ticking is parallel to going out the door of death in order to escape time.[84]

Revealing himself to be a direct descendant of the many purity-obsessed characters in American literature, and by professing belief in an aesthetic of lifeless purity which refuses any engagement with reality, Quentin is unable to formulate an adequate vision of life, and emerges instead with an aesthetic of death,[85] the ultimate obstacle of the fulfillment of love.[86] In the Appendix to The Sound and the Fury, Faulkner acknowledges that Quentin is in love with death and anticipates it as one does a lover. He describes Quentin as he

> who loved death above all, who loved only death, loved and lived in a deliberate and almost perverted anticipation of death as a lover loves and deliberately refrains from the waiting willing friendly tender incredible body of his beloved, until he can no longer bear not the refraining but the restraint and so flings, hurls himself, relinquishing, drowning.[87]

Thus, Quentin's tragic moral flaw ultimately lies in a peculiarly stoic emphasis of the abstract chivalric code over the reality of daily living and the reality of those surrounding him.[88] He is actually in love not with Caddy, but with the abstract ideal of love. He can therefore welcome the taboo of incest that bars any real expression of love between them, and his willingness to be

sentenced with Caddy to purgatory for their sin is really a wish for total isolation from life "in the clean flame of Hell . . . out of the loud world."[89] In Quentin's quest for permanence, to remove himself and Caddy from the movement of the world and from their own sexuality, which was symbolic of change, he dreams of an eternal stasis, which he is forced to conceive of as Hell itself. And once Quentin has set himself on the path towards immobility and death, incest is the only sin he can conceive of as having the proper tragic grandeur to counterbalance his choice of suicide.

Thus, through the force of his will, Quentin's goal is to conquer time and impose his own puritanical judgment upon Caddy's actions that were more folly than sin. His incestuous goals seem to have an egocentric origin and an abstract element which characterizes them as a form of narcissism expressed as "moral auto-eroticism."[90] In his effort to create values in the mechanical passage of time, it seems that his excessive ego is the corrupting force. His life is devoted to a sort of selfish and self-conscious puritanism, which he ends in an "apotheosis of self-consciousness."[91]

In analyzing Quentin's character, the sophistry of his despair, which the French critics failed to recognize, becomes evident. His system antecedes his experience, a characteristic which is ironically in keeping with the French mentality; but in Quentin's case, the system is upheld in defiance of experience, ultimately becoming the source of his destruction. His ethical order is one that is finally based only on words, on "fine, dead sounds," the meaning of which he lacks the experience to learn.[92] Quentin's moral humanism driven by romantic egoism ultimately reaches the point where he must destroy the real world in order to retain its abstract perfection within his mind.[93]

In the imaginative reconstruction of Quentin's dialogue with his father concerning the possibility of suicide, however, it is apparent that Mr. Compson's

arguments are out of touch with his son's idealistic straining towards death as an absolute means of preserving the concept of Caddy's purity. Immediately before his death Quentin reminisces, and envisions his father saying:

> . . . no you will not do that until you come to believe that even she was not quite worth despair perhaps and i will never do that nobody knows what i know and he i think youd better go on up to cambridge right away . . . and i suppose i realise what you believe i will realise up there next week or next month and he then you will remember that for you to go to harvard has been your mothers dream since you were born and no compson has ever disappointed a lady and i temporary it will be better for me for all of us and he every man is the arbiter of his own virtues but let no man prescribe for another mans wellbeing and i temporary and he was the saddest word of all there is nothing else in the world its not despair until time its not even time until it was.[94]

From his father's comments such as, "you will not do that [commit suicide] until you come to believe that even she was not quite worth despair," Quentin realizes that Mr. Compson's cynicism prevents him from understanding the intensity of his son's desire to escape from time and its memories of Caddy's dishonor. In his total focus on the reality of past time, Mr. Compson remarks, "its not despair until time its not even time until it was," a statement which acts as a final persuasion for Quention in his thoughts of suicide. If time only exists in the past, and the past is unbearable for Quentin, then there is every reason to transcend it through death. Quentin thus tries frequently to think of himself as already dead or to say to himself that he soon will be dead.

Quentin's discovery that life is chaos, that nothing really happens, and that there is no indication of a shape, ultimately casts him into the role of existential hero. Unlike the Bergsonian man, who has the courage to understand and face such a monotonous succession of days while declining to order the monotony with fallacious conceptions which give an artificial sense of purpose, however, Quentin refuses to accept the chaos of life, preferring to terminate it himself.[95]

and face such a monotonous succession of days while declining to order the monotony with fallacious conceptions which give an artificial sense of purpose, however, Quentin refuses to accept the chaos of life, preferring to terminate it himself.[95]

There is no realistic solution for Quentin's major dilemma, his awareness that with the passage of time the reality of Caddy's past promiscuity, no matter how sinful, will inevitably be forgotten. His view of life corroborates Sartre's statement that "Faulkner's vision of the world can be compared to that of a man sitting in an open car and looking backward,"[96] for Quentin ultimately feels it is worth it to leap out of the car, out of time itself, in order to preserve his vision of lifelong purity.[97]

He decides to take his final gamble when he feels despair itself slowly slipping away, which he alludes to in the statement, "It's not when you realize that nothing can help you -- religion, pride, anything -- it's when you realize that you don't need any aid."[98] Quentin realizes that "even his horror at Caddy's promiscuity is mortal and can [only] be secured for eternity by the destruction of time itself."[99] But finally, following on the heels of his complaint about man's inability to do anything really "dreadful," it is fear of the meaninglessness of life rather than avoidance of despair that ultimately provides the motivation for Quentin's suicide and moral failure to attain unity of being.

With his thoughts filled with the notion of escaping his own shadow which he associates with death, and with a feeling of attraction and repulsion towards the water in which he plans to drown himself, time stops for Quentin as he stands on the bridge over the Charles River, musing

> The shadow of the bridge, the tiers of railing, my shadow leaning flat upon the water, so easily had I tricked it that it would not quit me. At least fifty feet it was, and if I only had something to blot it into the water, holding it until it was drowned . . . Niggers say a drowned man's shadow was watching for him in the

ultimate goal, he nevertheless remembers the life-giving force of Dilsey's personality, and what a practical, commonsense reaction she would have to what he was about to do.

Elements of Transcendence in The Sound and the Fury

After reading The Sound and the Fury, and analyzing each of the sections within the context of the novel, one realizes that there can be no truth without an involvement of the imagination -- that truth emerges only from an active engagement of the mind with reality. From the failure of Benjy's static objective reality, which cannot represent a truth because his view does not incorporate the world's movement, we proceed to discover the failure of Quentin's and Jason's efforts to achieve truth through subjective means. In their cases imagination is employed as the agent of a contorted mode of thought which they impose on experience. The result is the failure of their narratives, which are based on their failed versions of truth.

While the Compsons all attempt to some degree to deny their involvement in the sequence of natural events, at the same time manipulating experience to justify their preconceived ideas, both Caddy and Benjy test the family's ability to deal with their problems in a concerned, understanding, and forgiving manner, the one through flaunting society's norms, the other through existence on a subhuman level. Quentin, as well as the rest of the family, fails in his dealings with them both. Only Dilsey, as one who realizes and acts out her humanity, represents the ethical norm in a loveless household.[101] She is open to acceptance of whatever time may bring. Her method of creating order out of disorder is to work with circumstances instead of against them, and to adjust herself to change. She has an instinctive attitude that whatever the vicissitude, it must be confronted with courage and dignity, rather than with pessimism or

passivity. Revealing that the only possible way to live with time is to be preoccupied with the present, Dilsey's dealings with the past are with that tangible portion of it which is caught up in the present, without trying to make it endure forever (in Quentin's manner), or trying actively to avoid it (as Jason attempts to do). Dilsey's existence as an ethical norm does not depend upon an abstract system or code of behavior. Simply by her existence and through her actions, the reader becomes instinctively aware not only of her pain and suffering, but of her endurance and permanence in change.[102]

In the contrasting perspectives created among Quentin's abstractions and final withdrawal from life, Dilsey's stoicism, and the preacher's vision of "de power en de glory," Faulkner's moral concerns become evident. The preacher transcends his insignificance and manages to translate time into concrete religious experience, which is in direct opposition to Quentin's abstraction of time into fragmented segments. In the characterization of Dilsey and the minister, Faulkner introduces the possibility offered by the paradox of religious faith, through which one can resist the passage of time by never struggling against it.[103]

Dilsey's vision of "de first en de last" becomes a basic religious insight into the unity of all human experience. At the root of her vision is the power of human love, which is reflected in that of the preacher. In its projection outward, religious love can redeem the individual and protect him against the passage of time. Religion, in its primitive aspect, retains this redemptive, motivating force; whereas, when it is projected inward, love becomes egoistic and self-destructive.

In his sermon, the preacher becomes "nothing," and lifts his face towards a reality that exists beyond the divisions of time, which he perceives as the reality of redeeming love. In contrast to the preacher's transcendence of time through belief in the universal aspect of love, Quentin chooses fragmentation and

the nothingness of extinction. It is the concept of time as enclosed in his own egoism, which ultimately destroys Quentin.[104]

Faulkner's Successful Aesthetic Form Reveals Quentin's Moral Failure

Ultimately Faulkner's intellectual figures, of whom Quentin is the most fully developed example, are used as "arrested characters" or human artifacts presented in the same way as arrested moments, in order to reveal the motion of life in conflict with their static, fixed position.[105] Yet Faulkner's aesthetic reconstruction of Quentin's temporal fragmentation in Absalom, Absalom! and The Sound and the Fury paradoxically points towards his belief that "yesterday, today and tomorrow are Is: Indivisible: One."[106] For despite the fact that the dynamic process of empathy operating in the present fails as a temporal vehicle to heal the break between past and present in Quentin's perspective, in characters such as Dilsey and the preacher, we see that men can attain a transcendent sense of time based on belief in a universal reality that exists beyond all temporal divisions. The transcendence that Faulkner believes possible is not the life-denying form rejecting the passage of time, which is revealed in the lives of the isolated intellectual protagonists, but rather transcendence of time through stoic sacrifice or through the Christian experience of taking responsibility for oneself and others. Although man can never free himself of the burden of his past, which he carries with him at all times, yet he can conduct his constant struggle with past, present, and future experience hopefully -- because all time, following the Bergsonian belief, is constantly in the process of making and remaking itself as a unity.

In attempting to chart a course through the fragments of modern existence, the theme of time, of the "relation of past and future in the responsibility of the present,"[107] has thus become a philosophical consideration

which seems to offer the possibility of attaining an all-embracing perspective on life. Only when the passage of time can be accepted is one "prepared to face history, to enter 'the awful responsibility of time.' "[108]

Ultimately, Faulkner's temporal perspective combines modern consciousness of time as process with belief in the unity of all time. And through the shaping power of his romantic imagination, Faulkner succeeds in producing forms of fiction which embody a major form of unity within man's discontinuous and multifaceted existence. The major lesson that Quentin fails to learn is the lesson that Marcel as the evolving artist figure in Proust's work and Faulkner as the artist himself gradually realize. This is the important aesthetic discovery that transcendence of time can be attained through the creation of art, because through art it is possible to manifest the assumption of a particular form of responsibility for all mankind.

NOTES

[1]T.S. Eliot, "Four Quartets: Burnt Norton," in Collected Poems, 1909-1962 (Franklin Center, Pa.: The Franklin Library, 1979), p. 180.

[2]Quentin can be easily identified with the "procession of isolated, doomed heroes" who appear throughout the history of the American novel, including those in the works of Brockden Brown, Hawthorne, and Melville. Calvinism, with its elements of stoicism, was a strong influence in creating this type of character, about whose existence Richard Chase writes: ". . . nothing appears to our American novelists to be more terrible than to have become isolated or to have fallen victim to a cold, abstract hatred of life — nor . . . does any doom call forth a more spontaneous admiration or require a more arduous repudiation." (See Richard Chase, The American Novel and its Tradition [Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1957], pp. 214-215.)

[3]See David L. Minter, The Interpreted Design as a Structural Principle (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969).

[4]Donald M. Kartiganer, "The Sound and the Fury and Faulkner's Quest for Form," ELH, 37, No. 4 (December 1970), 638-639.

Faulkner's insistence upon engaging in a search for truth despite the fragmentation of reality links his work with that of Wallace Stevens, and differentiates their writing from that of modern poets of pure process, such as Walt Whitman and William Carlos Williams. (See Kartiganer, 617.)

In "Notes toward a Supreme Fiction," Wallace Stevens acknowledges the problem that occurs as he attempts to conform to Bergson's ideas — "Not to impose, not to have reasoned at all" — and yet, at the same time he feels the need to go beyond the mere process of recording "an endless succession of images and registering a resilient capacity for wonder." (See Kartiganer, 617.) He insists on participating in the creation of a supreme reality, which must reveal the process of change, while at the same time being abstract. It must somehow draw forth from the chaotic movement of the universe the fragmented elements which will distinguish the private imagination and the moving world — even if it is only for the moment. This effort is much more than simply recording the motion of life and the mind's effort to keep up with it, which is the effort involved in an art of sheer process.

Although process art restores integrity to reality, it fails to identify the dignity of man, a goal that is essential to both Wallace Stevens and to Faulkner. As opposed to the simple recording of life's motion in process art, the alternative is an aesthetic of constant creation and searching for a "Supreme Fiction" in the face of the vanishing boundaries of reality. It is a potentially tragic art in its effort to bind together the unyielding polarities of motion and form. (See Kartiganer, pp. 617-618.)

[5]In his quest for form, Faulkner interrelates themes and character types, and in his best work he refuses to use the analytical mode, or any artificial conceptual structure which gives only a facsimile of movement. He seeks a conversion from within as though compelling his fiction into the discovery of unity in its paradoxical parts. He seems to believe in an evolution towards order as a

principle of movement, which will communicate an authentic sense of experience. (See Kartiganer, p. 618.)

Donald Kartiganer writes:

> . . . the novels are aesthetic exercises in the attempt to become themselves, to become the single stream of their alienated parts. Their achievement, when Faulkner sees his way to the expression of it, is their affirmation of the possibility of viable, comprehensive form — which becomes in the twentieth century the very possibility of knowing and communicating in the world. (Kartiganer, p. 614.)

In discussing the form of Faulkner's novels, which are "conceived as studies in fragmentation, violently juxtaposed stations of a broken world," Kartiganer comments:

> the primary motivation of the work -- although rarely achieved and never sustained -- is the quest of one fragment to move into the life of another, to shatter the private prison and stand at least momentarily in relationship itself. (Kartiganer, p. 613.)

In response to Walter Slatoff's accusation that Faulkner purposely fails to resolve any of his novels, "that every one of Faulkner's experiments with form and style . . . is a movement away from order and coherence," Kartiganer replies:

> The quest in Faulkner is not for failure, but for form, to move toward coherence but only in ways acceptable to the modern writer. The attack on "conceptual" art, the need to create an illusion of "process" in fiction, to create viable yet not static forms — these are the motives of the great twentieth-century writers, who refuse only the kinds of resolution Slatoff is insisting on, not resolution itself. (Kartiganer, p. 621.)

(Also see William J. Slatoff, "The Edge of Order: The Pattern of Faulkner's Rhetoric," in William Faulkner: Three Decades of Criticism, ed. Frederick J. Hoffman and Olga W. Vickery [New York: 1963], and Quest for Failure: A Study of William Faulkner [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960].)

[6]Kartiganer, p. 629. Faulkner seemed fascinated with the Prufrock-like passivity he discovered not only in Conrad's work, but in Joyce's characterization of Stephen Dedalus in Ulysses as well. In his creation of Quentin, Faulkner interjects Stephen's feelings of attraction to and alienation from his homeland, preoccupation with time, and the symbolic significance of various passing episodes, as well as his focus on the past to which he is attached by feelings of guilt. Stephen's statement, "history is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake," reveals the same problem that underlies Quentin's inability to live actively in the present. (See Chase, p. 223.)

Thus, in Quentin Compson Faulkner reveals that he has discovered the techniques needed to present the son of one of the old families of Yoknapatawpha County, discoveries triggered to a large degree by his reading of Ulysses, and his awareness of the means that Joyce had used to characterize Stephen. (See Chase,

p. 223.) Hence the many obvious parallels in the two characters, among them Faulkner's conversion of Stephen's guilt that he may have killed his mother into Quentin's guilt over the belief that he has committed incest with his sister.

[7]In Quentin's attempt to arrest time and analyze a running parallel of the past with the present, the technique used has much in common with the Joycean "mythical method" employed in Ulysses. In both Absalom, Absalom! and in Ulysses the protoganists create a constant juxtaposition of present reality with mythical elements from the past to reveal the identification of the present with the past. (See Richard P. Adams, Faulkner: Myth and Motion [Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1960], p. 140.)

[8]By believing that the sins of the father are transmitted to the son, and that time with its past inexplicable sins becomes a personal burden, Quentin and Faulkner's other intellectual protagonists tend to relive a static myth of their own making, which isolates them from changing reality. In repudiating reality, which he finds unacceptable according to the idealistic values which he superimposes upon life, Quentin is forced to choose to be isolated in time. By embalming his values in a series of arrested moments, whatever he holds in his memory becomes unchangeable, and can be summoned and reexamined at different times without undergoing any alteration. This approach to the past is possible if the individual remains static in the present, a state which can be attained only by isolation from the world of natural time.

Thus, for those for whom the act of remembering becomes a "consecration" or a "sacred duty," the price of isolation for the sake of gaining immunity from time is one they gladly pay. Clearly, the refusal to readjust one's thinking in light of growing and evolving experience, can eventually destroy the continuity of time, and eliminate the capacity for action, not only for the individual, but for an entire society. (See Olga Vickery, The Novels of William Faulkner, 2nd ed. [Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959], pp. 100-101.)

Yet, despite the fact that the historiographical approach to reconstruction of the past in Absalom, Absalom! is a failure as a psychoanalytical tool for Quentin's survival in the present, it proves to be a very successful fictional technique for Faulkner in the same novel. (See Adams, p. 175.)

[9]Michael Millgate, The Achievement of William Faulkner (London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1966), p. 154-155.

[10]In Faulkner's presentation of Quentin's search for unity of being, elements of Stoicism appear in his characterization, which briefly enable him to bear the psychological anguish of the separation of the past from the present. Because of Faulkner's predilection for a concept of morality based on the chivalric code, on an ideal of love in which he embodies the characteristics of Don Quixote, he elevates a social ideal containing elements of Stoicism to the preeminent philosophical position in his universe. If there is any conflict between "the world as it is and the world as it should be," Faulkner's sympathy, like that of Cervantes, is always with the figure of the knight errant pursuing his idealistic, Stoic quest. In the character of Don Quixote, Faulkner found a figure who was both involved in time, manifesting Christian endurance through forgiving love, and involved in escaping time, through belief in Stoic transcendence. If the Stoic perspective seems akin to that of the spatializing intellect, the Christian outlook

seems to reveal an effort to reintegrate time and space, in order to survive in the real world. As the embodiment of both duration and transcendence, Don Quixote represents the Faulknerian ideal. (See Lynn Gartrell Levins, Faulkner's Heroic Design: The Yoknapatawpha Novels [Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1976], pp. 115-116.)

The concept of time can thus be examined in terms of basic Stoic and Christian differences, with obvious elements of both appearing in Faulkner's work. The Stoic believes that detachment from the world implies detachment from time, and that it is therefore possible to escape from involvement in time. The Stoic focuses almost exclusively on man's Logos-being, which is timeless. By denying himself a future, the Stoic becomes superior to all obligations, and having repudiated the future, he, by extension, denies the present and the past their temporal characteristics as well. (See Rudolf Bultmann, Primitive Christianity in Its Contemporary Setting [New York: Meridian Books, 1957], p. 144, quoted in Cleanth Brooks, William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963], pp. 374-375.)

In addition to Quentin, other Faulkner characters who manifest evidence of the Stoic view of life and philosophy are Thomas Sutpen, Ike McCaslin, Charlotte Rittenmeyer, Eula Varner at the time of her suicide, and Joe Christmas. In contrast, there are extremely few characters who personify both Christian and Stoic values existing in harmony. Along with Dilsey and the preacher, only Judith Sutpen, Chick Mallison, and Harry Wilbourne seem to qualify.

Thus, the ultimate conflict in Faulkner's sense of time may be between the Stoic view, the belief that it is possible to escape from involvement in the world of time and enter the timeless Logos, and the Christian view, with its willingness to acknowledge guilt, and its efforts to achieve endurance through forgiving love. Whereas the Stoics believe that freedom is an escape from external reality, according to the Christian outlook, man can never be free because of human nature. Man is incapable of doing the things he wants to do. Thus, "Stoic endurance is a human achievement while Christian endurance is a gift of forgiving love." (See Brooks, Yoknapatawpha Country, p. 373.)

Faulkner defined his concept of the human ideal, which embodies both Stoic and Christian elements, in these words: "I would say that a first-rate man is one — is a man that did the best he could with what talents he had to make something which wasn't here yesterday. And also . . . that never hurt an inferior, never harmed the weak, practices honesty and courtesy, and tried to be as brave as he wanted to be whether he was always that brave or not." (Frederick L. Gwynn and Joseph L. Blotner, eds., Faulkner in the University: Class Conferences at the University of Virginia, 1957-1958 [Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1959], p. 296.

[11]Wylie Sypher, Loss of the Self in Modern Literature and Art (New York: Random House, Inc., 1962), p. 32.

Romantic idealists, whether poets, novelists, or painters, are in reaction against the philosophical separation that Descartes created in seventeenth century thought between the world outside ("res extensa") and the world inside ("res cogitas"). The romantic idealist believes that man should again stand at the center of the world he represents. (See Sypher, p. 45.)

[12]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1964), p. 244.

[13]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 263.

[14]Faulkner describes Sutpen by saying:

> He was not depraved — he was amoral, he was ruthless, completely self-centered. To me he is to be pitied, as anyone who ignores man is to be pitied, who does not believe that he belongs as a member of a human family, of the human family, is to be pitied. Sutpen didn't believe that. He was Sutpen. He was going to take what he wanted because he was big enough and strong enough, and I think that people like that are destroyed sooner or later .... (See Faulkner in the University, pp. 80-81.)

[15]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, pp. 263-264.

[16]C. Vann Woodward describes the peculiarly American quality of this innocence:

> American opulence and American success have combined to foster and encourage another legend of early origin, the legend of American innocence. According to this legend Americans achieved a sort of regeneration of sinful man by coming out of the wicked Old World and removing to an untarnished new one ... They were a chosen people and their land a Utopia on the make. (C. Vann Woodward, "The Search for Southern Identity," The Burden of Southern History [Baton Rouge: The University of Louisiana Press, 1960], pp. 19-20.)

[17]Cleanth Brooks, William Faulkner: Toward Yoknapatawpha and Beyond (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), p. 300.

[18]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 265.

[19]Minter, pp. 212-213.

[20]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 319.

[21]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 312.

[22]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 326.

[23]Brooks, Toward Yoknapatawpha, pp. 296-297.

[24]Adams, pp. 200-201.

[25]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 336.

[26]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, 335.

[27]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 351.

[28]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, pp. 212-213. In order to achieve a conversion from within their listeners, all of the narrators of Absalom, Absalom!, Quentin, Rosa, and Mr. Compson, seek to communicate an authentic sense of experience which will lead to comprehension through the reader's involvement in hearing, smelling, and feeling the emotions and sensations of life. The fullest comprehension of something, Faulkner seems to sometimes suggest, comes from not only being close to the past event and feeling it, or imaginatively projecting oneself into it, but from a kind of mystical union with it, which he strives to achieve in his fiction.

Faulkner's views on achieving this kind of union with a past event approach Bergson's belief that "intuition" provides our only real understanding. The Bergsonian concept of intuition is based on the ability to enter into an object, to achieve conjunction with it, as opposed to viewing it from without. Bergson explains the need for this intense sort of union with another:

> The author may multiply the traits of his hero's character, may make him speak and act as much as he pleases, but all this can never be equal to the simple and indivisible feeling which I should experience if I were able for an instant to identify myself with the person of the hero himself . . . with that which constitutes his essence [which] cannot be perceived from without, being internal by definition . . . Coincidence with the person himself would alone give me the absolute. (Henri Bergson, An Introduction to Metaphysics, trans. T.E. Hulme [New York and London: Putnam, 1912], pp. 3-5.)

Because the essence of inner self of another person is a dynamic process, it follows that the ultimate act of empathy would be to experience that dynamic process in the present. (See Slatoff, Quest for Failure, pp. 245-246.)

[29]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 316.

[30]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 335.

[31]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 340.

[32]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 342.

[33]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, pp. 346-347.

[34]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 353.

[35]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, pp. 177-178.

[36]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 356.

[37]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 355.

[38]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, pp. 357-358.

[39]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 358.

[40]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 359.

[41]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 135.

[42]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 172.

[43]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 378.

[44]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 361-362.

[45]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 213.

[46]Adams, pp. 179-180.

[47]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 101.

[48]William Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury and As I Lay Dying, (New York: Random House, Inc., The Modern Library, 1946), p. 196.

[49]Vickery, pp. 100-101.

[51]Although Faulkner was fascinated by the Southern past, he was realistic about its limitations and sins. For him, the tragic flaw embedded deep in the culture of the South was its adherence to racial discrimination and to the practice of slavery. Yet, he was aware that many of the men who fought for the Confederacy were not slave holders, but rather men fighting for a region, for a culture that is distinguished by its courtesy and graciousness, its gaiety and humor, its myths and legends, its bravery and heroism. The resulting ambivalence in Faulkner's mind about the ultimate collapse of the South was revealed in Japan in 1955, when someone posed almost the same question that Shreve had asked Quentin: "Do you love the South?" Faulkner's response was remarkably parallel to Quentin's:

> Well, I love it and hate it. Some of things there I don't like at all, but I was born there, and that's my home, and I will still defend it even if I hate it. (Robert A. Jelliffe, ed., Faulkner at Nagano, [Tokyo: Kenkyusah Std., 1966], p. 26.)

[51]Although Quentin's and Shreve's version is the most imaginative and dynamic rendition of Stupen's history, as the omniscient author, Faulkner comments that their interpretation in the end remains only another effort to reach the truth. He describes them as " 'dedicated to the best of ratiocination which after all was a good deal like Sutpen's morality and Miss Coldfield's demonizing . . .' " (Absalom, Absalom!, p. 280.)

In the ability of Quentin's and Shreve's version to amalgamate the other two versions of Sutpen's story and progress beyond them, as well as in their interest in characterizing the youthful protagonists with their own attributes, the final version is not only dynamic, but through the process of assimilation, develops a contrapuntal structure for the book in the addition of yet another story. (See Adams, p. 193.) Ultimately it is up to the reader to present the " 'fourteenth image of the blackbird which,' " Faulkner said in an interview, he " 'would like to think is the truth.' " (Faulkner in the University, pp. 273-274.)

[52]Millgate, p. 157.

[53]Faulkner's letter to Malcolm Cowley, quoted in Millgate, p. 322. (The Faulkner-Cowley correspondence is deposited in the Yale University Library. Faulkner's letters are, with one exception, undated, but have been numbered and catalogued in the sequence in which Malcolm Cowley placed them.)

[54]In speaking about the moral flaw that existed in the form of a curse upon the South, Faulkner commented at the University of Virginia: "The curse is slavery, which is an intolerable condition -- no man shall be enslaved --and the South has got to work that curse out and it will, if it's let alone." (Faulkner in the University, p. 79.)

[55]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 272.

[56]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, p. 268.

[57]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, pp. 151-152.

[58]Adams, pp. 202-203.

[59]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, pp. 142-143.

[60]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 97.

[61]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, pp. 113-114.

[62]David L. Minter, William Faulkner: His Life and Work (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), pp. 98-99.

[63]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, pp. 98-99.

[64]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 135.

[65]Peter Swiggart, "Time in Faulkner's Novels," Modern Fiction Studies, 1, No. 2 (May 1955), 224.

[66]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 195.

[67]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, pp. 180-181.

[68]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 181.

[69]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 124.

[70]Quentin's naive ideal of aristocratic purity prevents him from living to become a real aristocrat, because logically, his theory requires that an absence of mature sexuality, or impotence, should be the preeminent characteristic of aristocracy. (See Adams, pp. 242-243.)

[71]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 109.

[72]Perrin Lowrey, "Concepts of Time in The Sound and the Fury," English Institute Essays, 1952 (1954), 75. My interpretation of Quentin's use of the gull symbolism differs slightly from that of Lowrey, who states that Quentin aspires to be like the gulls in their static position, attached by invisible wires to the schooner of life.

[73]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 123.

[74]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, pp. 142-143.

[75]Swiggart, pp. 222-223.

[76]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 95.

[77]Swiggart, pp. 221-223.

[78]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 104.

[79]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 104.

[80]In As I Lay Dying Addie Bundren is filled with the same anguish over the inexorable quality of linear time which permits few redeeming experiences to transcend it. She reminisces, "My father said that the reason for living is getting ready to stay dead. I knew at last what he meant. . . ." (Faulkner, As I Lay Dying, p. 467) But as Addie expresses the difference between hollow, verbal abstractions, which are synonymous with chronological abstractions, and the reality of durational time, it becomes clear that she and Quentin are opposites in terms of their temporal perspectives and the choices they subsequently make. Addie chooses to live fully in the durational sense, scoffing at those who seek transcendence through abstraction and miss the experience of life. She comments:

> . . . I would think how words go straight up in a thin line, quick and harmless, and how terribly doing goes along the earth, clinging to it, so that after a while the two lines are too far apart for the same person to straddle from one to the other; and that sin and love and fear are just sounds that people who never sinned nor loved nor feared have for what they never had and cannot have until they forget the words. (Faulkner, As I Lay Dying, p. 465.)

[81]Lowrey, pp. 71-72.

[82]Lowrey, p. 73.

[83]Lowrey, p. 73.

[84]Lowrey, pp. 73-74.

[85]Kartiganer, p. 625.

[86]Denis de Rougemont, Love in the Western World (New York: Anchor Books, 1957), p. 45.

[87]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, pp. 9-10.

[88]Faulkner differs from the ancient Stoic philosophers in their view of the present world as a world completely fallen from grace. However, he resembles the Stoics in placing no reliance upon grace to extricate man from his temporal dilemmas, hoping that it will somehow be possible for man's courage to

do so. The kind of courage Faulkner praises is Stoic in its determination to act in the face of death, but Christian in its willingness to acknowledge guilt.

In his unpublished manuscript entitled "William Faulkner's Theological Center," Professor John Hunt describes Faulkner's mingling of Stoicism and Christianity by saying: "Faulkner seems unable to tell the Christian story in isolation from Stoic insights, but also unwilling to let his attachment to the traditional Stoic vision obscure the Christian judgment which explains ... [Stoicism's] failure to provide a lasting and meaningful moral order." (See Brooks, Yoknapatawpha Country, p. 373.)

Thus, Faulkner's search seems to be to find a balance between the visions of a fallen Stoic world and a redeemed Christian universe. Whether Stoic or Christian in orientation, Faulkner's characters yearn for their freedom. But freedom has different meanings according to the context in which it is considered. For the Stoic, freedom implies independence of all external reality. For the Christian, however, the definition of freedom raises the whole question of human nature. Is man, when left completely free to be himself, capable of committing himself to good? Even if man wants to do good, is he capable of following through? The Christian point of view leads to the conclusion that even though man may desire what is best, he may turn to evil despite himself. Yet for the Christian, it is impossible to espouse Stoic renunciation of life without experiencing guilt. The Stoic, on the other hand, believes that by turning away from the world, he is on the path to peace and security. (See Bultmann, pp. 143-144, quoted in Brooks, Yoknapatawpha Country, p. 374.)

[89]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 195.

[90]Swiggart, p. 225.

[91]Swiggart, p. 232.

[92]Vickery, pp. 37-38.

[93]Swiggart, p. 236. While in the process of moving towards suicide, Quentin cannot be described as fully conscious of his own goal, because his critical awareness of either the present or the future is lacking. (See Lowrey, p. 75.)

[94]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, pp. 196-197.

[95]In La Nausée, Sartre's existential hero, Roquentin, describes himself as having lost the human capacity to organize, and is thus in the midst of the uncontrolled presence of nature. Yet, in contrast to Quentin, he continues to choose life, and somehow retains faith in a future, whereas Quentin chooses to kill himself when confronting the same dilemma. Hence the basis of Sartre's criticism of Faulkner's "metaphysic" as he interprets in The Sound and the Fury. Sartre, however, fails to consider the wider temporal perspectives of the Faulkner characters, such as Dilsey, Ratliff, and Chick Mallison, whose outlooks counterbalance Quentin's distortions. (See Kartiganer, p. 628.)

[96]Jean-Paul Sartre, "On The Sound and the Fury: Time in the Work of Faulkner," reprinted from Literary and Philosophical Essays by Jean-Paul Sartre, trans. Annette Michelson (London: Rider & Co., 1955), in Faulkner: A Collection

of Critical Essays, ed. Robert Penn Warren (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), p. 89.

[97]Swiggart, p. 230.

[98]Faulker, The Sound and the Fury, p. 99.

[99]Swiggart, p. 231.

[100]Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, p. 109.

[101]Vickery, pp. 47-48.

[102]Vickery, pp. 47-49.

[103]Swiggart, p. 235.

[104]Swiggart, p. 235. There is a parallel between Quentin's enclosure of time within his own ego and Swann's circumscription of the world of art within the confines of his egoism. Egocentric perspectives are incomplete and cripple the individuals by denying attainment of an integral intellectual focus.

[105]The concept of arresting motion in literature involves a tricky aesthetic paradox, because there is no inherent motion in the printed word. Since motion cannot be directly described and be completely credible, it must be approached through artistic indirection. Through the creation of static, "arrested" characters, Faulkner, in his attempt to halt the flow of time and motion of life, creates dramatic human foils against which the motion and energy of life can be revealed.

[106]William Faulkner, Intruder in the Dust (New York: Random House, Inc., 1948), p. 194.

[107]Monroe K. Spears, Dionysus and the City: Modernism in Twentieth-Century Poetry (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 183.

[108]Spears, pp. 182-183.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FAILURE OF FAULKNER'S ISOLATED INTELLECTUAL CHARACTERS TO ATTAIN UNITY OF BEING AND CONTINUITY OF TIME

> There is, it seems
> to us,
> At best, only a limited value
> In the knowledge derived from experience.
> The knowledge imposes a pattern, and falsifies,
> For the pattern is new in every moment
> And every moment is a new and shocking
> Valuation of all we have been.[1]

As Quentin appears in the role of a romantic idealist observing the world from within the confines of his own ego in Absalom, Absalom! and The Sound and the Fury, so Faulkner's other isolated intellectual characters believe that man should stand at the center of the world he represents.[2] They thus hope to be able to recreate the world according to their personal image of it. Through the fabrication of a series of ideal worlds, they attempt to solve the conflicts and uncertainties which are part of experience.

An examination of the isolated, intellectual characters in Faulkner's work reveals that none can meet the demands of the external world, all try to escape clock time by creating a personal sense of time, and all are incapable of love. These alienated individuals choose the solitude of dilapidated houses and unheated rooms, which accentuate their feeling of being trapped in the inadequacy of their emotional responses to life.

Although Faulkner understands and pities those who retreat into the world of the imagination, he does not approve of them, and never condones mere

passivity when confronting adversity. Having personally solved the dilemma of incorporating a life of action into a life devoted to art, he utilizes the isolated intellectual figure as an archetype of the indecision of modern man, for whom the separation of the past with its heroic actions and the present with its fragmentation and passivity have become a psychic wound.

In addition to Quentin Compson and Rosa Coldfield, characters who fit into the isolated intellectual category are Horace Benbow, Gavin Stevens, the schoolmaster, Labove, Gail Hightower, Isaac McCaslin, Charlotte Rittenmeyer and Harry Wilbourne. They all fail to realize that to know truth and not just abstract facts, one must yield one's inner world to change while still holding onto a sense of continuity. A few of them identify eternal human values with a specific period of history, thereby replacing reality with the past, whereas the others simply equate truth and reality with their own idealistic beliefs as a bulwark against uncertainty, opting for permanence at the expense of their humanity in ongoing time.[3]

Some of the members of the isolated, intellectual group dedicate the act of remembering to a special event or person from their past, considering the preservation of the memory a sacred duty for which they are willing to accept isolation from the world of time and change. By refusing to realize that each moment of the present creates a new perspective on the past, they cling to the notion that memories should be unchangeable in order to be summoned and reanalyzed at different points in the present. Thus, acts of memory play a negative role in the lives of Faulkner's characters who insist upon isolating themselves from the world of natural time.

The alienated figures of Faulkner's fiction are victims of a syndrome that is more complex than Sartre's diagnosis of their ailment as simply a sharp Proustian focus on the past. The Faulkner characters of this type are searching

for a sense of identity in actions and standards which they have romanticized in order to provide a sense of solidarity upon which to structure their lives. Through the demonstration that the continuity of time and the capacity for action can be destroyed by an excessive concern with the past, and the revelation that reality is not a system, nor truth a dogma, the isolated intellectual characters of Faulkner's fiction thus serve a significant fictional function.

Faulkner's great discovery was that characters moving with a stream of motion are unable to sense its power, whereas persons or objects assuming a static stance against the flow of motion dramatically reveal energy in the opposition of the forces generated. Hence the creation of Quentin and other static figures whose fixed positions act as silhouettes against the cinematic movement of life. From this discovery emerges the opposition between dynamic life and static word -- the aesthetic cornerstone of Faulkner's work enabling him to freeze the motion of life through artifice.[4]

In seeking an existence dedicated to imagination and illusion, Faulkner's alienated characters are searching for security in a form of "life-denial."[5] However, in their attempts to grasp truth aesthetically through their perception of a supreme moment in the natural historical order, they are unaware of the life-denying aspect of the order they seek. In following the Keatsian ideal of promoting aesthetic order over reality -- in seeking to convert truth to beauty and beauty to truth -- they doom themselves to inverted thinking. Yet, enclosed in a myth of their own making, they continue to believe in the moral superiority of their solipsistic view of reality.

In the process of initiation into the experience of life, while learning whether to "accept the code or repudiate the code or transcend the code,"[6] only a very few of Faulkner's idealistic, intellectual figures are able, therefore, to discover the true nature of reality. The quality of innocence they reveal is more

than simply youthful naivete that can be converted into maturity. It is a quality of intransigent idealism and deep-rooted romanticism that invariably has the effect of shocking or "outraging" its human possessor when it comes into contact with the resistance of reality.

The question must be asked: Why do Faulkner's intellectuals fail in their efforts to grow from innocence to experience, in attempting to combine the past with the present? The answer is found in their intense and exaggerated reaction to reality, which differs radically from their preconceived idea about it. In most instances the desire to retreat into an isolated world of the imagination is the result of an earlier episode of suffering from shock or outraged idealism when one of the moral norms of society was transgressed.

The outrage felt by these idealists can be traced to the universal, human desire to reduce and control nature with formulas and strategems. When man's rules fail to contain nature and are easily overturned, there is sudden proof of human weakness and imperfection. Man is confronted by an "enormous, upsetting . . . gap existing between things as they are and [his] concept of them," creating a mental conflict between awareness of what is and what ought to be.[7] In these instances, the isolated intellectual figure retreats behind a barricade of intellectual and idealistic codes to try to control the moral and physical universe which has so threatened both pride and self-respect.

In dealing with a partially "fallen world," in which the grace of total vision is denied, Faulkner's intellectuals fail the "crisis of knowing" because their innocence ultimately creates an absurd sense of non-involvement in the chaos of human life.[8] They somehow believe that it is possible to do what they will in life without inflicting enough injury upon other men or their dreams to cause them to fail.[9] Faulkner, on the other hand, is convinced that no one can achieve his dream

through non-involvement and his fiction reveals that the life of each being is interrelated with that of others.

The handling of the theme of individual development is central in Faulkner's work, revealing the protagonist's successful or unsuccessful growth from innocence through experience to a sense of responsibility for himself, his family, and the community. The Faulkner characters who are defeated are those who attempt to link themselves to something which is motionless in the midst of change. In their search for security and stasis, they become crushed in their effort not to move, becoming living testimony to Faulkner's belief that it is only possible to be motionless if one is dead.[10] Faulkner's intellectuals are therefore guilty of the greatest existential sin, which (according to Sartre) is "being in stasis and taking identity from the past."[11] Yet if one were to ask what these obsessed characters are searching for, as they seek to convert reality to their own view of it, it would be their own personal concept of unity of being, or "being, itself," in all of its mystery.[12] Instead of accepting change when necessary, however, they hope to attain an integral unity of being by subsuming reality into their own immutable image of it.

In this chapter the lives of Faulkner's major isolated intellectual characters will be analyzed in ways which parallel the analysis of the life of Quentin Compson, and in terms of each character's sense of outrage and subsequent failure to attain a sense of continuity of time and unity of being. Those whose fictional existences will be scrutinized include Isaac McCasin, Gail Hightower, Horace Benbow, Gavin Stevens, and Harry Wilbourne. The perspective of life-denial, which acts as a guiding principle in the lives of these characters, will then be contrasted with the life-giving impulse which directs the action of Faulkner's more fully developed characters.

Isaac McCaslin's Relinquishment of His Patrimony

In Go Down, Moses, Ike states the arguments for relinquishing his inheritance in terms of an act of atonement for the sins and guilt of his forefathers, outwardly adopting a simple, Christ-like life style. In reality his refusal to farm the land which was rightfully his, while accepting a small stipend on which to live, is an evasion of responsibility. In his effort to reject a sinful life, he fails to follow Christ's example of actively sharing in the life of man, while accepting the guilt and suffering that it entails.

Ike's dream of escape from the plantation world of the McCaslins is focused on a pastoral form of existence, which he first experienced in the ritual of the hunt with its illusion of immortality and eternal youth. But the life he chooses is never able to fulfill the promise he feels from his early years in the wilderness with Sam Fathers. Confusing rituals with the life they order, Ike fails to realize that any ritual has only a symbolic importance in its power to create order and a sense of continuity with the past.[13] Although the precepts that were learned in the woods could have been extrapolated and applied within the framework of civilization, Ike insists on applying them only to the hunt itself. By the end of "Delta Autumn," his world has become merely a hunting camp for city vacationers, and seems to have lost all validity and heroic grandeur. Although his wisdom was learned from the wilderness, he chooses not to use it to help control the inevitability of change.

In his misconception of the wilderness as being the Garden of Eden, Ike fails to realize the necessity for man to leave the seclusion of paradise in order to discover his humanity; his awareness thus fails to encompass the "paradox of the fortunate fall."[14] Henry James, Sr., explained the paradox of the "fortunate fall"

as the necessity for man to undergo a fall from grace in order to gain the knowledge to seek actively for good in life:

> The unfallen Adam's innocence was an innocence bred of ignorance; he was without the vast knowledge accumulated through experience. In the paradox of the fortunate Fall, in order to attain manhood, the individual had to fall, had to pass beyond childhood in an encounter with Evil — for only by knowing evil could he recognize good and thereby make a significant choice between the two.[15]

In fact, the comparison of Ike with the Biblical Adam is striking. When, in Sections 4 and 5 of "The Bear," Ike emerges from the timeless world of the wilderness in order to prepare to enter the world of history, to be thrust "into an actual world and an actual age," he, like Adam, is "at home only in the presence of Nature and God."[16] It is at this point that Ike looks through the family ledgers, and has the necessary encounter with evil in his discovery of old Carothers McCaslin's sexual relationship with his Negro daughter, who bears a child and commits suicide.

At the moment of this discovery, Ike loses his innocence, and has the opportunity for moral growth. But instead of assuming the role of a Moses, a possibility indicated in the title of the novel, and choosing to reenter the sinful world after communing with God in the solitude of the mountain top, Ike returns instead to the wilderness in the hope of recapturing some form of lost innocence. In so doing, he repudiates the reality of the world of time in favor of an isolated paradise.

Because Ike can exist successfully only in the wilderness and outside of human time, he makes the conscious decision to hold himself aloof from his fellow man, thereby ensuring that nothing occurs in his life between his twenty-first and his eightieth years. Although called "Uncle" throughout the area, he leads a sterile existence, repudiating wife and children in favor of solitude in the forest. Thus he more than deserves the angry queries of those who live around him, when

in "Delta Autumn" Roth Edmonds asks him, "Where have you been all the time you were dead?"[17]

In "Delta Autumn" we see Ike from the final poignant perspective of a man grown too old to participate in the hunt to which he has dedicated his life. All of his thoughts are the same, as though they have been frozen in time from his youth; and in his conversation with Roth at the hunting camp he says much the same things that he said to Cass a half century before. In the encounter with Roth's mulatto mistress, however, he lacks the courage and understanding to be supportive of her desire for marriage to result from love. Failing to discern the parallel of her position with the earlier beliefs which directed the course of his life, he encourages her to relinquish Roth. Although he felt strongly enough about the wrong committed by Carothers McCaslin and the slave whom he impregnated to relinquish his patrimony, Ike seems to avoid assigning blame in this relationship. When she inquires, "Old man . . . have you lived so long and forgotten so much that you dont remember anything you ever knew or felt or even heard about love?" his unspoken response is that he never actually experienced a relationship involving human love. Thus, he is neither able to condemn Roth Edmonds for refusing to marry the mulatto, nor is he able to be supportive of her as the woman who loves him and as the mother of his child.

Following the existing Southern code of behavior, Ike suggests that within a thousand or two thousand years the taboo against such marriages will have vanished, and in the meanwhile urges the girl to marry someone of her own race as a form of revenge, a course of action that even he seems to realize is full of insincerity. Although he is sensitive to the girl's suffering, in the passivity of his life he has lost all semblance of courage and the will to protest against the status quo.

Ike's life has thus been dedicated to an ideal of perfection rather than to the effort to create such perfection out of the materials at hand. In his age and impotence, he has become a figure of pathos, whose myopic view allowed him to interpret his youthfully heroic quest in the wilderness as a goal worthy of the dedication of his future. His life is paradoxically styled as an imitation of Christ's life, which he erroneously interpreted as a renunciation of the world.

The grandeur of the "yearly pageant-rite" into the wilderness for the hunt during two weeks each November slowly diminishes from a mythic celebration of youth and courage to a pleasure trip in which the killing of a doe is acceptable sport. In attempting to transmit the wisdom of the wilderness which had been imparted to him by Sam, Ike ultimately discovers that his own voice and example are too weak to be effective in delivering the legacy for which he gave up his life. By relinquishing his land and refusing to "till the ground," Ike becomes a childless ascetic with no means of attaining salvation. He never learns that

> Eden is an imaginary past condition, and never a present state. . . . To try to restore such an imaginary past condition is to try to destroy creation, which is not a condition or a state but a process. To deny the fall, then is to deny life itself. . . .[19]

Faulkner himself, in one of his rare statements condemning the choices of one of his characters, admitted that he considered Ike McCaslin's retreat into the idyllic life of the wilderness a negative action, and said at Nagano:

> I don't hold to the idea of a return [to Nature] . . . once the advancement stops then it dies . . . We musn't go back to a condition, an idyllic condition, in which the dream [made us think] we were happy, we were free of trouble and sin. We must take the trouble and sin along with us, and we must cure that trouble and sin as we go.[20]

In one of his interviews at the University of Virginia, Faulkner acknowledged that Ike was not one of his most admirable characters, when he said:

> McCaslin . . . says, This is bad, and I will withdraw from it. What we need are people who will say, This is bad and I'm going to do something about it, I'm going to change it.[21]

The duality of Stoicism and Christianity, which are major forces in the characterization of Ike, create a source of philosophical tension in Go Down, Moses. In his unpublished manuscript entitled "William Faulkner's Theological Center," Professor John Hunt states:

> Isaac's diagnosis of the human condition is Christian, but his solution to it is essentially Stoic, essentially one in which the reason and the will remain intact, unaffected by the taint. Isaac assumes he can slough off the sin and act in the heart's truth. That he is unable finally to do so testifies to the accuracy of his diagnosis and to the fallacy of his [stoical] solution.[22]

In Ike's decision to renounce his patrimony, the stoic elements of his personality prevail in their emphasis on duty, justice, endurance, and resignation, the human values reflecting divine reason and will rather than love, which is Christian in focus. In his act of renunciation, Ike dissociates love from human will and reason, creating the same dichotomy that precipitated man's original fall from grace. Yet it is only through courage based on love that man can be brought to the point of rescuing himself, a formula which combines elements of both Stoicism and Christianity.[23] Of the two McCaslin cousins, Cass is thus more Christian in orientation, accepting the family's guilt as a burden, but refusing to become immobilized by it. Even though he realizes the failure of justice to fulfill love, Cass takes on his responsibilities, and enters into the stream of life.[24]

In this analysis of Ike's personality, it becomes evident that he lacks the "courage founded on love," and is unable to give of himself, a failure first revealed in his relationship with his wife. Incapable of either loving concern or heroic acts, his primary goal becomes a quest for his own personal salvation, without energy or interest to aid in the salvation of others. Ike's image of himself as one of God's elect emphasizes his self-focus. His self-idealization becomes

apparent in the proud announcement that "Sam Fathers set me free." He is speaking here of freedom from the McCaslin sin, and at the same time hopes to achieve liberation from the guilt of his heritage and any accompanying punishment it might entail.

Cass, however, is not blind to Ike's real meaning in speaking of his "freedom." He views it as Ike's abdication of the Mosaic role of responsibility after he has received the vision and original instruction from Sam Fathers. Cass reprimands him with the retort: "You will be free -- No, not now nor ever, we from them nor they from us."[25] Ike goes on to say, " . . . I have got myself to have to live with for the rest of my life, and all I want is peace to do it in."[26] But the kind of peace Ike is seeking is an ideal peace which exists only within his own mind, not in the reality of the world of movement and change.[27]

The truth of the matter is that in repudiating a past crime and relinquishing a piece of land, Ike has renounced both marriage and family in the present, and ultimately life itself in the future, thereby becoming the major static obstacle blocking the ongoing movement of Go Down, Moses.[28] Thus, in comparing Ike's life to that of Cass and the Edmonds family, despite the callous behavior of Zack with Lucas, the injustice of Roth's betrayal of his mulatto mistress and their child, and all of the sins which they willingly admit about themselves, the Edmondses with all of their flaws are involved in the process of living and are, therefore, morally superior to Ike. In all of their activities -- in tilling the soil, taking responsibility for running the farm, and working on an everyday basis -- they are involved in an effort to rebuild the disabled economy of the South, thereby coming much closer than Ike to the role of the active man, who is willing to do something about correcting the unbearable evils of life.[29]

In his efforts to preserve the beauty of an ideal, Ike McCasin's life is remarkably similar to that of Quentin Compson. The purity of a sister's body and

the beauty of the wilderness untainted by civilization are driving forces in the minds of each of these intellectual protagonists, who refuse to accept the paradox of the fortunate fall. In their efforts to maintain their innocence, both Ike and Quentin find it necessary to stop the process of time abstractly in their imaginations, thereby immobilizing themselves in the midst of life's movement, and refusing to accept the experience and interaction of life among men.

Thus, for both Quentin and Ike there can be no sense of unity of self achieved in the passage of the years, for their identities are suspended in the past, in a time of their own idealization, which to preserve requires the cessation of time. Hence for them both time has become discontinuous, and they have become static, isolated, and potentially tragic figures in their refusal to move with the ongoing current of life.

Gail Hightower's Focus on a Legacy of Bravado

The Reverend Gail Hightower of Light in August is a second isolated intellectual figure akin to Quentin Compson, who turns to the past to seek a basic moral framework by which to establish some permanent meaning and enduring values of honor and glory in life. In the intense desire for a standard of moral values, they search their memories of the past only to find shattered fragments of morality which cannot be transferred out of the past into the present or future. When present reality is forced upon them without the reenforcement of sustaining moral concepts, neither has the power to endure.[30] For both Quentin and Hightower the past remains constantly separated from the present, with no sense of the ongoing continuity of life.

Haunted by the crime and glory of the past, the Reverend Hightower is a timid and retiring person, who, because of his fear of life, is incapable of

interacting successfully with society. In his desire to attain a sense of identity and to adopt an ancestral pattern of courage, Hightower willfully attempts to impose some sense of order on the irrational flow of time and nature. In his ecstatic perception of the possibility of a supreme moment in the natural historical order when truth might become beauty and beauty truth -- he attempts to grasp truth aesthetically. In his mythic and aesthetic focus, however, Hightower's mind reflects the philosophy of Keats and Tennyson, rather than the metaphysical and theological orientation of Quentin's meditations in The Sound and the Fury.[31]

It is only at the time of Hightower's death that he ultimately understands the romantic myth in which he has been living, and is freed from it for the first time. This progression of insight takes him beyond his Christian beliefs and beyond pure aestheticism to attain a more profound and tragic outlook on life.[32] Hightower's ability to recognize the myth which has dictated all of his choices distinguishes him from Quentin, as well as from Isaac McCaslin, Horace Benbow, and Gavin Stevens, who never understand the proportions of the idealistic illusions which control their lives.

From the beginning, Hightower's decision to go to a theological seminary was based on the desire to foster a static ideal, which is ultimately doomed to disillusionment.

> While at the seminary, after he first came there, he often thought how he would tell them, the elders, the high and sanctified men who were the destiny of the church to which he had willingly surrendered. How he would go to them and say, "Listen, God must call me to Jefferson because my life died there, was shot from the saddle of a galloping horse in a Jefferson street one night twenty years before it was ever born." He thought that he could say that, at first. He believed that they would comprehend. He went there, chose that as his vocation, with that as his purpose. But he believed in more than that. He had believed in the church too, in all that it ramified and evoked. He believed with a calm joy that if ever there was shelter, it would be the Church; that if ever truth could walk

> naked and without shame or fear, it would be in the seminary. . . . That was what the word seminary meant: quiet and safe walls within which the hampered and garmentworried spirit could learn anew serenity to contemplate without horror or alarm its own nakedness.[33]

By entering the ministry, Hightower thought that he could build a stylized vase-like structure to encapsulate his idealized memory of his grandfather, the reckless cavalryman who was killed in Jefferson while in the process of raiding a henhouse during Van Dorn's raid on Grant's supplies. In Hightower's misdirected perspective, his grandfather's bravado embodied a cavalier heroism which is sadly absent in his own existence. Ignoring the fact that his grandfather was killed while actually stealing chickens from a Confederate roost appropriated by Grant's troops, Hightower prefers to sustain his imaginative concept of the heroic proportions of his grandfather's action, which he would like to believe worthy of the legend that he constructs around it.

> (. . . he was not an officer . . . grandfather wore no sword waving in front of the rest of them) performing with the grim levity of schoolboys a prank so foolhardy that the troops who had opposed them for four years did not believe that even they would have attempted it. Riding for a hundred miles through a country where every grove and hamlet had its Yankee bivouac, and into a garrisoned town . . . Hungry, gaunt, yelling, setting fire to the store depots of a whole carefully planned campaign and riding out again. No looting at all: no stopping for even shoes, tobacco. I tell you, they were not men after spoils and glory; they were boys riding the sheer tremendous tidal wave of desperate living. Boys. Because this. This is beautiful. Listen. Try to see it. Here is that fine shape of eternal youth and virginal desire which makes heroes. That makes the doings of heroes border so close upon the unbelievable that it is no wonder that their doings must emerge now and then like gunflashes in the smoke, and that their very physical passing becomes rumor with a thousand faces before breath is out of them, lest paradoxical truth outrage itself.[34]

In a Pygmalion-like manner, Hightower then falls in love with the glamor of the legend he has constructed, and finds it impossible to create a personal identity which is separate from the cavalier ghost whom he imbues with all of the courage, honor, and gallantry of an imaginary romantic past.

> It was as if he couldn't get religion and that galloping cavalry and his dead grandfather shot from the galloping horse untangled from each other even in the pulpit. And that he could not untangle them in his private life, at home either . . . on Sunday . . . they (his parishioners) would look at him and wonder . . . if he had not even forgot that he ever had a wife, up there in the pulpit with his hands flying around him and the dogma he was supposed to preach all full of galloping cavalry and defeat and glory just as when he tried to tell them on the street about the galloping horses, it in turn would get all mixed up with absolution and choirs of martial seraphim. . . .[35]

In his choice to live in a moment in time that occurred twenty years before his birth, in a memory that is beyond change and violation, Hightower dedicates his imagination to the past, denying his wife and the parishioners a sense of his involvement and interest in their lives. He even admits to himself that he has substituted for "the crucified shape of pity and love, a swaggering and unchastened bravo killed with a shotgun in a peaceful henhouse."[36]

Although Hightower's refusal to focus on the reality of the present had been the cause of his wife's promiscuity and eventual suicide, as well as the cause of the parish's loss of confidence and desire to evict him from the pulpit, he remained perversely content in his isolation and solitude. In seeking to indulge freely in his reveries of the past, Hightower chooses to lead a life of self-alienation and removal from those who needed him most.

> He remembers that which he had sensed before it was born, hiding it from his own thinking. He sees himself offer as a sop fortitude and forebearance and dignity, making it appear that he resigned his pulpit for a martyr's reasons, when at the very instant there was within him a leaping and triumphant surge of denial behind a face which had betrayed him, believing itself safe behind the lifted hymnbook, when the photographer pressed his bulb.
>
> He seemed to watch himself, alert, patient, skillful, playing his cards well, making it appear that he was being driven, uncomplaining, into that which he did not even then admit had been his desire since before he entered the seminary.[37]

That desire which he had cultivated even before entering the seminary is simply to be in Jefferson and to constantly relive his grandfather's life. In his flight into "solidarity with illusion," he thus establishes himself in the mode of the alienated individual, whose life-denial process involves removal of himself from day-to-day actuality in order to engage in union with a past that never existed.[38] He assumes a stoic pose in regard to the treatment he receives from the townspeople, in order to disguise and masochistically pay for the joy he feels in solitude relishing his illusions.

> . . . allowing himself to be persecuted, to be dragged from his bed at night and carried into the woods and beaten with sticks, he all the while bearing in the town's sight and hearing, without shame, with that patient and voluptuous ego of the martyr, the air, the behavior, the How long, O Lord until, inside his house again and the door locked, he lifted the mask with voluptuous and triumphant glee: Ah. That's done now. That's past now. That's bought and paid for now[39]

Of all the symbolic imprisoning circles that exist in Light in August, the Reverend Hightower's is the only one which is self-imposed, a creation of his intellect and neurotic fantasy.

In his final meditation at sunset, Hightower comes to the belated realization that his process of passive withdrawal from life as a means of escaping from responsibilities has been disastrous to himself and those he loves.

> "I came here where faces full of bafflement and hunger and eagerness waited for me, waiting to believe; I did not see them. Where hands were raised for what they believed that I would bring them; I did not see them."[40]

He accepts the fact that it is he who has driven his wife into debauchery and suicide, realizing that he has been "her seducer and murderer." He acknowledges:

> "I brought with me one trust, perhaps the first trust of man, which I had accepted of my own will before God; I considered that promise and trust of so little worth that I did not know that I had even accepted it. And if that was all I did for her, what could I have expected? what could I have expected save disgrace

> and despair and the face of God turned away in very shame? Perhaps in the moment when I revealed to her not only the depth of my hunger but the fact that never and never would she have any part in the assuaging of it; perhaps at that moment I became her seducer and murderer, author and instrument of her shame and death."[42]

Thus, it finally becomes clear to him that his retreat from life has lacked any sense of virtue, and has been a negative act resulting in criminal neglect of his personal responsibilities. Ironically, the house to which he retreated after being dismissed by his congregation and to which he gave the name, "Sanctuary," has proved to be retreat of idle fantasy rather than of fulfilling solitude.

Having been drawn forth from his twenty-five or thirty years of solitude at the insistence of Byron Bunch, who is eager to enlist his aid in helping Lena Grove search for the father of her child, Hightower slowly reenters the life of society. After aiding Lena in the delivery of her child, he finds that it is finally possible to assert his identity outside of the legend in which he had been living during all of these years, and to participate in the life around him.

> . . . as he stands, tall, misshapen, lonely in his lonely and ill-kept kitchen, holding in his hand an iron skillet in which yesterday's old grease is bleakly caked, there goes through him a glow, a wave, a surge of something almost hot, almost triumphant. "I showed them!" he thinks. "Life comes to the old man yet, while they get there too late. They get there for his leavings. . . ." But this is vanity and empty pride. Yet the slow and fading glow disregards it, impervious to reprimand. He thinks, "What if I do? What if I do feel it? triumph and pride? What if I do?" . . . He moves like a man with a purpose now, who for twentyfive years has been doing nothing at all between the time to wake and the time to sleep again. Neither is the book which he now chooses the Tennyson: this time . . . he chooses food for a man. It is Henry IV. . . .[43]

Hightower's redemption slowly begins to take place as he finds himself in a position to be of aid to Joe Christmas, and finds himself willing to lie in an effort to save Joe's life, despite the fact that the alibi he creates suggests a homosexual involvement.

> "Men!" he cried. "Listen to me. He was here that night. He was with me the night of the murder. I swear to God --"[44]

It is only after he has had the courage to involve himself in life and has rejected the concept of himself as his grandfather's ghost, accepting reality with all of its responsibilities, that Hightower receives a final all-encompassing vision. But first he attempts to use the same romantic, egoistic excuses for the failure of his life, before finally admitting for the first time that he has lived selfishly only for himself.

> "And after all, I have paid. I have bought my ghost, even though I did pay for it with my life. And who can forbid me doing that? It is any man's privilege to destroy himself, so long as he does not injure anyone else, so long as he lives to and of himself --" He stops suddenly. Motionless, unbreathing, there comes upon him a consternation which is about to be actual horror. He is aware of the sand now; with the realization of it he feels within himself a gathering as though for some tremendous effort.[45]

From an outlook on life that at first sounds like that of Mr. Compson in The Sound and the Fury, Hightower reaches a higher plateau of awareness, finally comprehending the interrelated strands of all human existence. And the wheel of his thoughts keeps turning, forcing him to realize the part that he has played willynilly in the lives of those around him.

> Out of the instant the sandclutched wheel of thinking turns on with the slow implacability of a mediaeval torture instrument, beneath the wrenched and broken sockets of his spirit, his life: "Then, if this is so, if I am the instrument of [my wife's] despair and death, then I am in turn instrument of someone outside myself. And I know that for fifty years I have not even been clay: I have been a single instant of darkness in which a horse galloped and a gun crashed. And if I am my dead grandfather on the instant of his death, then my wife, his grandson's wife . . . the debaucher and murderer of my grandson's wife, since I could neither let my grandson live or die. . . .[46]

Through the interrelationship of his identity with that of his grandfather, Hightower feels he has become either his own grandfather or his grandfather's ghost, which has so haunted him for fifty years that he has been able neither to

live nor die. This is the same ability to merge into a mythical ancestor from the past which is found in characterizations of both Quentin and Gavin, who along with Hightower, suffer from the maladie of reliving a myth in the present. Having atoned for his sins, however, Hightower's ultimate vision comes as a form of exultation rather than as a form of romantic escape. At the end of his life, when he is finally released from the isolation and stagnation of his obsession, his last vision concerns the wheel around which his fantasy has roamed through the years.

> The wheel whirls on. It is going fast and smooth now, because it is freed now of burden, of vehicle, axle, all. In the lambent suspension of August into which night is about to fully come, it seems to engender and surround itself with a faint glow like a halo. The halo is full of faces. The faces are not shaped with suffering, not shaped with anything: not horror, pain, not even reproach. They are peaceful, as though they have escaped into an apotheosis; [Hightower's] own is among them.[47]

This last vision of Hightower's seems to be a reuniting of himself with the people of the present who have surrounded him but have both rejected and been rejected by him all of his life. The faces are individual yet at the same time universal:

> . . . they all look a little alike, composite of all the faces which he has ever seen. But he can distinguish them one from another: his wife's; townspeople, members of that congregation which denied him, which had met him at the station that day with eagerness and hunger; Byron Bunch's; the woman with the child; and that of the man called Christmas.[48]

When he attains this naturalistic intuition of shared humanity, he is finally freed from the circle of isolation which he long ago prescribed for himself.

As Hightower lies dying he does not return to his earlier Christian belief as the basis for ultimate insight. Instead he reaches an aesthetic grasp of truth, perceiving it as a heightened moment in the natural, historical order, a moment when it is possible for truth to be perceived as beauty and beauty as truth. But at the same time, and more importantly, he perceives the anomaly that ethereal beauty must spring from the baseness of life's reality.[49] In admitting his own shortcomings by saying -- "I have not been clay" --Hightower reveals his

realization that truth and beauty can only be perceived by the common mind of man that is able to accept humanity's dependencies on both nature and time.[50]

Having progressed beyond Christianity and pure aestheticism, Hightower finally sees both the beauty and the horror of the myth which has governed his life, and is free of it for the first and last time. His final perspective on life is philosophically one of profound and tragic naturalism:[51]

> Then it seems to him that some ultimate dammed flood within him breaks and rushes away. He seems to watch it, feeling himself losing contact with earth, lighter and lighter, emptying, floating. "I am dying," he thinks. "I should pray. I should try to pray." But he does not. He does not try. "With all air, all heaven, filled with the lost and unheeded crying of all the living who ever lived, wailing still like lost children among the cold and terrible stars. . . . I wanted so little. I asked so little. It would seem. . . ."[52]

Thus, at the end of Light in August Hightower has understood that his own small desires in life form a fragment of the "lost and unheeded crying of all the living who ever lived. . . ."

Horace Benbow as the Impotent Aesthete

Horace Benbow of Sartoris and Sanctuary, one of Faulkner's transitional characters, is also developed in the tradition of the aesthete. Despite inherent good will coupled with an analytical ability to penetrate beneath the surface appearances of life and detect hidden evils, Horace suffers from a weakness in moral makeup. His moral and physical impotence ultimately have an enervating effect on any purposeful action in his life.

Although Horace is a failure in both his marriage and his civic responsibilities, his highly developed sense of honesty will not permit him either to ignore or to gloss over any of his failings. He finds that he is both incapable of

rescuing Lee Goodwin from an unjust death, and is powerless against the evil designs of Popeye. He freely admits the source of his weakness:

> "You see," he said, "I lack courage: That was left out of me. The machinery is all here, but it wont run."[53]

In his devotion to the concept of static, abstract justice, he is ineffective in dealing with real situations such as Lee Goodwin's need for a powerful and persuasive attorney to prevent the lynching which occurs. The corruption of which he is so fearful ultimately is permitted to flourish in the vacuum created by his indecisive weakness, indicating a certain impotence which is also reflected in his dealings with women.

As his name indicates, Horace is a classicist, who has idealized his sister's serene qualities to which he directs all of his worshipful devotion. Fearful of the prospect of fertility, Horace holds himself aloof from all women except his sister, who is symbolically represented in the form of a beautiful glass vase, which he keeps at his bedside. Despite his attraction to Ruby Goodwin, he shrinks back from her offer to pay for his legal services with her body. Thus, Horace, as one of Faulkner's static characters, identifies sexual potency and fertility with evil and corruption.

In his hopeless idealism and obsessive narcissism there are many parallels between Horace and Quentin Compson. Both characters have a sexual interest in their sisters and are fixated on their sisters' virginity; both have dominating mothers; both seem to create their own wasteland in an overripe natural world; both hear the songs of distant birds at important times in their lives; and both find in it impossible to deal with the world of reality on its own terms.[54]

In the following description of Horace, which was struck from the galleys of Sanctuary, he sounds remarkably like Quentin and Marcel as he laments his sense of loss of identity:

> . . . he waked himself calling his mother's name in a paroxysm of terror and grief.
>
> He was afraid to turn on the light. Sitting there in bed in the dark, he believed that he had irrevocably lost something, but he believed that if he turned on the light, he would lose even the sense, the knowledge of his loss. So he sat there, hugging his knees, not crying any longer.[55]

And in Horace's conversation with Narcissa, which was also deleted in the revised form of Sanctuary, there is a tone similar to that of conversations which Quentin had with Caddy. With very few changes, the words could have been Quentin's:

> Two days before her wedding [Horace] said to her: "Is there any reason why you are marrying this particular blackguard?" She was reading in bed then; he had fetched her a letter which he had forgotten at noon. She lowered the book and looked at him, her brow beneath her loose hair broader than ever, with a serene placidity like that of heroic statuary. Suddenly he began to speak at her with thin fury, watching the sense of his words accomplish steadily behind her eyes, a half sentence behind, as though he were pouring them from a distance into a vessel. "What are you, anyway? What sort of life have you led for twenty-six years, that you can lie there with the supreme and placid stupidity of a cow being milked, when two nights from now _____" he ceased. She watched him while the final word completed itself behind her eyes and faded. "Narcy," he said, "dont do it, Narcy. We both wont. I'll _____ Listen: we both wont. You haven't gone too far that you can, and when I think what we . . . with this house, and all it _____ Dont you see we cant? It's not anything to give up: you dont know, but I do. Good God, when I think. . . ."[56]

As a Prufrockian intellectual who fears sexuality and marriage, Horace is simply a forty-three year old decadent version of the man Quentin would have become if he had lived. Both are self-indulgent, self-destructive, and morbidly introspective, with their thoughts developing by association rather than logic. In the original unpublished text of Sanctuary, in which Horace is the narrator, words,

phrases, and events in the present trigger his memories of the past. The story is thus related through a series of flashbacks, the fragments of information emerging from Horace's memory, with anachronological additions supplied from the stories told by Ruby and Temple, all of which the reader must recompose in a sense of coherent order.

Given the similarity of characterization in Horace and Quentin as well as the structural resemblances of the original version of Sanctuary and The Sound and the Fury, it is theorized that parts of the former novel were being written while Faulkner was still working on the latter. It is very possible that the rewriting of the Quentin section of The Sound and the Fury took place during the period that Faulkner was writing Sanctuary, if Faulkner received the galleys of The Sound and the Fury in early July of 1929, as Joseph Blotner suggests.[57] This fact of the overlap would explain the many parallels in symbolism, tone, and theme between the two novels.

In a mode of life that parallels that of Gail Hightower, Horace also fails to assimilate the concept of the fortunate fall, refusing to be tainted by the fallen nature of reality and the prevalence of sin and corruption. He cries out:

> "Dammit, say what you want to, but there's a corruption about even looking upon evil, even by accident; you cannot haggle, traffic, with putrefaction" --[58]

Following Horace's logic, if man is to remain untouched by corruption by refusing to deal with it, there is no way that evil can be annihilated or injustice corrected. Thus, ironically, Horace refuses to live by refusing to progress beyond a state of innocence. In his attempt to avoid evil, he becomes less rather than more human.[59]

An analysis of Horace's predicament in life reveals an obvious parallel with Eliot's Waste Land and its theme of impotence. In his effort to free himself from a sterile existence, Horace seeks and fails to rescue Ruby Goodwin as a

maiden in distress, or to restore fertility to the wasteland and its inhabitants. There is also a mythic parallel in Sanctuary's reflection of the Persephone myth, according to which Horace fails to be initiated into the mysteries of fertility and to restore the goddess to the upper world. But most importantly, in the context of the myth of the fortunate fall, Horace fails to realize and accept the significance of man's fall from grace, and thus is denied permanent salvation according to the Christian belief. In each of these external mythic patterns there is the promise of rebirth and regeneration of physical and spiritual strength and potency, which Horace as the impotent aesthete fails to receive.[60]

In the final analysis, there are many similarities between Horace and Gavin Stevens, another of the Faulknerian isolated intellectuals. In many ways it seems as though Faulkner conceived of them as two facets of the same personality. Both are country lawyers who enjoy the printed word more than direct participation in life. Horace acknowledges in Sartoris that he loves his office because it is "the dwelling-place of books,"[61] while Gavin spends his spare time translating the Old Testament back into the classic Greek of its first translation. Both marry late in life, and both are dreamers. There is a difference, however, in the type of dreams the two have. While chivalric images of crusades fill Gavin's mind with thoughts of a world that ought to be, Horace is involved in dreams of escapism, constructing dreams of an impossible fairy-tale world, "where unicorns filled the neighing air with galloping, or grazed or lay supine in golden-hoof repose."[62]

Ultimately, in attempting to confront the world of evil, Horace discovers he is not up to the task, and retreats into the world of fantasy and glass-blowing, mentally dwelling in the "old unchanging days; unwinged perhaps, but undisastrous, too."[63] In real life, Horace ultimately chooses to marry Belle Mitchell, an overbearing and castrating woman, with whom he has an almost

Prufrockian relationship, symbolized by his dutiful efforts to bring home the fresh shrimp at her behest.[64]

Gavin, in contrast, fights against his innate desire to retreat from reality during his intermittent trips to Heidelburg to earn another degree. Although he is scarcely more effective than Horace in his efforts to serve as a protector of women, he nevertheless persists in trying to protect first Eula and then Linda Snopes over a much longer span of time than Horace involves himself with Ruby Goodwin. When Gavin leaves Jefferson he delegates the responsibility of defending the town against Snopesism to Ratliff in his absence, and in Intruder in the Dust he serves as a concerned uncle and counselor for Chick Mallison in his effort to protect Lucas Beauchamp against a false murder charge.

Horace thus appears in Sartoris and Sanctuary as an incompletely developed figure of impotence and aestheticism, a character who serves as a sort of blueprint for the more fully developed Faulknerian characters of this type.

Gavin Stevens' Chivalric Crusading Spirit

In advising his nephew, Charles Mallison, on the proper code of conduct, Gavin instructs him:

> "Some things you must always be unable to bear. Some things you must never stop refusing to bear. Injustice and outrage and dishonor and shame . . . Not for kudos and not for cash: your picture in the paper nor money in the bank either. Just refuse to bear them."[65]

Gavin, like Quentin Compson, attempts to preserve an idealized form of behavior in the twentieth century; but unlike Quentin, he never stops trying to create living principles of conduct from this code. He seems ultimately like a version of the Roland figure, whom Faulkner described as being the best defense against the

powers of evil and corruption, characteristics which he associates with materialism and Snopesism.

When a student who had read The Town and discovered Flem Snopes securely established in Jefferson with a house, a bank, and the deacon's position in the Baptist church, asked Faulkner if Snopesism would ultimately prevail in the town, Faulkner asserted:

> There is always someone that will never stop trying to cope with Snopes, that will never stop trying to get rid of Snopes . . . The impulse to eradicate Snopes is in my opinion so strong that it selects its champions when the crisis comes. When the battle comes it always produces a Roland.[66]

While acknowledging that the Snopeses "are the men that can cope with the new industrial age," Faulkner declared that there will still be

> something left of the old cavalier spirit that will appear, that does appear. By cavalier spirit, I mean people who believe in simple honor for the sake of honor, and honesty for the sake of honesty.[67]

In continuing to carry on in the cavalier spirit protecting the ideals that are important to him, Gavin reveals that he, unlike Quentin, is able to conceive of time as a constantly flowing stream, refusing to separate the past from the present and future.

> "It's all now you see. Yesterday wont be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."[68]

But he is also capable of conceiving of a transcendent moment defying the passage of time, to which he, like his nephew, dedicates his imagination:

> For every Southern boy fourteen years old, not once but whenever he wants it, there is the instant when it's still not yet two oclock on that July afternoon in 1863, the brigades are in position behind the rail fence . . . and Pickett himself with his long oiled ringlets and his hat in one hand probably and his sword in the other looking up the hill waiting for Longstreet to give the word and it's all in the balance, it hasn't happened yet, it hasn't even begun yet, it not only hasn't begun yet but there is still time for it not to begin. . . .[69]

This moment, which exists in the imagination and which is universalized, is a moment beyond the passage of time, symbolizing an ideal instant before the South's defeat in the battle of Gettysburg. Although Gavin relishes such moments in his imagination, he simultaneously espouses an active life of involvement in the community, a quality which differentiates him from Quentin, Ike, Horace, and Gail Hightower. In his vigilence in active support of the virtues that he hopes will endure, Gavin advises Chick Mallison that "all man ha[s] [is] time, all that st[ands] between him and the death he fear[s] and abhor[s] [is] time."[70]

Faulkner has acknowledged that he had Don Quixote in mind as another prototype in his creation of Gavin, and singled out Gavin's fight with Manfred de Spain over Eula Snopes's honor as an example of an idealistic effort to defend someone who has not requested defense and does not need it. Gavin's problem of idealization springs from his insistence on his imaginative construction of the world as it should be, prompting actions based on ideal motives rather than on practical considerations. This dilemma is characteristic of Cervantes' knight as well.

In The Town Gavin begins a "crusade" to vindicate Eula's name and to restore the respectability that she has lived quite happily without. All of his efforts to defend a woman against malignment simply for the sake of virtue embody the chivalric ideal. Faulkner's narrative voice explains in The Town,

> What he was doing was simply defending forever with his blood the principle that chastity and virtue in women shall be defended whether they exist or not.[71]

This interpretation of Gavin's actions could be used as well to explain Quentin's activities in The Sound and the Fury, with the important difference that Quentin chooses to die rather than to continue fighting for what he considers to be important. Gavin, on the other hand, adopts the role of self-appointed protector

of Linda Snopes after Eula's death, thereby continuing to preserve the ideals by which he lives, seeking new ways to fight for his goals.

In all the years of his devotion to Eula and to Linda, Gavin's joy is in the service itself. In answer to Linda's accusation, "you haven't had very much, have you. . . . No, that's wrong. You haven't had anything. You have had nothing,"[72] Gavin thinks back over the time he has cared for the two women and realizes that he has "got back for it nothing but the privilege of being obsessed, bewitched -- ."[73] This "privilege" is one that means a great deal to Gavin with his need to fill the real world with the figments of his idealistic imagination. In addition, he has the satisfaction of simply living up to the high standards of his ideals. Because of the nature of his personality, Gavin acts on idealistic principles for the sake of the principles themselves, rather than for the hope of any reward.

When Eula criticizes Gavin's decision to live in a dream world refusing to take what is offered to him in life, he recognizes the validity of her criticism by responding:

> "If I had just had sense enough to say I am, I want, I will and so here goes — If I had just done that, it might have been me instead of Manfred. But dont you see? Cant you see? It wouldn't have been me then?"[74]

Yet, because of his inability to progress beyond an idealistic, mythical conceptualization, Gavin is unable to understand and accept the reason that underlies Eula's suicide, and view her as a woman with real human needs. He turns in his anguish and confusion to Ratliff for an interpretation of her actions, and asks:

> "Why did she do it, V.K.? That -- all that -- that she walked in, lived in, breathed in -- it was only loaned to her; it wasn't hers to destroy and throw away. It belonged to too many. It belonged to all of us. Why, V.K.? . . . Why?"[75]

His question reveals that to the very end Gavin never deviated from his romanticization of Eula as a woman of mythic proportions, who could never be satisfied by a merely mortal male. Nevertheless, while Gavin's concept of Eula remains an abstraction of his own making, the validity of his grief is beyond doubt.

After eighteen years of devotion, when Eula dies and Gavin insists on maintaining a platonic relationship with Linda, he is ultimately defeated by losing both the women he has loved. But Ratliff tries carefully to verbalize why Gavin's "defeat" is actually an ethical victory of the chivalric principles he chooses to live by. He philosophizes:

> "Being the next-best to Paris is jest a next-best too, but it aint no bad next-best to be. Not everybody had Helen, but then not everybody lost her neither."[76]

And Faulkner himself pointed out that Gavin's love of abstract law and his interest in attaining degrees are sublimations of his desire for a closer relationship with women. "He was probably afraid to be married," Faulkner explained. "He might get too involved with the human race if he married one of them."[77]

Ethically, with his defeat becoming a kind of moral victory, Gavin passes the ultimate test by which all Faulkner characters are judged: He has continued fighting to the end. Although he is confronted with countless obstacles, Gavin will "never stop trying," and will "just do the best he can" simply for virtue's sake.[78] Because of his constant struggle with the forces of evil around him, in some ways Gavin merits the title of being one of Faulkner's "men in motion."[79]

It is understandable that Gavin meets only rarely with success as he applies Faulkner's own principles of "love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice" to the practical world where more material concerns

usually determine the action taken. Gavin's defeat is ultimately significant, as critics have pointed out, because he prefers in the end to be defeated by Snopesism rather than to be contaminated by the Snopes in order to win[80] -- an attitude which denies the concept of the fortunate fall and becomes the formula for life-denial underlying the actions of all of Faulkner's isolated intellectual characters.

Although Gavin survives and continues his involvement in life throughout the Snopes trilogy and in Intruder in the Dust, there is a constant gap between his words and deeds, which ultimately becomes unbridgeable. In the same mode in which Faulkner describes Quentin, Hightower, Ike, and Horace, a plethora of words pour forth from Gavin, revealing that words become simply verbal counters unless their intrinsic meaning is restored through the actions which they describe. In and of themselves, the words come relatively easily and smoothly to all of the isolated intellectuals, whose circumlocutions distract them from any form of action.[81]

Intruder in the Dust and Go Down, Moses are the two novels in which Faulkner focuses most clearly on sustaining a parallel between words and deeds in an effort to find a way to span the gap between them. Both Gavin and Ike McCaslin in their conversations make similar points when discussing their concepts of history and the innate potential of man. The ineffectuality of such verbal ability becomes apparent when the words are weighed against the dynamic actions of the young Ike learning about the wilderness and of Chick Mallison in his efforts to save Lucas Beauchamp. Both novels reveal Faulkner's basic belief that when words are in juxtaposition with direct actions, the words become facile and almost meaningless.[82]

In attempting to reach a final evaluation of Gavin Stevens, it is necessary to assess both his strength in refusing to stop righting certain wrongs in

life, and his weakness in creating a verbal abstraction of life. In a final assessment, while not qualifying to be the spokesman for Faulkner himself, he must be judged favorably as a character who despite defeat continues to strive valiantly against the vicissitudes of life.

Faulkner Characters Who Learn the Value of Life

In a 1955 interview, when asked about the instances in his novels in which his characters are defeated, Faulkner replied that there is always one person in his work who survives, who triumphs over his fate.[83] Faulkner himself pronounced V.K. Ratliff capable of coping with change because he possesses a "moral, spiritual eupepsia" — "a man who practiced virtue from simple instinct . . . for a practical reason, because it was better."[84]

The Faulkner characters who are able to survive in life are generally the primitive figures who are uncluttered with facts and unbound by myths, who work slowly to achieve the truth as they perceive it. Yet, in his desire to depict the morally admirable characteristics of human nature more forcefully, Faulkner created another character type, who is forced to go through a learning process in order to understand the value of life. Young Bayard in The Unvanquished is a survivor who refuses to submit to an established family tradition of revenge as the only means of settling the score for the death of his father, thereby revealing that he is capable of performing a heroic act without committing a murder to satisfy a tradition based on blood. Judith Sutpen in Absalom, Absalom! succeeds in meeting the vicissitudes which she encounters with dignity and self control. In Light in August Byron Bunch is an admirable character in his love and devotion to aiding Lena, and although in the course of the novel he does not succeed in his personal quest in terms of marrying her, the indications at the end are optimistic. And in Intruder in the Dust, despite all of the obstacles, Charles Mallison and Miss

Habersham work together to succeed in saving Lucas Beauchamp from being lynched.[85] Others who go through the learning process include Lucius Priest in The Reivers, and V. K. Ratliff, who attempts to counter the challenge of the Snopes tribe when they invade Frenchman's Bend in the trilogy. Ratliff, however, seems more completely formed from the beginning, and has to subject himself to less painful developments in terms of training.

It is interesting from an aesthetic point of view to realize that the more highly developed the character's moral sense in relating to life, the less useful that character is to Faulkner as a fictional tool. The characters who are the most dramatic and the most successful in literary terms are those who are neurotic, maladjusted, desperate, or inherently evil.[86]

Chick Mallison's Search for a Balanced View of Reality

Of all of Faulkner's characters who are able to learn the value of life, Chick Mallison in Intruder in the Dust is the most fully developed. In a critical comparison of his life with that of Ike McCaslin in Go Down, Moses, it is possible to understand the difference between one whose learning experience is directed toward the achievement of balanced reality and one who devotes his life to serving an abstract ideal.

By an act of historical imagination, Ike McCaslin imagines that the society of his time is exactly the same as that in which old Carothers McCaslin lived. He feels compelled to deny history, time, and change, and through his cultural and temporal denial, he condemns his own existence to the preservation of an empty ritual. A cultural problem similar to the one which destroys Ike confronts Chick Mallison. In contrast to Ike, however, Chick grows increasingly

aware that he must maintain the imaginative flexibility to realize his cultural vision simultaneously in the world of myth and in the context of history.[87]

Through his rebellion against society's strict moral taboos, Chick succeeds in growing up and achieving a mature relationship with society. Like Ike, he first attempts to withdraw from the problems of his segregated environment, and to allow events to follow their own course. Ultimately, however, Chick realizes that it is his social responsibility to defend Lucas Beauchamp, who has been wrongly accused of committing a murder in Intruder in the Dust. He chooses to take direct action on behalf of Lucas, accepting the responsibility for an accused black man, and facing difficulty and danger in a concerted effort to overcome evil.

As a young man attempting to help unravel the murder mystery, Chick is presented in the process of learning the cultural requirements of Southern ideology. And at the beginning, Chick accepts all of the complex social categories which define society without any thought. It is through Lucas that the implications of that acceptance are revealed. Chick's reactions to what he learns about Southern societal norms range from guilt to resentment and frustration, which slowly subside as Lucas attempts to educate him in virtue and human relationships. Thus, in many ways the role of mentor that Lucas assumes in regard to Chick parallels that of Sam Fathers with Ike.

Much of the dramatic tension in Intruder in the Dust is within Chick's own mind and emotions. In an earlier encounter with Lucas several years before, Chick had accepted shelter in Lucas's home when he badly needed it, and had then offended him by attempting to pay him for the courtesy any good neighbor would have offered. This event had made a moral impact on Chick as an adolescent. Thus when Lucas turns to Chick to come to his aid as a responsible member of society when his own life was threatened as a result of social injustice, Chick is

ready to be of aid. Although Chick finds it painful to confront society's prejudices, as well as to clear prejudice from his own mind, he is ultimately able to rise to the occasion to defend Lucas in the eyes of the community, thereby revealing his awareness that Lucas is his equal.

As Chick's uncle, Gavin Stevens attempts to further Chick's understanding of social relationships and public morality, and thus serves a function similiar to that of Cass Edmonds in regard to Ike. The equivalent of Ike's venture into the wilderness comes when Chick dares to enter Beat Four to open a Gowrie grave in order to find the information he needs to exonerate Lucas from the crime. He first reacts to the negative discoveries he makes about human nature by deciding to renounce society and to live a life of moral and social isolation. It is largely because of Gavin's influence that Chick refrains from becoming an isolated figure, and realizes that he must step back into the continuity of time and history, accepting society's strengths and weaknesses. This is the act of faith which Ike refuses to make.

While attempting to gather the evidence that he needs in time to clear Lucas from all accusations, Chick pushes himself to keep going despite his exhaustion. Slowly he begins to realize that

> the need [is] not to finish anything but just to keep moving . . . just desperately to keep up with it like having to run on a treadmill not because you wanted to be where the treadmill was but simply not to be flung pell mell still running frantically backward off the whole stage out of sight. . . .[88]

This realization of the need for active involvement in life follows his first impulse to repudiate the land and the South after his original outrage upon discovering the disparity existing between his ideal vision of man and the grim reality of Southern society's prejudiced racial perspective.

With the aid of his uncle's attempts to provide an abstract, verbal framework large enough to encompass both the action of the mob and that of

Chick and Miss Habersham, attempting to find an acceptable form for both the realistic and idealistic perspectives, Chick is able to fuse both views into an emotional form of acceptance of the South. He ultimately admits his share in and responsibility for Southern history and the actions of Southern society in the present. Chick's actions span the possibilities of choice, progressing from repudiation, rebellion, and rejection to partial conformity and acceptance, revealing the breadth of the social vision he inherited from Gavin. The pattern of Chick's conformity and acceptance, however, represent his deliberate involvement in actions which will improve the moral fabric of society.

In Chick's recognition of the interests shared by both the individual and by society, which are revealed in the individual's ethics and in society's conventions, there is evidence of his hopefulness for the improvement of society in the future. Through the maturing process, Chick has come to realize that although the shape of the future is determined by the past, it is the actions of individuals in the present that create the past.[89]

Thus he is able to accept responsibility for his particular time and place as a framework within which he must maintain his personal humanity, while simultaneously remaining actively involved in the affairs of his community. His dual role symbolically affirms Faulkner's concept of the interdependence of the individual and society, and the interconnecting structure of personal ethics, public morality, and the natural world of time, as well as the social world of history. In Intruder in the Dust, Faulkner's message is unequivocal concerning the individual's responsibility for his own personal conduct and for the conduct of all humanity as well, forever linking the individual's interests with those of his community.[90] With a balance achieved among all of these factors, Faulkner believed that man would be able to recover and acclaim his dignity, integrity, and humanity.[91]

Harry Wilbourne's Decision to Endure

In The Wild Palms Harry Wilbourne's learning experience in life leads him in a direction which is the opposite of the achievment of balanced reality extolled by Chick Mallison. And yet, while following the passionate idealization of romantic love which he shares with Charlotte Rittenmeyer, Wilbourne is a fascinating study of one who is both driven into isolation to embody an ideal in a dream world, while being simultaneously motivated to endure in order to cherish the memory of a life molded by love. As a survivor, Wilbourne is unique among Faulkner's isolated intellectual figures, and comes the closest to embodying the Proustian concept of the significance of memory in the process of attaining unity of being.

In his description of the "romance of illicit love," which he calls "the passionate idea of two [lovers] damned and doomed and isolated forever against the world and God and the irrevocable,"[92] Harry Wilbourne sounds remarkably like Quentin Compson when, in The Sound and the Fury, Quentin describes his desire for isolation with Caddy in some corner of hell. In both instances, an "innocent" hero creates an ideal world composed of romantic love, which has much in common with the early concept of "chivalric" love embodied in the songs of the troubadours. In the height of chivalric passion, lovers transcend their physical passion for one another in the purity of their devotion with no practical, worldly goal in mind.[93]

According to the concept of chivalric love, the lover is willing to defy all prohibitions for the sake of the beloved, and the passion inspired is conceived as a pure love either lacking the possibility of consummation or attaining consummation only by flouting conventional moral and legal codes. In carrying the concept of romantic love to the ultimate degree, the lovers may be pursuing

the ideal of death, for in seeking an absolute union, their bodies physically separate them. Thus their desire can be perfectly consummated only in death, and in some cases, the romantic lovers actually fall in love with the concept of death itself.[94]

In pursuing an idealistic goal of a romantic relationship which must be "all honeymoon, always. Forever and ever, until one of us dies,"[95] Charlotte Rittenmeyer reveals that she too is one of the isolated, intellectual figures in Faulkner's fiction, who feels encumbered by the daily obstacles of reality. Her statements and actions seem to embody the real quest of chivalric love. Rather than striving toward the mundane goal of living with the beloved, she strains to attain an apotheosis of desire, which ultimately leads to her death.

Harry shares Charlotte's commitment to the passionate ideal that chivalric love can transcend the flesh. Believing that romantic love can soar beyond the confines of the realm of time, Harry describes sexual climax as a moment when one is "present in space but not in time."[96] Time becomes suspended or even ceases to exist, thereby affirming Harry's belief in the passionate expression of love as a means of transcendence. Thus, for him the romantic experience constitutes "one single abnegant affirmation"[97] of life itself.

Although Charlotte is determined that the two of them must be free of society and retreat undisturbed into a private Eden, Harry soon discovers that he cannot exist in such an unstructured blissful state. Realizing that he misses having a sense of vocation, he admits that uninvolvement in life has created a vacuum of boredom from which he needs to return to the world of time to experience life's continuity. Incapable of enduring "the sunny and timeless void into which the individual days had vanished,"[98] and anxious to relocate himself in the world of time, Harry constructs a calendar to attempt to recapture the lost time that they have been together in the forest.

In the end, Charlotte's and Harry's experiment of trying to live in such an intense state of absorption in themselves, attempting to superimpose the significance of their love over the natural flow and rhythm of everyday life, results in failure. After seeking to isolate themselves in different parts of the country, they are beset by financial and practical worries that intrude upon the idyll they seek to perpetuate.[99]

The finally irony occurs when Harry, as the young, solitary medical student, who had wanted so terribly to have an active existence involving love, feels obliged to submit to Charlotte's desire to perform an abortion, which he then bungles. By his actions he actually dramatizes the fantasies of death which Charlotte had engaged in earlier. Because Harry so absorbed himself in passively fulfilling the request of the woman he loved, at the time of her death there seems to be an emotional reversal in his final rejection of passivity and refusal to reenact the suicidal formula of Faulkner's other isolated intellectuals.

Rather than denying life, at the end of The Wild Palms Harry stresses the importance of remaining alive in order to preserve and celebrate the memory of Charlotte and the love they shared. Harry feels that his final choice is simply between memory and oblivion, and thinks:

> When she [Charlotte] became not then half of memory became not and if I become not then all of remembering will cease to be. — Yes, he thought, between grief and nothing I will take grief.[100]

In this decision, Harry is following Marcel's example in The Past Recaptured, creating a peculiarly Faulknerian version of Proust's philosophy of reminiscence.

Ultimately, in accepting Charlotte's death, Harry becomes aware that the world of dreams which exists in defiance of reality remains constantly vulnerable in the movement of life. However, he goes further in realizing that time is constantly weaving a pattern of events and situations, which finally come

into conflict with the "design" of an individual, if the design has been set up without consideration of the passage of time. Because change accompanies time and experience, no design or dream imposed upon the experience of life is immune to change. The need to be flexible enough to accept change therefore dictates the individual's need to focus his perceptions on reality.[101]

Harry finally gathers his strength at the end of The Wild Palms to assert the revelation that he must yield himself and his world to the process of change if he is going to know truth and not simply record facts. His final decision is to hold firm to a sense of life's continuity, which he is able to do through the process of memory. He thinks:

> . . . after all memory could live in the old wheezing entrails: and now it did stand to his hand, incontrovertible and plain, serene, the palm clashing and murmuring dry and wild and faint and in the night but he could face it, thinking, Not could. Will. I want to. So it is the old meat after all, no matter how old. Because if memory exists outside of flesh it wont be memory because it wont know what it remembers. . . .[102]

In the final choice between accepting reality or dying for an idealized concept, Harry reaches a compromise in which he chooses to believe in his ideal and to live cherishing his memories of the love he has had.

The Attainment of Unity of Being and Continuity of Time in Faulkner's Novels

In the scope of Faulkner's fiction, an examination of the characters who fit into the isolated intellectual category reveals a pattern of failure in their repeated and fruitless efforts to preserve an ideal removed from the passage of time. Although these characters serve an important aesthetic purpose in acting as static obstacles, the rushing current of life ultimately overwhelms them. Neurotic and maladjusted to the realities of life, in their immobility these

characters can serve only as dramatic foils against which the action of life may be projected.

Although a cursory reading of Faulkner's work sometimes leads to the erroneous conclusion that Yoknapatawpha County is inhabited only by isolated, intellectual figures who assume static, tragic, and idealistic poses, and primitive characters, who manage to endure because of their sexual potency and procreative abilities, it is the characters who have learned the value of life who are capable of embodying Faulkner's highest ideals. In their progression from innocence to experience, relating the lessons they learn and revealing the truths they stumble upon, the characters who have experience the reality of life find that they can meet the demands of the external world. They can learn to cope with clock time, and can grow to be capable of love. Rather than solitude they seek interaction in society. Faulkner's description of Ratliff serves as an all-inclusive description of these characters who choose reality rather than illusion as their guiding principle in life:

> . . . he [Ratliff] accepted a change in culture, a change in environment, and he has suffered no anguish, no grief from it . . . for that reason, he's in favor of change, because it's motion and it's the world as he knows it, and he's never one to say, I wish I had been born a hundred years ago, or I'm sorry I was born now and couldn't have put it off a hundred years. Ratliff will take what's now and do the best he can with it. . . .[103]

The few characters of this type sometimes seem peripheral in the Yoknapatawpha saga. Yet, despite the relatively obscure position they occupy in Faulkner's fictional world -- the young Bayard Sartoris, Judith Sutpen, Byron Bunch, Charles Mallison, Lucius Priest, Harry Wilbourne, and V. K. Ratliff -- nevertheless assume a central significance in their symbolism of hope for the future and in their ability to endure. They seem to act as Faulkner's prophecy for the future, a prophecy which the British-born economist Robert Theobald believes will be realized more dramatically in the years ahead. In describing a "new

vision" of humanity, he believes that Americans may have realized the necessity of returning to traditional, enduring values. He describes these qualities as:

> not necessarily church values -- honesty, responsibility, humility and love, with people doing things for each other not because there's money in it but because they care.[104]

Believing that people will act in their perceived self-interest, Mr. Theobald concludes: "I think I can prove that survival requires these religious values." Faulkner reached the identical conclusion which he embodied in his fictional world many years before.

NOTES

[1]T.S. Eliot, "Four Quartets: East Coker," in Collected Poems, 1909-1962 (Franklin Center, Pa: The Franklin Library, 1979), p. 186.

[2]See Wylie Sypher, Loss of the Self in Modern Literature and Art (New York: Random House, Inc., 1962).

[3]Olga Vickery, The Novels of William Faulkner, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), pp. 246-247.

[4]Richard P. Adams, Faulkner: Myth and Motion (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 5.

[5]Jean Defrees Kellogg, Dark Prophets of Hope: Dostoevsky, Sartre, Camus, Faulkner (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1975), p. 68.

[6]Cleanth Brooks, "Primitivism in The Sound and the Fury," English Institute Essays, 1952 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), p. 20.

[7]As Jean Weisgerber wrote in his comparison of the work of Faulkner and Dostoevesky:

> . . . the outrage results from the violation of the schemes with which we cover nature and to which we try to reduce her. But, indocile and whimsical, she resists them and amuses herself by demonstrating the fragility of these structures and their authors. At bottom, what provokes the outrage is the blinding proof of our weakness, of the imperfection of what we are and what we do: our codes and our knowledge which nature insultingly denies. . . . our awareness of outrage always derives from an enormous, upsetting, suddenly discovered gap existing between things as they are and our idea of them, in short, the opposition between what is and what ought to be, between reality and our expectations. (Jean Weisgerber, Faulkner and Dostoevsky: Influence and Confluence, trans. Dean McWilliams [Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1974], p. 137.)

The greatness of Faulkner's early works -- The Sound and the Fury, Light in August, Go Down, Moses, and Absalom, Absalom! is revealed in their ability to encompass the protagonists' sense of outrage and resulting denial of life, reiterating the lesson that only be accepting moral responsibility and the guilt of our actions and by willingness to break rules and static past formulas may we survive. Faulkner expressed his belief in man's constant need for action and change in life at the University of Virginia by saying:

> . . . Most of anyone's life is a pursuit of something. That is, the only alternative to life is immobility, which is death. . . . And always to learn . . . not only to pursue but to overtake and then to have the compassion not to destroy, to catch, to touch, and then to let go because then tomorrow you can pursue again. If you destroy it, what you caught, then it's gone, it's finished. And that to me is sometimes the greater part of valor but always it's the greater part of pleasure, not to destroy what you have

pursued. The pursuit is the thing, not the reward, not the gain. (Frederick L. Gwynn and Joseph L. Blotner, eds., Faulkner in the University: Conferences at the University of Virginia, 1957-1958, [Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977], pp. 271-272.

[8]David L. Minter, The Interpreted Design as a Structural Principle (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), p. 212.

[9]Minter, p. 212.

[10]Adams, p. 13.

[11]Kellogg, pp. 83-84.

[12]Cleanth Brooks, William Faulkner: Toward Yoknapatawpha and Beyond (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), p. 296.

[13]Vickery, p. 133.

[14]Vickery, pp. 132-133.

[15]Henry James, Sr., quoted in R. W. B. Lewis, The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy, and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 55. quoted by Lynn Gartrell Levins, Faulkner's Heroic Design: The Yoknapatawpha Novels (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1976), p. 91.

[16]Lewis, p. 89, quoted in Levins, p. 91.

[17]William Faulkner, Go Down, Moses, (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1973), p. 345.

[18]Faulkner, Go Down, Moses, p. 363.

[19]Adams, pp. 149-150.

[20]Robert A. Jelliffe, ed., Faulkner at Nagano, (Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 1956), pp. 77-78.

[21]Faulkner in the University, p. 246.

[22]John Hunt, "William Faulkner's Theological Center," quoted in Cleanth Brooks, William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 373.

[23]Hunt, quoted in Brooks, pp. 373-374.

[24]Hunt, quoted in Brooks, p. 374.

[25]Faulkner, Go Down, Moses, p. 299.

[26]Faulkner, Go Down, Moses, p. 288.

[27]On the quest for this type of peace, Faulkner himself once said that he was

> inclined to think that the only peace man knows is -- [when] he says, Why good gracious, yesterday I was happy. That at the moment he's too busy. That maybe peace is only a condition in retrospect, when the subconscious has got rid of the gnats and the tacks and the broken glass in experience and has left only the peaceful pleasant things -- that was peace. Maybe peace is not is, but was. (Faulkner in the University, p. 67.)

[28]Adams, p. 152.

[29]Adams, p. 151.

[30]Peter Swiggart, "Time in Faulkner's Novels," Modern Fiction Studies, 1, no. 2 (May 1955), 223.

[31]Richard Chase, The American Novel and Its Tradition (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1957), p. 216.

[32]Chase, p. 216.

[33]William Faulkner, Light in August, (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1972), p. 452-453.

[34]Faulkner, Light in August, pp. 457-458.

[35]Faulkner, Light in August, pp. 56-57.

[36]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 428.

[37]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 463.

[38]Kellogg, p. 146. Faulkner became judgmental of Hightower in his remarks at the University of Virginia:

> He didn't die. He had wrecked his life. He had failed his wife. He had failed himself, but there was one thing he still had -- which was the brave grandfather that galloped into the town to burn the Yankee stores, and at least he had that. Everything else was gone, but since he had been a man of God he still tried to be a man of God and he could not destroy himself. But he had destroyed himself but he still couldn't take his own life. He had to endure, to live, but that was one thing that was pure and fine that he had -- was the memory of his grandfather, who had been brave. (Faulkner in the University, p. 75.)

[39]Faulkner, Light in August, pp. 463-464.

[40]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 461.

[41]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 462-463.

[42]Faulkner, Light in August, pp. 462-463.

[43]Faulkner, Light in August, pp. 382-383.

[44]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 439.

[45]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 464.

[46]Faulkner, Light in August, pp. 464-465.

[47]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 465.

[48]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 465.

[49]In recognizing the conjunction of the mundane with the ethereal, Hightower has attained an insight into life which is akin to Stein's philosophy of the butterfly alighting on the dunghill of reality in Conrad's Lord Jim.

[50]Chase, p. 216.

[51]Chase, p. 216.

[52]Faulkner, Light in August, p. 466.

[53]William Faulkner, Sanctuary (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1958), p. 16.

[54]Noel Polk, ed., Afterword, Sanctuary, The Original Text, William Faulkner (New York: Random House, Inc., 1981), p. 299.

[55]Polk, p. 298.

[56]Polk, p. 299.

[57]Polk, p. 298.

[58]Faulkner, Sanctuary, p. 125.

[59]Adams, pp. 63-64.

[60]Adams, p. 69.

[61]William Faulkner, Sartoris (New York: The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., Signet Classic, 1964), p. 175.

[62]Faulkner, Sartoris, p. 179.

[63]Faulkner, Sartoris, p. 175.

[64]Lynn Gartrell Levins, Faulkner's Heroic Design: The Yoknapatawpha Novels (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1976), p. 150.

[65]William Faulkner, Intruder in the Dust (Random House, Inc., 1948), p. 206.

[66]Faulkner in the University, p. 34.

[67]Faulkner in the University, p. 80.

[68]Faulkner, Intruder in the Dust, p. 194.

[69]Faulkner, Intruder in the Dust, pp. 194-195.

[70]Faulkner, Intruder in the Dust, p. 30.

[71]William Faulkner, The Town (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1961), p. 76.

[72]William Faulkner, The Mansion (New York: Random House, Inc., 1955), p. 424.

[73]Faulkner, The Mansion, pp. 424-425.

[74]Faulkner, The Mansion, p. 94.

[75]Faulkner, The Mansion, p. 150.

[76]Faulkner, The Town, p. 101.

[77]Faulkner in the University, p. 141.

[78]Faulkner, The Mansion, p.

[79]Levins, p. 152.

[80]John L. Longley, Jr., The Tragic Mask: A Study of Faulkner's Heroes (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), p. 49.

[81]Each of the histories of Faulkner's isolated intellectual characters is revealed as a growth from innocence to experience in which they consciously or unconsciously work to solve the verbal problem of reconciling language with experience, attempting to cope with acceptance, rejection, or redefinition of their inherited traditions. (See Vickery, p. 144.)

[82]Vickery, p. 144.

[83]Faulkner interview with Cynthia Grenier, Accent, 16 (Summer 1956), p. 172.

[84]Faulkner in the University, pp. 253, 140.

[85]Levins, pp. 166-167.

[86]Adams, p. 14.

[87]Vickery, p. 133.

[88]Faulkner, Intruder in the Dust, p. 197.

[89]Vickery, pp. 141-144.

[90]Vickery, pp. 134-135.

[91]Vickery, p. 135.

[92]William Faulkner, The Wild Palms, (New York: The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., Signet Modern Classic, 1968), p. 82.

[93]See Denis de Rougemont, Love in the Western World (New York: Anchor Books, 1957).

[94]Brooks, The Yoknapatawpha Country, pp. 214-215.

[95]Faulkner, The Wild Palms, p. 215.

[96]Faulkner, The Wild Palms, p. 139.

[97]Faulkner, The Wild Palms, p. 138.

[98]Faulkner, The Wild Palms, pp. 113-114.

[99]The story of the romance of Charlotte and Harry and the destructive aspect of their search to isolate themselves from reality becomes almost a modern rendition of the story of Anna Karenina, and her dream of living with her lover outside of society. In both novels the women seem better able to exist in a world comprised solely of the giving and receiving of love than the men, who soon feel a sense of uselessness deprived of an occupation which provides a practical framework for their lives.

[100]Faulkner, The Wild Palms, p. 324.

[101]Vickery, pp. 247-248.

[102]Faulkner, The Wild Palms, p. 102.

[103]Faulkner in the University, p. 253.

[104]William Raspberry, "A Vision of Profound Change: Futurist Robert Theobold Believes Americans Are at the Brink of Discovering a 'New Vision of Humanity,' " Editorial, Washington Post, 3 Feb. 1982, Sec. A, p. 22, cols. 3-4.

CHAPTER SIX

THE LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF FAULKNER'S AND PROUST'S TREATMENT OF TIME

. . . do not call it
fixity,
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement
from nor towards,
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still
point,
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.
I can only say, there we have been: but I cannot say
where.
And I cannot say, how long, for that is to place it in
time.[1]

Almost by definition the intellectual seeks the fullness of life as his purview, but often obtains only a sense of emptiness and isolation for his efforts. As the previous chapters have attempted to demonstrate, the self-destructive and isolating aspects of the human intellect are a major focal point in the fictional worlds created by both Faulkner and Proust, whose intellectual protagonists strive to discover a sense of unity of being and continuity of time despite the fragmentation of their lives.

Proust's portrayal of the loneliness of Marcel's search to discover what endures in time has been singled out as symbolic of the author's own sense of alienation. Wallace Fowlie comments, "No writer has gone as far . . . in analyzing the terrifying limitations which isolate man as a human being."[2] Proust's psychological portraits of the evolution of personality traits which lead to lives of isolation can indeed be characterized as a prelude to twentieth century

literature's preoccupation with man's solitude and mistrust of society. Proust discovered that when the pure intellect rejects the fullness of life, it has the tendency to become a prison filled with empty theories.[3] He, like Dostoevsky, saw that:

> ... the isolation that prevails everywhere, above all in our age ... has not fully developed... has not reached its limit yet. For everyone strives to keep his individuality as apart as possible, wishes to secure the greatest possible fullness of life for himself; but meantime all his efforts result not in attaining fullness of life but self-destruction, for instead of self-realisation he ends by arriving at complete solitude.... For he is accustomed to rely upon himself alone and to cut himself off from the whole; he has trained himself not to believe in the help of others, in men and in humanity.... Everywhere in these days men have, in their mockery, ceased to understand that ... true security is ... [not to be found] in isolated individual effort.[4]

The same isolation and futility characterize the intellectual protagonists of Faulkner's dramatis personae. In his fictional world of Yoknapatawpha, Faulkner depicts the society of a few impoverished aristocratic families and a community of small tenant farmers and woodsmen, who, in their reduced circumstances, search both consciously and unconsciously for the semblance of a heroic ideal by which to elevate their lives. The unrealistic nature of the search severely limits the chances of success, and because a sense of victory is so often unattainable, a few Faulkner critics have assumed that he is either writing about the negative aspects of human nature or the insurmountability of the circumstances that confront the individual, no matter how noble or deserving he may be.

Faulkner's own verbal testimony, however, stands in direct opposition to this interpretation of his fiction. Although he went fully as far as Proust in his analysis of the "terrifying limitations which isolate man as a human being," portraying the physical handicaps of poverty, hunger, and ignorance -- as well as the psychological aberrations of misplaced idealism, neurotic romanticism,

overwhelming jealousy, and uncontrollable nostalgia -- Faulkner was a strong believer in community solidarity and individual human interaction. In a letter to Warren Beck written in 1941 explaining his desire to glorify man's constant effort to survive, he acknowledges:

> I have been writing all the time about honor, truth, pity, consideration, the capacity to endure well grief and misfortune and injustice and then endure again, in terms of individuals who observed and adhered to them not for reward but for virtue's own sake. . . .[5]

While the ever-rolling stream of time in which man's fate must be realized is an absolute reality which Faulkner and Proust discover and then delineate in their work, they both maintain that certain elements of life are timeless. For Proust, various sensations and essences of life and experience defy time through their distillation in art; whereas for Faulkner, it is the moral qualities of humanity which endure without the necessity of artistic representation.

The Method of the Literary Portrait as a Means of Discovering Unity of Being and Continuity of Time

Basing their thoughts and literary efforts on the concept of an "enduring, identical self [existing] in and through the experience of temporal duration,"[6] the ultimate quest which enthralls both Faulkner and Proust is the effort to discover what is timeless in the self and in experience. Their novels, in effect, celebrate the discovery of these timeless elements.

In a modern world characterized by severe disruptions of most institutional and temporal continuity wherein the self can establish some sense of identity, both Faulkner and Proust have chosen to use the same method of the literary portrait through which to reveal the self as a continuing, functional unity

to which an identity might be attributed. In spite of fragmented and outdated associations, the significance of such literary reconstructions can be assessed by their helpfulness in restoring and reevaluating a sense of certain qualities of the self which have been menaced and partially obliterated by the impact of time upon the life of modern man.

In all of these literary portraits the problem facing the protagonists is how to reconcile the past with the present, a dilemma which each author projects into a literary quest for continuity, identity, and unity within the framework of the past, present, and future. Faulkner and Proust realized, in the words of Hans Meyerhoff, that "continuity as an essential ingredient of selfhood is invariably part of the literary portrait." In such portraits "the intimate, reciprocal relationship between time and the self becomes most manifest; for the awareness of continuity within the self is correlative with the aspect of continuity or duration in time."[7]

Both men saw that the

> correlation between these aspects of time and the self [i.e., continuity in the self and continuity or duration in time] arises in two contexts: (1) within the temporal flow of the specious present; (2) within the relations constituting the memory structure, or personal past, of an individual.[8]

Thus Faulkner and Proust used the literary portrait as a vehicle to demonstrate the sense of continuity and functional unity of the self in the midst of temporal succession and change. In their literary approach to describing the self, two aspects of selfhood are accorded particular significance.

First of all, the self seems to reveal a tendency toward dynamic organization which exists over and above the succession of fragmentary impressions and ideas. That is, it actively interprets, organizes, and synthesizes the data it receives, and it does so from the perspective of the self as a whole. And secondly, the self projects a certain quality of continuity and identity in the

midst of that data flow. In other words, the self seems to have a type of structure which demonstrates unity in continuity, the phenomenon an individual recognizes in conceiving of himself as the same person throughout his lifetime. Both of these qualities, dynamic organization and continuity, are inherently intertwined aspects of the self, and allow for a sense of cohesion among the multitude of heterogeneous characteristics which ultimately correlate with personal identity.[9]

For Proust and Faulkner memory is the key to the quest to rediscover the self, and their intellectual characters attempt to use memory as a means of transcending time with varying degrees of success. Through the memory process combined with intellectual analysis Marcel advances to the point from which he is able to become a creative artist, recognizing that his creation will attain the transcendence over the passage of time that he has been seeking. For Faulkner's intellectuals, however, emotional emphasis on the memory process tends to create static beings, who become trapped in the past they recall and are rendered incapable of transmitting their memories into art. Only by acceptance of the passage of time or in a mode of stoic endurance do Faulkner's characters find it possible to transcend time.

With their philosophical focus on time as an eternal phenomenon which man must attempt to survive and which he hopes to transcend, the Proustian and Faulknerian perspectives are remarkably parallel. While employing several of the same aesthetic techniques, however, the two authors present their fictional interpretations of man's efforts to transcend the passage of time in completely different manners.

With his imagination focused on the present, and the belief that he experiences life's reality through the repetition of sensation, Marcel realizes that recurring sensation can restore his original sense of being, making past and

present fuse into one. Reality is thus revealed in arrested moments of memory that Marcel can then aesthetically reproduce in art, hoping that his writing will have the same effect of restoration of being for the reader.

With imaginations held captive by the past, Faulkner's intellectuals believe that life's only reality is to be found in the recreation of their idealistic obsessions from a time long ago. Whereas Proust employs the aesthetic device of arrested moments and recurrent sensation as Marcel's artistic means of transcending time, Faulkner uses the arrested moments of his intellectual protagonists as an aesthetic device to reveal the static, spatially frozen quality of time created from an emotional impasse caused by the outraging of their ideals.

Through use of the identical aesthetic device of the arrested moment, which Proust expands to be all-encompassing and Faulkner contracts to be static and rigid, both writers nevertheless emerge with the same philosophical emphasis on man's constant need for restoration of being, which represents life itself. In his focus on the primacy of the artist, however, Proust's angle of vision is slightly different from that of Faulkner, who, while personally demonstrating the primacy of artistic vision, refuses to approve it or prescribe it for the fictional beings he created.

For the two writers time is described through both the transcendent and durational lenses. For Marcel, the durational sense of time allows the possibility of analysis of arrested moments while providing the necessary framework to incorporate such moments into the ongoing continuity of all time. With a static, linear view of chronological time whose passage they feel incapable of halting, however, Faulkner's intellectual protagonists want to escape from a sense of duration, which their rigid conceptualization of time will not permit. For them memory is not an adequate tool, and they are unable to discard the abstract Platonic absolutes which lead them to fail in their crisis of knowing. The form of

their failed lives is then reflected in the overly self-conscious form of the portions of the novels which relate their histories. Obsessed like Faulkner himself with the problems of the fragmentation of contemporary life, they allow no space in their world, rejecting the chaos of the real world for the abstract world of the spirit.

In Faulkner's novels which celebrate the success of the durational time sense with its aspects of change and survival, however, there is an interesting element of the inverted Platonism characteristic of Proust's thinking. In the Snopes trilogy, Intruder in the Dust, and The Reivers, durational time is reflected in the celebration of imagination in the present, linking the power of man's imagination to human consciousness of time's passage as in A la recherche du temps perdu. In these later works there is thus a transmutation of Faulkner's idealism from the tragic pattern inherent in the efforts of the isolated figures striving to attain timeless virtues in the Platonic tradition to a celebration of mundane human ideals, which are part of the human consciousness of time.

Ultimately, for both Faulkner and Proust, the concept of time as motion not only pervades, but determines the form and content of their work. For them both immobility is simply an aesthetic spatial technique, a momentary fixity presented against the diachronic flow of time. In their shared desire to create art which embodies "a certain abstract geometrical shape," and which, in its durability and permanence becomes "a refuge from the flux and impermanence of outside nature,"[10] both Proust and Faulkner thus incorporate spatial form as a structural element in their fiction. In their space-consciousness and fear of the passage of time, they create non-naturalistic art forms in which the dimension of depth (indicating time) is replaced by static concepts that are presented on simultaneous, horizontal planes of juxtaposition.

In Proust, this spatial sense is evident in the technique of discontinuous presentation of character, and displacement and juxtaposition of images, as well as in his descriptions of transcendent moments revealed in flashes of involuntary memory. In these revelatory instants, by means of a shared sensation, the past and the present are momentarily superimposed, leading to a suspension of awareness of the passage of time and a sense of immortality.

In Faulkner, the techniques used to delimit the sense of space (culminating in spatial form) include arrested motion, juxtaposition and fusion of past and present, and the portrayal of intellectual character types, who feel themselves to be in disharmony and disequilibrium with the universe. In this interpretation, Faulkner's isolated intellectual characters are used as artifacts to reveal the spatial form of arrested moments, and are presented in constant contrast with the intuitive primitive characters, whose streams of consciousness reveal their identification with durational time, and their ability through intuition to transcend the passage of time.

Thus, although the different forms of Proust's and Faulkner's art reveal different responses to the challenge of twentieth century spatiality, ultimately the fictional focus of both is on the possibility of attaining transcendence. After stringing together temporal moments to remember, Proust determines that through his writing these moments can defy the passage of time and achieve a form of artistic immortality. In his celebration of transcendence, Faulkner ultimately condemns characters who allow themselves to be caught in time, whether they are isolated intellectuals seeking to obliterate contemporary time by escaping into the past superimposed above the present, or whether they are more primitive characters, who are unable to extricate themselves from a sense of durational time.

In their goal of fusing past and present as Faulkner himself does in his writing, the intellectual characters fascinate Faulkner by presenting him with

fragmented images of portions of his own being. But in their failure either to integrate the artistry and practicality of their lives through spatial vision or to attain a form of transcendence, Faulkner recognizes them as failed intellectuals and artists whose understanding of life is in opposition to reality, and whose creativity is never realized.

Thus, for Proust, spatial form provides a means of attaining transcendence of time through the revelatory moments immortalized in his art; whereas for Faulkner, spatial form provides a means of presenting a particular static, conceptual outlook embodied in his intellectual characters, who are ultimately incapable of meeting the challenges of life in the twentieth century.

Forgetting the Past to Recreate the Future

As authors who inherited and espoused the nineteenth century's notion of continuous creation, Proust and Faulkner understood and focused on the creation of the mind in the flow of durational time. In addition, they both recognized that with the new twentieth century concept of the present existing in every instant, one has a continuous opportunity to act and formulate a philosophy of action, thereby recreating oneself and the world. The idea that there is a creative decision as the source of every act is central to their view of human activity.[11]

Although the tendency of the twentieth century is "to apprehend the present as the generative act of time in its concrete reality," such an act of creation of the self ex nihilo must be achieved by the being's awareness of its own existence as set against its own death.[12] The mind must "recognize in its act of creation an act of annihilation."[13] Thus the true twentieth century attitude which Proust and Faulkner embody in their writing may be the necessity for man to forget at each instant what he was in order to become the person he wishes to be.

If it is actually necessary for man to forget what he was in order to change and become the being he would like to be, a paradox is created for those who seek continuity and unity of being. And it is on the foundation of this paradox that the Proustian and Faulknerian fictional worlds are fabricated. This act of forgetting in order to become is only possible for those individuals who have obtained both unity of being and a sense of the ongoing continuity of time on the basis of which they feel secure enough to acknowledge the changes which time brings.

Not only are Faulkner's primitive characters absorbed in a sense of ongoing durational time, but their every action seems to be an act of forgetting in order to become. Certainly Dilsey, Lena, and Eula are manifestations of a type of basic human mindlessness, which in Dilsey's case manifests itself as human compassion, in Lena's and Eula's cases as simply feminine fertility. Although the clock in the Compson kitchen has only one hand, yet Dilsey has an inner awareness of the time of day. Although Lena has no notion of the whereabouts of the lover who deserted her, yet she plods ahead confident that she will find him and be taken care of at the time of her child's delivery. Although Eula in The Hamlet has no interest in learning anything academic from the schoolmaster who longs to possess her, yet at the time of his assault she knows instinctively how to protect herself without any manifestation of surprise or alarm. In each case the character in question has chosen to forget what they have been taught as the rational explanation in order to move ahead remaking themselves and those around them in the serene assurance of the continuity of time and their ability to become whatever they wish.

It is, therefore, only those Faulkner characters who, in their rigid adherence to a formula or code of existence, cannot forget, who fail to become what they desire. The list includes all of the isolated intellectuals with the single

exception of Harry Wilbourne, who chooses to forget Charlotte's fanatical refusal to give birth and his bungling of the abortion in order to preserve his memories of the passion which had sustained them at an earlier time.

In A la recherche du temps perdu, Marcel at first seems to be a decadent but rigid young man absorbed with his memories of the past. But gradually it becomes apparent that he is aware of the strength of oblivion which swallows up most of the sensations he receives from experience, reexperiencing these sensations only upon occasion when the original experience is resurrected in its entirety. Thus, in the Proustian realm, the immediate past is frequently brushed aside in order to create an opening, an invitation to an apparition from the past, when Marcel finds himself confronting a younger version of himself accompanied by an overwhelming rush of sensations which are dazzling in their reincarnation. On the strength of these episodes of forgetting and remembering, Marcel is able to evolve into the artist he feels that he can become.[14]

The recognition of the present as the generative act of time is at once central to the twentieth century dilemma and an incomplete answer to it. With the present in a constant state of metamorphosis, no focus is more difficult to achieve. As Jean Wahl points out, "Our attention can be directed only to the past . . . [because] whatever is new eludes the grasp of consciousness, and when seized by it becomes transformed into a thing of the past."[15] Paradoxically, the creative act of time must first appear as a death of time itself. Clearly, Proust and Faulkner were ultimately led to that recognition, to the idea that "continuous creation becomes . . . a creation continually discontinued."[16] On the one hand, the self and the universe are constantly rediscovered and chosen anew, and constantly appear to be formed from the creative act. On the other hand, despite the recovered newness and freshness of this creation, its recognition seems linked to a sort of immobility. One's continual awareness of the present is trapped in the

frame of a moving picture film. Thus, the "anachronism of duration [ultimately] corresponds to and is superimposed upon an anachronism of space."[17]

For Faulkner and Proust the solution to the dilemma of the present becoming the past is, therefore, in part the stoic formula mentioned in Chapter Two and suggested by Georges Poulet: "To endure is to be present, and to be present is to be present to things distributed in a sort of time-space."[18] This formula, however, produces the danger that, "... the human act by which the mind becomes present to any group of images at once local and temporal very often possesses the character of an incomplete incongruous creation. . ."[19] The possibility of fragmentation seems to be exemplified in the cases of Marcel and of the Faulknerian intellectual figures. When, through abstraction they attempt to understand the local and the temporal, finding only images of life that seem "incomplete and incongruous," they reject the present in favor of a more perfect creation composed of the interaction of their minds and imaginations with the past. But in their desire to relive moments from the past, the death of time itself ultimately obsesses the Proustian and Faulknerian intellectual characters.

It is ironic that although many Faulkner characters are doomed by their tendency to "spatialize" time, to deal with its experiences abstractly allowing the temporal components to refer reflexively to each other, yet the artist, the novelist himself, must be capable of dealing with time spatially as well as intuitively. For Faulkner the intimate portrayal of characters consumed with a sense of transcendent time seems to come from from first-hand experience. And in the case of Proust, it is clear that the units of meaning that he describes Marcel discovering in the past are ultimately related and refer to one another reflexively like seriographic mirrors in a moment of time.[20] This act of reflecting on the composite of the past units of memory to determine their

significance may be used as an indication of Proust's own use of a spatializing form of intellect.

Proust's Affirmation of Life

Ultimately, Proust's sense of time involves an affirmation of temporal, chronological elements combined with a spatial, simultaneous approach. From a perspective which is predominently temporal, he springs into another world delineated with arresting spatial insights.[21]

In raising the question of the meaning of human life in a universe that reveals none, Proust's point of view is essentially existential. Like Faulkner, Proust reaches the conclusion that the nature of existence cannot be fully grasped in intellectual terms, and that intellectual awareness is only one of many modes of cognition. In focusing on his fellow man, Proust's major concern is directed toward the "unauthentic" quality of most lives, which he believes leads to a "lost" existence, an existence based on an understanding of itself according to universal concepts instead of individual analysis of the modes of feeling and experience.

Throughout the expanse of A la recherche du temps perdu it is obvious that Marcel is gradually becoming aware that "the being creates and finds itself only by setting its existence against its own death, only by creating itself ex nihilo."[22] Thus, according to the Proustian outlook, it is ultimately up to each individual to deal with life's major paradox and recognize that he is simultaneously, to use Heidegger's phrase, a "being-for-life" and a "being-for-death."[23]

Believing like most existentialists that the human being cannot be divorced from a dynamic interrelationship with his environment and community,

Proust stresses the temporal modes of human life, revealing the possibility of evolution from a "dead" past to a vital relationship with all of life, which can best be manifested in a "project" uniting the individual with the flow of life. For Marcel this life-giving project is his decision to create a work of art, which is able to reflect the complexity of life.

Although Proust was aware that the creation of a work of art alone could not solve any of the metaphysical problems of living, he felt that it could stand as his personal testimony to the victory of the "being-for- life" over the "being-for- death."[22] Thus, in describing the death of the novelist, Bergotte, Proust affirms his belief that human virtues have the possibility of enduring through art by having Marcel state:

> All these obligations which have not their sanction in our present life seem to belong to a different world, founded upon kindness, scrupulosity, self-sacrifice, a world entirely different from this, which we leave in order to be born into this world, before perhaps returning to the other to live once again beneath the sway of those unknown laws which we have obeyed because we bore their precepts in our hearts, knowing not whose hand had traced them there -- those laws to which every profound work of the intellect brings us nearer. . . .[24]

Reaching out of reality and time towards eternity, art as a "profound work of the intellect" eventually flows back to confront the vision and critical acclaim of men in the real world, thereby creating a loop of transcendence capable of defying death.

After Marcel's efforts to grasp knowledge out of the flux of life through intellectual analysis, and after the height of the atemporal vision at the end of A la recherche du temps perdu, his final discovery is simply that "life is worth living."[25] The ultimate Proustian vision is of the peaceful coexistence of time and space as they "perform an elaborate and moving saraband" from positions of equal power.[26]

Faulkner's Ambivalent Affirmation of Life

Faulkner remained realistic, by some interpretations even pessimistic, about the general obstinacy and orneriness of human nature, qualities which make it difficult if not impossible to predict and direct the course of history. The ambiguity of the statement "man will endure," with which he concluded his Nobel Prize Speech, has been the source of contradictory interpretations throughout the decades. We as well as Walter Slatoff may wonder, "whether he will endure by virtue of his soul or his folly and whether enduring means primarily to suffer or to transcend time. . . ."[27]

Although Faulkner never despaired of man's possibilities, he found it impossible to be enthusiastically optimistic about man's future. In 1955, several years after the Nobel Prize Speech, he remarked in a letter to a friend ". . . human beings are terrible. One must believe well in man to endure him, wait out his folly and savagery and inhumanity."[28] While he continued to "believe well in man," it was no idealistic or naive belief, but rather a faith that was hard to win.[29]

The passage which is briefly cited in Chapter Two as the definitive statement of Faulkner's view of the frustration, tension, and conflict that characterize life, is found in Absalom, Absalom! in Judith Sutpen's stoic evaluation of the enigmatic complexities of existence. Her statement is recounted in its entirety much later to Quentin by his father, who had heard the story from his own father. Judith is quoted as saying:

> ". . . You get born and you try this and you dont know why only you keep on trying it and you are born at the same time with a lot of other people, all mixed up with them, like trying to, having to, move your arms and legs with strings only the same strings are hitched to all the other arms and legs and the others all trying and they dont know why either except that the strings are all in one another's way like five or six people all trying to

> make a rug on the same loom only each one wants to weave his own pattern into the rug; and it cant matter, you know that, or the Ones that set up the loom would have arranged things a little better, and yet it must matter because you keep on trying or having to keep on trying and then all of a sudden it's all over and all you have left is a block of stone with scratches on it provided there was someone to remember to have the marble scratched and set up or had time to, and it rains on it and the sun shines on it and after a while they dont even remember the name and what the scratches were trying to tell, and it doesn't matter."[30]

In the coexistence of the statements "it cant matter" and "yet it must matter" Faulkner has created a combination of contradictory phrases which express his dual perspective on life, his feelings of uncertainty and paradox which are presented as Judith's perceptions of an existence she stoically endures. Rather than these phrases revealing a "desperately divided and tormented perspective," which Walter Slatoff describes as a "condition of [Faulkner's] mind which tries to move simultaneously and intensely toward both order and chaos,"[31] they simply describe the underlying ambivalence of Judith's emotions as she calmly accepts whatever time brings.

Judith's contradictory statements do not fall into the category of oxymorons (such as "cruel kindness" or "thundering silence") as Slatoff suggests. They are simply antithetical phrases which are answered at the end of the soliloquy by her muted affirmation of the act of living. In a more complete rendition of her statement than was cited earlier, Judith suggests that it is action in life which is important --

> ". . . if you could go to someone, the stranger the better, and give them something -- a scrap of paper -- something, anything, it not to mean anything in itself and them not even to read it or keep it, not even bother to throw it away or destroy it, at least it would be something just because it would have happened, be remembered even if only from passing from one hand to another, one mind to another, and it would be at least a scratch, something, something that might make a mark on something that <u>was</u> once for the reason that it can die someday, while the block of stone cant be <u>is</u> because it never can become <u>was</u> because it cant ever die or perish. . . ."[32]

Judith's words suggest that in Faulkner's philosophy it is the motion of life not the reasoning or rationalizing of it which is significant. Despite the ambiguities and ambivalences, the fact of man's interaction with humanity is what Faulkner is celebrating.

In one classroom interview Faulkner was asked the question, "Mr. Faulkner, do you consider human life basically a tragedy?" And he replied: "Actually, yes. But man's immortality is that he is faced with a tragedy which he can't beat and he still tries to do something with it."[33] He went on to explain:

> ". . . failure to me is the best, to try something you can't do, because it's too much (to hope for), but still to try it and fail, then try it again. That to me is success."[34]

And in another interview, Faulkner amplified the point by saying: "It is this act of trying that is the source of man's immortality."[35]

Perhaps Faulkner's fullest statement of hope for the future was expressed at Nagano when he stressed his commitment to change which he believed would occur through man's own efforts. He said:

> ". . . I am still convinced that man is tougher than any darkness. That man's hope is the capacity to believe in man, his hope, his aspiration toward a better human condition. . . . He knows that since his own yesterday showed him today that he endured, was capable of hope, was capable of believing that man's condition can be bettered, is his assurance that after he is gone someone will read what he has done and see what man yesterday was capable of believing and of hope that man's condition can be changed. . . ."[36]

A Final Evaluation

With Proust's and Faulkner's shared conviction that life is worth living, an important final question in any consideration of the lives of their protagonists

is what attitude finally distinguishes Faulkner's portraits of intellectual figures from Proust's exaltation of Marcel as the portrait of the artist?

Despite the similarity of the treatment of time through arrested motion, and the same fictional turning to the past and memory to discover the thread to the future, the outcome of the lives of the intellectual Faulkner figures in no way parallels Marcel's evolution into an artist. The question that haunts the reader long after reading The Sound and the Fury, Absalom, Absalom!, and Go Down, Moses, is what went wrong in the lives of each of Faulkner's major protagonists which directed their lives towards isolation, masochism, and suicide? And why is it that only the primitive characters and a very few who learn the value of life are capable of survival? These questions, which penetrate the fabric of Faulkner's fiction more deeply than the usual critical queries concerning the success or failure of his novels' form, attempt to probe into the reason underlying the negative outcome of the lives of those characters who reveal intellectual or analytical abilities.

Faulkner's predilection for the stunted development of his intellectual characters reflects a particular American problem, which was emphasized by the small, Southern rural community in which he grew up and chose to remain. Despite the influence of the European novels to which he devoted himself during the years of his intensive reading, their major effect was to provide knowledge concerning the techniques of novelistic form. In terms of character type and development, Faulkner already felt adequately prepared, having closely observed the people around him, who were later to appear in fictional form as the unforgettable inhabitants of Yoknapatawpha. The traditional pattern of the bildungsroman, with its focus on the protagonist's growth in experience and intellectual stature was not nearly so interesting to Faulkner as the possibility of

forbidding the protagonist's development beyond a certain romantic stance in order to deny the realization of his dreams and intellectualized fantasies.

Given the confining values in the small community in which Faulkner grew up, where any attempts toward intellectualism were considered pretentious and unusual, Faulkner's own adolescent experiences labeled him as artistic and therefore "different." Instead of exploring the possibility of an intellectual protagonist's escape from and growth beyond such narrow boundaries, Faulkner preferred to escape alone in his own imagination to exist in the limitless expanses of fiction, while restricting any characters who seemed to reflect his own artistic inclinations to a much narrower fate. In real life he denied that he was a novelist, preferring to think of himself as a "farmer," a dramatic role that he enjoyed assuming to feel more a part of the community.

Faulkner seems to associate romantic fantasies and intellectual ideas with character types who tend toward fixations and obsessions, thereby distorting normal emotional and intellectual impulses and creating tragic figures who must be punished for their excesses. Yet, simultaneously, Faulkner the artist had the hidden pleasure of thinking and feeling many of the same things and surviving to incorporate them into his fiction, while puritanically punishing characters very like himself for their indulgences. The characters whom he feels comfortable with and allows to flourish are the local townspeople, such as Ratliff and the Snopeses, or the primitive characters such as Dilsey, Lena, and Dewey Dell.

Solely in the case of Harry Wilbourne in The Wild Palms does Faulkner begin to delineate the outlines of a sensitive and intellectual character who hurls himself into the motion of life, and then chooses to survive in order to savor the memory of his passion. Although Faulkner's characterization of Harry is not fully developed, yet there is enough of an indication of a life that will continue on absorbed in thoughts and memories to be very reminiscent of Proust.

Although in philosophical and intellectual terms Faulkner never permitted himself to grow and develop in the elevated direction of Proust's thought, yet in literary terms, as the creator of an array of isolated, intellectual protagonists whose stunted growth and possibilities are a source of poignancy to all who read the histories of their inability to deal with the passage of time, Faulkner can at least appear in the same ring with the French genius who is famed for his memories of things past. When Quentin Compson, Gail Hightower, Isaac McCaslin, Horace Benbow, and Gavin Stevens reach the end of their development in terms of effectively dealing with the motion of life, they reproduce in miniature an intricate and original variation on the pattern of Marcel's thoughts, which seemed for a time to render him ineffectual and incapable of dealing energetically with his future task as a writer. The great literary difference between the two is that Proust was able to lead Marcel cautiously and lovingly beyond his mental stumbling blocks into the heady ether of the artistic world, while Faulkner stood firmly barring the path of fulfillment for those whom he had created. In each case time past assumed either the role of collaborator or nemesis in the future of the potential artist.

Moreover, despite the personal failures of Faulkner's intellectual heroes, despite their ultimate inability to attain a sense of continuity of time and unity of being, the very creation of such characters, and the creation of the literary works which reveal their shortcomings allowed Faulkner the novelist to achieve transcendence of time, and in effect affirmed Proust's vision of the artist's role. By definition any literary triumph achieved in twentieth century fiction is a reduced triumph, one which provides little more than the assurance that meaning is possible in the world. In an epoch of marginal heroes, the act of choosing or not choosing and a clearly articulated sense of time are central to any sound definition of man.

Both Faulkner and Proust grappled with the recognition that life is potentially intolerable, but they nevertheless continued to choose the struggle that it implied. Faulkner would agree with Proust that this was much more than a "stupidly romantic gesture."[37] For both writers it was an act of faith, an act wherein the continuous human creation of self and universe could be achieved by the mind confronting the present. For both it was a "creation endlessly aborted, travestied, corrected,"[38] but a human imperative in spite of its inherent toil. That imperative -- for the continual "retouching of the present and of nothingness"[39] in order to begin again -- was for Faulkner and Proust not simply a credo, but the only path out of the twentieth century's temporal labyrinth. In their search for transcendence of time they both revealed the "still point . . . where past and future are gathered" in the eternal movement of their fiction.

NOTES

[1]T. S. Eliot, "Four Quartets; Burnt Norton," in Collected Poems, 1909-1962 (Franklin Center, Pa.: The Franklin Library, 1979), p. 179.

[2]Wallace Fowlie, A Reading of Proust (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964), p. 122.

[3]Jean Weisgerber, Faulkner and Dostoevsky: Influence and Confluence, trans. Dean McWilliams (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1974), p. 119.

[4]Feodor Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, trans. Constance Garnett (New York: Random House, Inc., The Modern Library, n.d.), p. 317-318, quoted by Weisgerber, pp. 119-120.

[5]Letter from William Faulkner, quoted by Warren Beck, "Faulkner: A Preface and A Letter," Yale Review, 52 (October 1962), 159.

[6]Hans Meyerhoff, Time in Literature (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1955), p. 36.

[7]Meyerhoff, p. 35.

[8]Meyerhoff, p. 35.

[9]Meyerhoff, pp. 33-34.

[10]T. E. Hulme, Speculations: Essays on Humanism and the Philosophy of Art (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1961), pp. 86-87.

[11]Georges Poulet, Studies in Human Time (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956), p. 35.

[12]Poulet, p. 36.

[13]Poulet, p. 36.

[14]Poulet, p. 36.

[15]Jean Wahl, Vers le concret, Rech. Phil., I, 11, quoted in Poulet, pp. 34-36.

[16]Poulet, p. 37.

[17]Poulet, p. 37.

[18]Poulet, p. 37.

[19]Poulet, p. 37.

[20]Roger Shattuck, Marcel Proust (New York: The Viking Press, 1974), p. 112.

[21]Shattuck, p. 117.

[22]Poulet, p. 36.

[23]Germaine Bree, The World of Marcel Proust (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1966), p. 288.

[24]Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past, trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Frederick A. Blossom (New York: Random House, Inc., 1927), II, 510.

[25]Proust, II, 1112.

[26]Shattuck, p. 119.

[27]Walter J. Slatoff, Quest for Failure: A Study of William Faulkner (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1960), p. 250.

[28]Cleanth Brooks, William Faulkner: Toward Yoknapatawpha and Beyond (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), p. 273.

[29]Brooks, p. 273.

[30]William Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom! (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1964), p. 127.

[31]Slatoff, pp. 250-251.

[32]Faulkner, Absalom, Absalom!, pp. 127-128.

[33]Robert A. Jelliffe, ed., Faulkner at Nagano (Folcroft, Pa.: Folcroft Library Editions, 1973), p. 4.

[34]Faulkner at Nagano, pp. 3-4.

[35]Joseph L. Fant, III. and Robert Ashley, eds., Faulkner at West Point, (New York: Random House, Inc., 1964), p. 76.

[36]Faulkner at Nagano, pp. 157, 158-159

[37]Frederick J. Hoffman, The Modern Novel in America (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1967), pp. 234-235.

[38]Poulet, p. 37.

[39]Poulet, p. 37.

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